Ethics prepares for emergencies in advance

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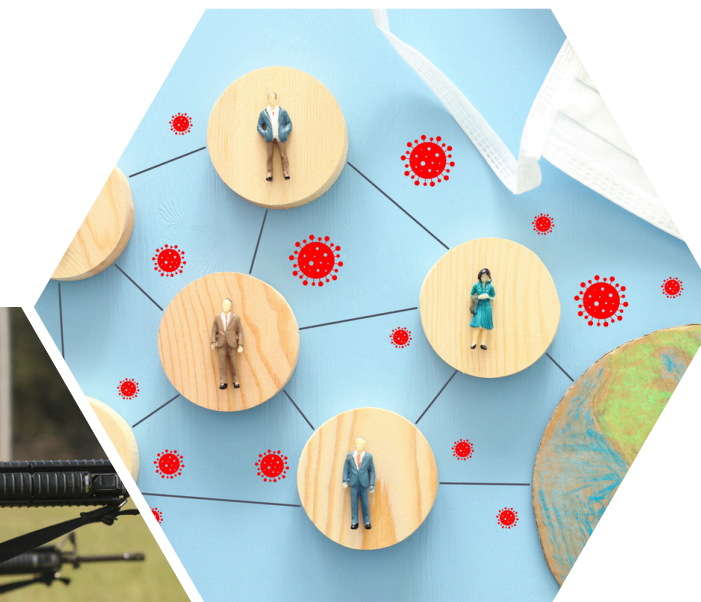
Intervene in which health emergencies?
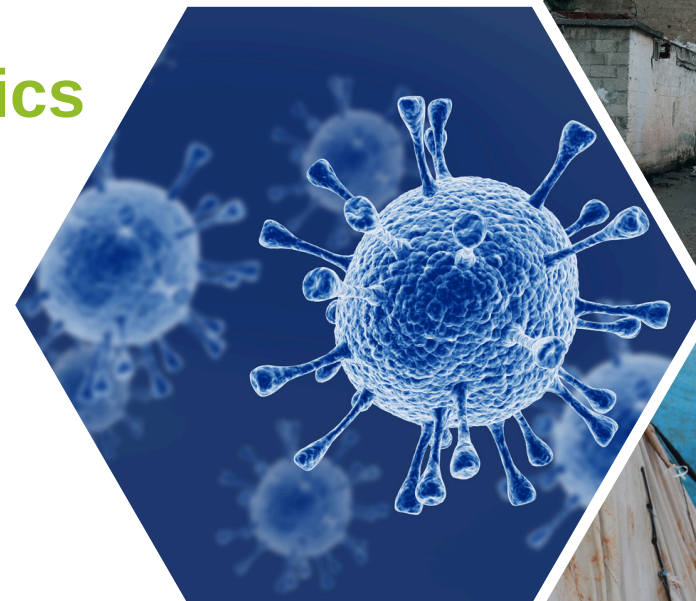
Natural Disasters

Localized Outbreaks

Wars

Pandemics

Forced Displacements

Environmental Crises

Emergency requires an ethical overhaul

THERE IS NO

TIME TO REFLECT

DURING A CRISIS

The **urgency of decision-making prevents prior consultation with ethics bodies**, forcing the decision to be based on the **professional's and team's ethical training.**

In all emergencies, resource scarcity must be managed:

- **Who receives priority access** to resources?

- How can we **ensure relative equity in access** to resources?

- Which **types of resources** should be prioritized (health, food, transportation, lodging, etc.)?

- How can we **avoid worsening existing asymmetries in access**?

The importance of having time

IT IS BEFORE EVENTS THAT THERE IS TIME TO PREPARE ACTION PLANS AND DISCUSS THEM ALSO FROM AN ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

There must be a **thorough discussion** regarding the **points that can be identified as potentially difficult to manage ethically** and **find compromise solutions that safeguard all parties.**

Examples:

- Who has access to **body manipulation**?

- How should **hygiene and privacy** be handled?

- If there are not enough important resources, **who should be prioritized** over the rest of the population?

- **Which social groups might resist clinical procedures**, certain foods, accommodation, communication styles, forced mobility, etc.?

- **How can these problems be addressed effectively and respectfully?**

LISTENING IS ESSENTIAL

Field Actors

Involve actors in all emergency response fields (e.g. aligning practices, routines and ethical values, etc.).

Professional Ethics Bodies

Engage ethical bodies from the various professional bodies:

- **How to react** in each type of situation?
- **What should not be done?**
- **What is acceptable** under emergency escalation?

Community Insights

Include community leaders:

- **What is and what is not acceptable** for each social group?

Train, train, train

Only through training in different types of emergencies can ethical breaking points and practical challenges be identified. Within each emergency type, it is crucial to train for various levels of intensity, particularly those with low-frequency.

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Coordination between professional groups so as not to leave people lost in the response system.

The use of assistive technologies and anticipate their ethical implications.

Emergency mental health support and how to provide it ethically during emergencies.

LOCAL LEVEL

▷ **What technologies** will support our emergency responses?

▷ What is the **resilience of the technology** (e.g. the Iberian blackout) and what **ethical challenges** should be anticipated when systems fail?

▷ To what extent do the technologies used **exacerbate pre-existing problems?**

▷ What are the **foreseeable, possible, and probable ethical risks** of employing these technologies? (e.g. AI and other advanced digital solutions).

INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

▷ **Ensure equitable access to resources** for poorer or less technologically advanced countries in large-scale international emergencies.

▷ **Combat disinformation** while respecting the need-to-know principle.

▷ **Combat the authoritarianism** that tends to occur during emergencies.

▷ **Combat the potential dehumanization of services** justified by emergency conditions.

Thank You!