

Health promotion during emergencies The health promotion programme is a WHO collaboration with national and provincial health authorites and other partners. It is not limited to a specific health problem or set of behaviours, but addresses a variety of population groups, risk factors, diseases and settings, including emergency situations.

Health promotion interventions are made in the areas of education, community development, policy, legislation and regulation. These are done not only for the prevention of noncommunicable diseases, but for the prevention of communicable diseases, injury and violence as well.

The programme contributes to achieving Millenium Development Goals 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6, and aims to address the underlying social and economic determinants of health through initiatives that enhance health equity with a specific focus on communities.

The main approaches of the programme are:

social mobilization

communication for behavioural impact (COMBI)

community participation

information, education and communication (IEC) strategies.

The involvement of communities through social mobilization, COMBI and IEC strategies is an integral component of primary health care. By involving local communities, it is possible to empower them by providing them with an enabling environment in order to reflect, articulate and document their particular health issues and the way they manage emergency situations such as natural disasters.

Community mobilization and participation is a long and continuous process that requires regular contact and facilitation with communities to enable them to organize themselves effectively and efficiently.

A key component of the programme is the One UN Joint Initiative on school health that seeks to initiate and/or strengthen knowledge, attitude and practices relating to health promotion in schools.

Health promotion programme achievements

The health promotion programme has worked towards building alliances with networks and partners, including in the media. Planned mass communication interventions include collaborations with InterNews and International Organization for Migration to increase awareness on major health risks as they occur (such as cholera outbreaks) and on health care access and utilization.

Programme achievements include:

religious leaders mobilized at federal, provincial and district levels to raise community awareness on major health risks

collaboration between WHO and International Organization for Migration for critical communication of health-related information in 30 districts in Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh

pilot project on social mobilization activities in a district in Punjab

participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHAST) interventions in the environmental health sector

production of a booklet to raise community awareness among internally-displaced persons regarding health entitlements, health risks and disease prevention

adaptation of a booklet for schools on dengue fever and malaria

support to community-based disaster risk management activities

health education and communication campaign in four districts in Sindh.

Health promotion

Regional health promotion and education programme

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