

Promoting health by Hans, Ashok and Hans, Nizni

Disability and disaster in Global Forum 2006

In recent years, many natural and man-made disasters have struck regions across the globe – the Asian tsunami that devastated regions as far as the east coast of Africa, followed by Hurricane Katrina along the US Gulf Coast and the Kashmir earthquake in India and Pakistan. These disasters affect most the vulnerable groups within a community, including women, children, the elderly and the disabled (International Disability Rights Monitor 2005; Kett & Yeo 2005). It is important to note, moreover, that disasters disproportionately affect persons with existing disabilities as well as generating new disabilities.

This article concentrates on one category of the vulnerable – the disabled – during disasters and focuses on a research agenda on the subject.

Research challenges

The challenges before us will be related specifically to measures of integrating uniform engagement of the various groups in the planning segment of disasters, with an understanding of disability as a social and human rights issue (World Bank 2006); to get governments and civil society activists to plan the research agendas together, and to take into account cross-current issues such as gender environment, psychosocial issues, disability diversity concerns, human and material resources, and training and networking; and finally, to look at individual needs while also mainstreaming in practical terms and maintaining a theoretical perspective. The research strategies should therefore be multiple and based on knowledge of the disabled themselves.

Conclusion: principles to guide the research

It is clear that there is tremendous scope for carrying out research related to the disabled so that their inclusion during **disasters becomes easier**

Full article

http://www.globalforumhealth.org/filesupld/global_update3/2_Promoting%20health.pdf