

# Vulnerability reduction and risk management

Jean Luc Poncelet, MD, MPH



**Pan American  
Health  
Organization**



*Regional Office of the  
World Health Organization*

Area on Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief

# PAHO

- **Health agency of the inter American system**
- **Directed by the Ministers of Health of all western hemisphere countries**
- **Regional office of the WHO**
- **Around 2500 staff in the America**

# Role and functions

- **Mandated since 1976 by the Ministers of Health to assist countries:**
  - **Response**
    - **Coordinate international health assistance**
  - **Preparedness and risk reduction**
    - **Assist in building national capacity**

# Main issues

- **There is a large and increasing number of actors:**
  - **need a cluster approach. Similar to IASC (inter Agency Standing Committee)**

# Vulnerability reduction

- **15 years of experience in the region in reducing health facilities vulnerability**
  - **Technical guides, pilot project,...**
- **A simple, measurable and visible objective that has been adopted by 168 countries (Hyogo Framework)**

However we are still



# What is missing?

- **We will not be able to go further without the support from other sectors (water, electricity, communication,..)**
  - The real issue of risk reduction usually doesn't reside in the specialty but in the interaction among those specialties
- **Political support is still very timid**
  - Can a regional network assist in changing that

- **There is a need to demonstrate at regional level that risk reduction is possible**
  - **Concentrate the few available resource on a few visible topic. Adopt ISDR Campaign topic ?**



# Proposals

- **Organize the network around small number of topics (5?) in order to be more effective (cluster approach?)**
- **Focus on a few practical project at country level**
- **Adopt a few visible and concrete topics that would be emblematic. Suggest that we take the ISDR campaign topic as the one to focus our effort.**