

The Public Health Dimensions of SALW Violence

Case Study: Story from the field

EL SALVADOR

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United Nations 2nd BMS



Presents



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AIMING FOR PREVENTION
IPPNW/EL SALVADOR
Central America



EL SALVADOR

- □ 6.5 millions inhabitants
- 12 years of civil war
- 2 million Salvadorans live outside country
- Tropical country

At this meeting government representatives must answer Dra. Olive Kobusingye's from Uganda's questions posed in her address to states during the BMS 2003:

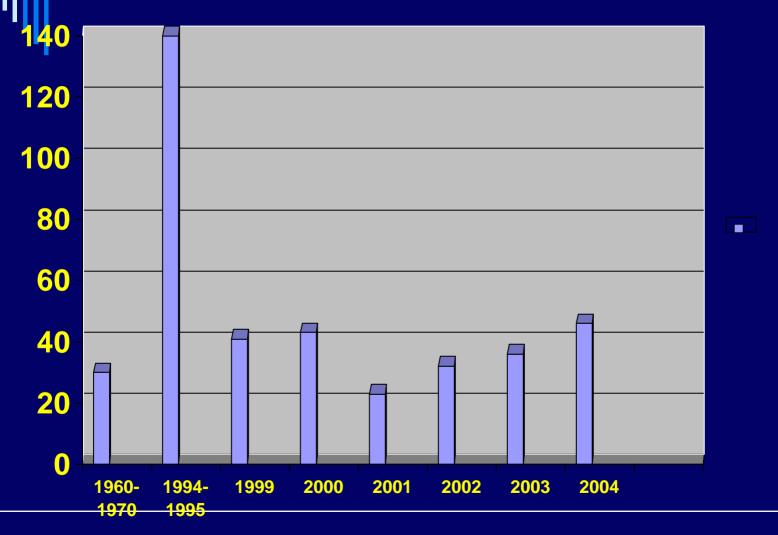
"Why in a country where there is lack of health resources can eight physicians spend 6 hours in a surgery removing a bullet from a 6 month-old baby? (1)

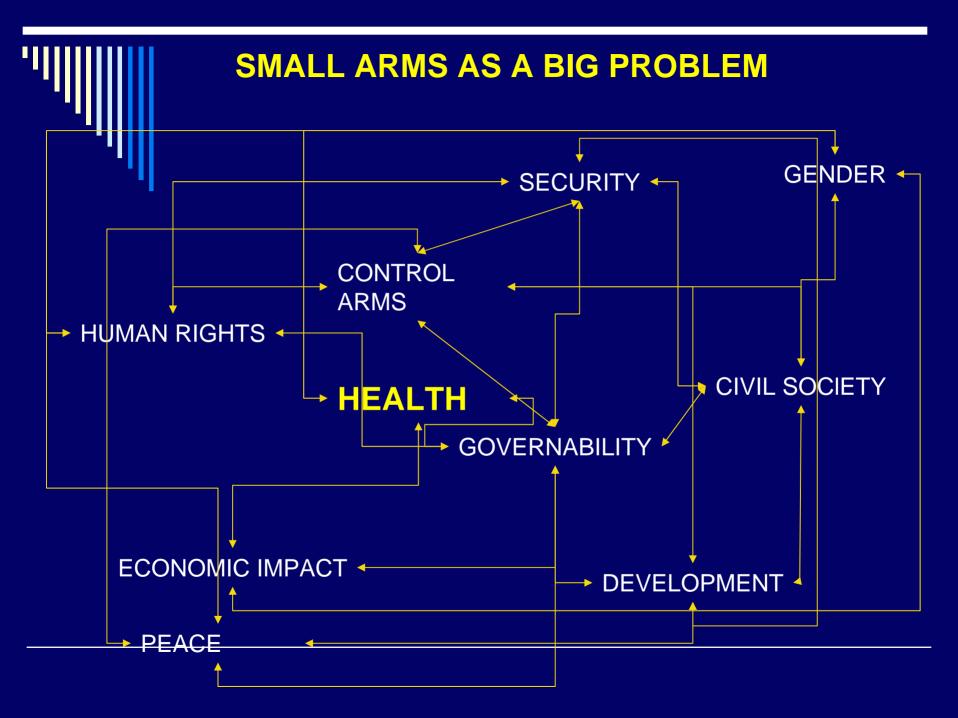
(1) IANSA NEWSLETTER, BMS 2003

Regarding Small Arms

- ...should be the next urgent issue for global attention
- ...losses caused are enormous. It has been calculated by International Bank of Development that direct and indirect costs of violence due to firearms are around 140 and 170 million dolars per year in Latinamerica.
- ...these weapons are a threat for peace, development, democracy and human rights.

Kofi Annan, July 2001







How physicians or health professionals can organize for action using health approach and help to get better gun regulation and public policies ?



Public Health Interventions

Physicians every day at emergency rooms face injuries, death and human suffering, mostly under a weak public health system. Circumstances include insufficient health resources, lack of medicines and post-emergency care.



