



European Interregional
Scientific and Educational Centre
on Major Risk Management

“Human rights in Disasters: Search and Rescue Operations in disasters especially for vulnerable people”

Workshop

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***Disaster risk reduction and the protection of
vulnerable people-
preparedness and preventive measures.***

Yerevan, Republic of Armenia, 2009

People with physical, mental or sensory limitations are often disabled not because of the diagnosable condition, but because they are denied access to education, labour markets and public services.

What is more tragic than that they all are lacking or being provided a handicapped access to education, informing, warning and relevant public services in regard to the observance of their rights and equitable access to meeting their needs in the field of disaster risk reduction and reducing vulnerability, the protection of life and health, the administration of first aid and first psychological intervention and first- and self-aid training in emergencies.

At the same time, a number of lacks and gaps in the texts of the Standard Rules has been revealed during their practical implementation , in particular, those concerning the restricted access to education, informing and warning (awareness raising) and relevant public services by people with disabilities of all ages regards the observation of their rights and the provision of equal opportunities to meeting their needs in the field of disaster risk reduction and reducing vulnerability, the protection of life and health against emergencies.

To eliminate the shortcomings in the above area requires to develop and introduce, in appropriate way, below are given some suggestions to supplement the texts of the Standard Rules .

In particular, if the Standard Rules (Section 28) say, that states through their existing medical system should ensure that the disabled get the medical services adequate to those provided to other community members,

than this, of course, should state that states must ensure the disabled of all ages to get the similar search, rescue, first aid and first psychological intervention in major natural and man-made disasters and in other extreme situations.

If the Standard Rules (Section 29) say, that states must ensure adequate preparedness and the provision of equipment to all medical and nursery brigades and related to them personnel servicing the disabled and must ensure access to appropriate methods and tools in providing treatment,

than this, of course ,should state that states must ensure adequate training and equipping of rescue teams, medical , nursery and related to them brigades to enable search, rescue and administering first aid to people with disabilities in major disaster and in other emergency situations.

If the Standard Rules (Section 31) say, that states should elaborate and implement the Programs seeking the engagement of the disabled men and women of all ages in full, aimed at providing them appropriate completely accessible education, informing and services regards meeting their needs in the field of the protection of reproduction sexual health ,

than this, of course , should state that states should elaborate and implement Programs supporting the full engagement of disabled men and women of all ages and targeted at providing them appropriate education, informing , warning and services by relevant structures concerning the observance of their rights and provision of equal opportunities to meet their needs in the field of disaster risk reduction and reducing vulnerability and the protection of live and health.

Ensuring the provision of equal opportunities in the above area to the disabled of all ages requires in line with resolving legislative and other strategic goals also meeting below three essential objectives:

1. To educate emergency and relief managers and workers about the special and heterogeneous needs of the people with disabilities (including, the preparing and publication of correspondent information materials)

2. To bring the people with disabilities to the emergency management table with the first responders to introduce the two sides to each other:

to educate first responders to work adequately with disabled, to ensure adequate preparedness and equip rescuers and related to them the personnel servicing the disabled to rescue and search the disabled and show them first aid and first psychological assistance

to make people with disabilities active participate in disaster planning and preparedness, teach them how to survive in emergencies, encourage them to cultivate creative skills, first - and self -aid skills included.

3. For the people with disabilities to be insured equal rights and enhanced education and preparedness, the development of relevant information materials assigned to them and their training should be implemented through regular organizing and holding national and municipal Campaigns on informing and warning the population about emergencies.

The elaborations in parallel with practicing their outcomes are supposed to be implemented under support of EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement in close collaboration with the

relevant structures of the Emergency Management Ministry of Armenia (in first turn with the Rescue Service of Armenia and Academy of Crisis Management),

relevant UN's structures in Armenia and other concerned international organizations

as well as with active participation of organizations and specialists attending this Workshop in Athens.

Particularly this refers to our next developments (Projects) and suggestions:

“The methodology and Plan for action to develop and hold national and municipal Campaigns on informing and warning the population about emergencies at central and municipal levels”;

“Preparing and implementing special Tests assigned for school administration, teachers and parents to assess safety of school , undertake preventive measures to reduce risks as well as to respond adequately to an imminent natural or man-made disasters or to a terrorist attack or to a threat of such an attack” ;

“Training community counsels (local psychologists) in providing first psychological aid and long-term psychological assistance to disaster victims, particularly children” .

