Preparedness and Recognition Programs

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- The key to reducing loss of life, personal injuries, and damage from natural disasters is widespread public awareness and education.
  - Home
  - Community
  - School
  - The Workplace
  - Colleges and Universities
  - Public Officials and the press
  - Professionals
Wealth of Local, National, Regional and International Tsunami Educational and Awareness Initiatives/Programs

• K-12
• Exercises
• Workshops, trainings, conferences
• Movies
• Books
• Social Media and Traditional Media
• Actual Tsunami Events – IO, Chile, Japan
Are people/countries ready?

- Countries and External Agencies do not recognize the risks of disasters – ½ of the countries borrowing from World Bank for disaster response did not mention disaster prevention in their development plans (Vinod Thomas, Huffington Post, 2010)
Why are we not more ready?

• “as human beings our brains just really are not well-designed for dealing with making good decisions about events which are very very rare and are potentially life-threatening”

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Biases for Getting Ready

• Myopia: The tendency to focus more on the short-term costs than the future potential benefits of investments.
• Amnesia: The tendency to forget the lessons of past disasters.
• Optimism: The tendency to underestimate the likelihood of future hazards.
• Inertia: The tendency to maintain the status quo or adopt the default option when uncertain about the future benefits of investing now.
• Simplification: The tendency to selectively consider only certain factors when making choices involving risk, e.g. In hurricanes one only has to worry about wind, not water, in tsunamis it could be worrying only about height, not currents.
• Herding: The tendency to follow the “wisdom” of the crowd.
## Addressing Biases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overcome This...</th>
<th>By Considering This....</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Myopia</td>
<td>Immediate satisfaction, Highlight the tangible recognition/reward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amnesia</td>
<td>Remind populations of past events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>Express the risk in terms that makes it real (scary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inertia</td>
<td>Break the programs down, have as few steps as possible, make it doable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simplification</td>
<td>Images/Videos showing the impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herding</td>
<td>Identify leader that will get others to follow</td>
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Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)

- **Educates** volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area
- Provides **training** in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.
- A **consistent**, nationwide approach CERT program
- **Grassroots** initiative in which local and state program managers have the **flexibility** to adapt in the way that best suits their communities.
- **2,700 local CERT programs in the US**, with more than 600,000 individuals trained since CERT became a national program.

**Addresses:** Myopia, Inertia, Simplification
TEMPP

Addresses: Myopia, Amnesia, Optimism, Inertia, Simplification
Tsunami Ready

- Pilot Performance Based Community Recognition Program
- 10 Guidelines that the community has to meet
- 6 international recognitions by UNESCO/IOC
- Almost 200 communities TsunamiReady® in USA (including 49 in the Caribbean)
10 Guidelines
Tsunami Ready

Addresses: Myopia, Amnesia, Optimism, Inertia, Simplification, Herding
Tsunami Wave Exercises

- CARIBE WAVE, PACWAVE, NEAMWAVE and IOWAVE
- Validate tsunami alerting mechanisms and the preparedness of communities to respond
- Annual/Biannual
- Regional/International thru the community
- In 2017 almost 700,000 people participated simultaneously in 47 countries and territories in CARIBE WAVE in the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions

Addresses: Myopia, Optimism, Simplification, Herding
World Tsunami Awareness Day

• In December 2015, the United Nations General Assembly designated 5 November as World Tsunami Awareness Day
• Promote a global culture of tsunami awareness.
• Aligned with the International Day for Disaster Reduction and the "Sendai Seven Campaign" Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

Addresses: Myopia, Amnesia, Inertia, Herding
Closing Remarks

• At the Global/International level we have developed programs that can help communities at risk be better prepared
• Further fine tuning and working with other experts – social science, political science – for better implementation
• Need to consider why people/governments might not adopt preparedness measures – risk perception studies
• Need for new programs? Address the communication vulnerabilities, both for sensing and communicating the threat
• The Global Tsunami Warning System is going to be evaluated based on the overall performance during an event – people felt informed and timely warned – lives were saved