

Dr. Arturo Pesigan, EHA WHO WPRO, Sec. General Pratap Singhasivanon SEAMEO TROPMED (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Tropical Medicine and Public Health Network. Representatives from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam and the Philippines, Mabuhay at magandang umaga sa inyong lahat.

In 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action stated 5 priorities of action.

1. Making disaster risk reduction a priority.
2. Improving risk information and early warning.
3. Building a culture of safety and resilience.
4. Reducing the risks in key sectors.
5. Strengthening preparedness for response.

In 2008-2009, the UNISDR launched the global campaign on Safe Schools, this was followed in 2009-2010 with the Safe Hospitals Campaign. The WHO collaborated in by making the theme for the World Health Day in April 2010 "Health Facilities Safe from disasters"

The 'One Million Safe Schools and Hospitals Initiative' was launched in Manila on 8 April 2010. The initiative with the slogan "Make a Pledge, Save a Life" encouraged an individual, a family, community, organization, government, or business entity to pledge to make a school or hospital safer from disasters in three ways: as an advocate, leader or champion.

We in Manila experienced severe climate change effect during typhoons Ondoy and Peping as the whole metropolis got flooded.

Ladies and gentlemen, the price we pay for the failure of schools, hospitals or health facilities due to disasters is too high.

In comparison, the cost of making schools and hospitals safe from disasters is tiny.

*KETSANA*

Disaster damage to health systems is a human tragedy, results in huge economic losses, deals devastating blows to development goals, and shakes social confidence.

I as the Undersecretary for hospitals and we at the DOH commit and affirm that making hospitals and health facilities safe from disasters is not only an economic requirement, but also a social, moral and ethical necessity.

We commit to give special attention to ensuring the physical and functional integrity of hospitals and health facilities in emergency conditions.

This is more than just protecting DOH and government buildings. We are committed to make 72 DOH Regional Medical Centers and Health facilities truly safe from disasters by making them accessible and functioning, at maximum capacity, immediately after a hazard impact like floods or earthquakes.

I congratulate the WHO WPRO and SEAMEO TROP MED Collaboration in developing this Regional Course on Disasters for Schools Heads and Officials. We hope that you achieve a better understanding of natural hazards in comparison to unnatural disasters.

Preparing preparedness plans and educational materials for children will be an organizational task. Managing an evacuation center of displaced families in the aftermath of emergencies is very important. And applying the principles of disaster risk reduction through advocacy, risk communication, and networking will save lives.

I bid you all a very productive and meaningful regional training program. I must remind you all that we are all here to save lives. This course will definitely save many vulnerable students and families and increase your countries' disaster risk reduction capabilities. Maraming Salamat sa inyong lahat.