These information materials include the knowledge on:

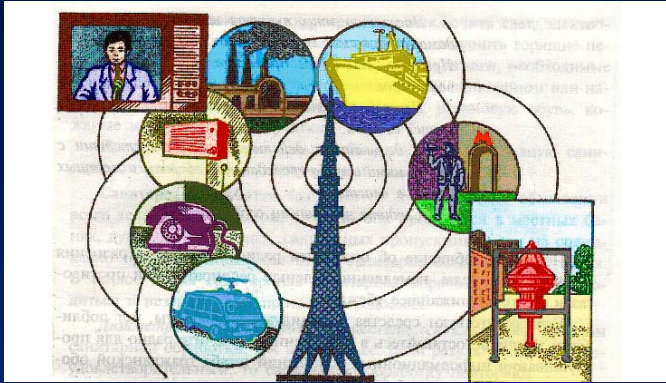
Risks present in a country, region or area where these people live.

Likely scenarios in case of a specific disaster.

Technique and tools available to inform and warn people about the disaster.

How to respond when warned about an imminent disaster (in a preventive phase) and in circumstances when a disaster is real (in an acute phase).

How to proceed in a recovery phase.



The sirens, enterprise and transport hoots will go off, police loudspeaker vans will drive round the streets with warning announcements.

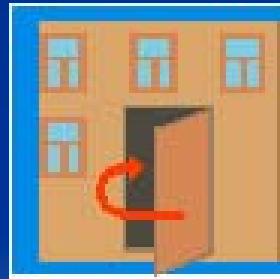


WHEN A SIREN SOUNDS THIS IS ALARM: "WARNING TO EVERYONE..."

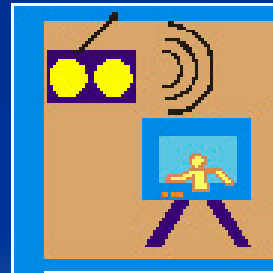


WHAT YOU SHOULD DO FIRST

GO INSIDE THE NEAREST BUILDING IMMEDIATELY



CLOSE DOORS AND WINDOWS



TURN ON THE RADIO AND TV TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT SHOULD BE DONE NEXT

THIS IS THE FASTEST WAY TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON AND WHAT YOU MUST DO.

The following universal (basic) information materials assigned to be distributed in each family have been developed within the Project:

Information Leaflet: “What to do first”.

A short Brochure: “Brief information for the population what to do first when warned on an imminent disaster”.

A more detailed Brochure: “The priorities for action to be undertaken by the population when warned on an imminent disaster or in case of disasters likely to occur in Armenia”.

**THE PRIORITIES FOR ACTION TO BE UNDERTAKEN
BY THE POPULATION**
*when warned on an imminent disaster
or in the case of disasters likely to occur in Armenia*

And God said unto Noah...
Make thee an ark of gopher wood
And shalt pitch it within and without with pitch...
...For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain
upon the earth forty days and forty night

WHO IS WARNED HE IS PROTECTED



**IF YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO IN THE CASE OF A DISASTER
YOU WILL SAVE YOUR OWN LIFE AND THE LIVES OF YOUR CLOSE-ONES**

At the same time for the municipalities at special risks the following four additional informational modules have been created:

A manual for the population on how to act when a n e a r t h q u a k e is real or seems imminent (the priorities for action to be undertaken by the population).

A manual for the population on how to act when r a d i a t i o n p o l l u t i o n is real or seems imminent (the priorities for action to be undertaken by the population).

A manual for the population on how to act when a f l o o d is real or seems imminent (the priorities for action to be undertaken by the population).

A manual for the population on how to act when c h e m i c a l p o l l u t i o n is real or seems imminent (the priorities for action to be undertaken by the population).

The mentioned brief and more detailed basic information materials as well as information materials for the population of municipalities at special risks assigned for the distribution in each family, and thereby promoting their usage while informing and warning the most vulnerable people- children, elderly and disabled included.

However, the specifics of the most vulnerable segments of population dictate the urgent necessity to prepare for them within national and municipal “Campaigns” some specific information materials.

By taking the above into account ECRM has planned for 2010 and following years to prepare some information materials addressing special targeted groups of the population, including the most vulnerable groups. In particular, in 2010

“The Manual for people with disabilities on how to act when an earthquake is real or seems imminent (the priorities for action to be undertaken by the population) is to be created within the above Project .

As for the second Project, than it is necessary to note, that the special Tests to assess safety of school and its readiness to respond adequately in disasters could be partially implemented directly and partially could serve a basis for the elaboration of

Additional special Tests to assess safety of specialized educational institutions where physically handicapped children with impaired mobility and having impaired hearing and vision are located, along with people living in elderly houses and in other specialized institutions.

The mentioned goal becomes the priority goal given that in border regions of Armenia as well as in other countries where some military actions took place, a number of children have impaired mobility as they have been blown up by left mines.

The third mentioned above Project which has been mainstreamed into ECRM Action Plan for 2010 and following years,

will cover specific challenges for providing first psychological assistance and long-term psychological intervention to disaster victims , particular to physically handicapped people with impaired mobility or having impaired hearing or vision, in particularly, children.

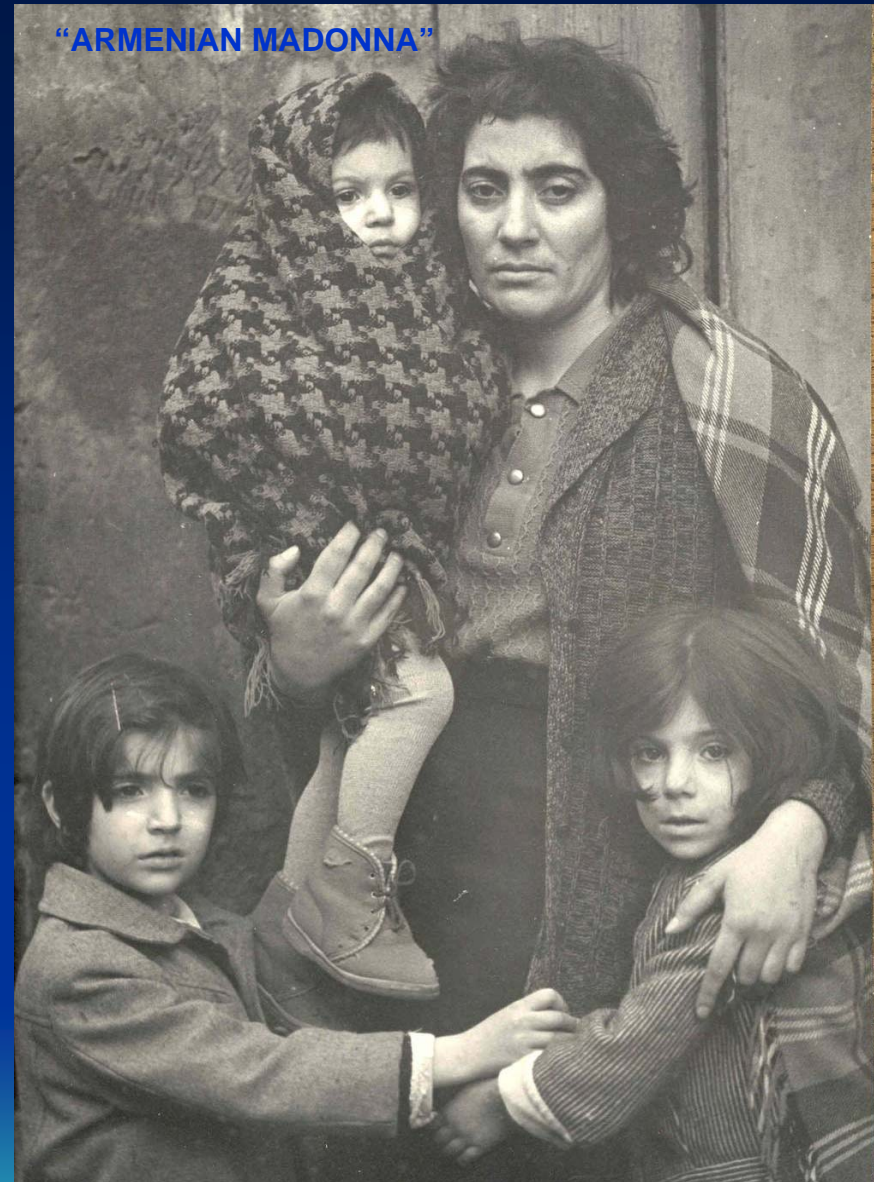
WHO IS WARNED HE IS PROTECTED

***IF YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO
IN THE CASE OF A DISASTER***

**YOU WILL SAVE
YOUR OWN LIFE**

AND

**THE LIVES
OF YOUR CLOSE-ONES**



**SPITAK EARTHQUAKE, ARMENIA
DECEMBER 7, 1988**