IPPNW/EL SALVADOR

1989- Born Salvadoran Physicians for Social Responsibility (MESARES)

1993- Health professionals and Medical Students work on SALW Programme and Prevention of Violence. As Physicians for Social Responsibility since 1999 we have pointed out the lack of database and information about the phenomenon of violence, especially regarding small arms.



At 2000 IPPNW Congress held in Paris we presented our concern as a "red highlight", the great amount of victims wounded and deaths due to firearms in El Salvador, even in peacetime after 12 years of civil war



IPPNW/EL SALVADOR

1999-2000 MESARES developed a research project investigating small arms injuries that included reviewing the patient records and interviews for patients.

We identified that the terrible effects of firearms goes further than hospitals where clinical skills among physicians and medical students are insufficient to fight to keep patients alive. Physicians are the last chance for people that have trusted their security in their governments and society in order to protect them. As Advocates for our patients we believe that treatments and rehabilitation are not enough to make a difference.



General Objective

To take an active part and provide a public health view on political and health interventions, and to construct a program to control small arms violence and its effects.



Specific objectives

1)To understand, from a scientific perspective, violence phenomena especially the consequences of small arms misuse through research and medical epidemiology, using health data/approach for better policies.



- Compilation of data of victims of small arms wounds from Central Archive of Rosales Hospital
- ✓ Hospital Estimate of Economical Costs due to their medical attention for Health System and Salvadoran Society.
- ✓ Monitoring of children wounded cases admitted to the main children hospital in 2004.



Researchers in the field were trained to identify the profile of victims of non-lethal wounds.





Specific objectives

2) To promote the participation of health workers and general society in order to prevent violence through an educative, promotional, and organizational program

| Mobilization of Health Sector











Specific objectives.

3) To contribute to the National Regulation and Control of Small Arms by integrating multidisciplinary movements from Civil Society.



CIVIL SOCIETY MEETING WITH PRESIDENT OF EL SALVADOR



EDUCATION & PROMOTIONAddress to citizens:

Information Management to Local Media in order to present scientific data and analysis of violence to interviews in local radio stations, TV channels, press releases, etc.







Taking part in public events from civil society and playing a role of health cares.



Signing Collection Campaigns to modify public politics.

Public Events (Mass of Angels Participation, Artistic Events, etc.)



Collection of signatures







Address to Health Sector:

Conformation of National Network of Health Workers against Violence and Weapons (in process)

Conferences at Public Hospitals, Medical Articles Published in a Local Journal distributed among health workers (Comunicando Mejor Salud, DHF de New York).



ADVOCACY AND LOBBY:

- Lobby and Advocacy developed at National Congress Presenting data collected in order to reform the Law of Regulation and Control of Small Arms, Ammunitions, Explosives and Similar. (President, Congress Representatives)
- ✓ Integration to the GROUP: "Society without Violence" with members from civil society & Multidisciplinary initiative.





VICE-PRESIDENT OF EL SALVADOR SIGNING THE CIVIL PETITION TO REFORM THE LAW OF SMALL ARMS ON CIVIL HANDS.







Outcomes Evaluated:

Medical Students—the number that got involved. The increase in the number of activities at the National University and the mobilization of Medical Students to develop interventions.

Gun law modifications and public politics address to control guns.

Management of admissions victims of small arms wounds (accordingly the economic costs showed in the research).-

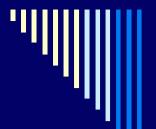


- Participation in different conferences as speakers,
- ➤ including the introduction of the issue into other disciplines (Medical Students Congress, Health Sector, Public Security, Central American film.

Media articles using our data and activities to address the issue.

Period of time which the movement achieved a political interest.

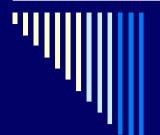
Impact of the activities on the Ministry of Health



MEDIA COVERAGE







POTILICY INCIDENCE









2 TEMA DEL DÍA

ASAMBLEA PREPARA REFORMAS A LEY DE ARMAS Y CREA NUEVOS DELITOS

Por ahora la portación de

armas de fuego sin licen-

castiga con multa. Los di-

putados establecerán que es delito y que se castiga-

cia es una falta que se

ACUERDAN MÁS EDAD PARA USO DE ARMAS

Los diputados dispusieron que la matrícula para la portación de armas de fuego será extendida sólo a mayores de 24 años, en lugar de los 21 años que bastan por ahora.

rá con cárcel.

Será delito portación sin licencia

use armore operation production of the confidence of makes the dealer of the confidence of makes the dealer of the confidence of makes the makes the confidence of the confide



400 MR ARMAS El Ministerio de Defense estiva que en El Salon

2 TEMA DEL DÍA

EL PROMEDIO DE EDAD DE LAS VÍCTIMAS ES ENTRE 18 Y 30 AÑOS DE EDAD

JOVENES SON LOS

SONSONATE Es el municipio donde más homicidios ocurrieron en 2004.

principal arms utilizado via ja di 2 mil 55 muertes), y suo balas ini-oli más en los jóvenes entre les 18 j s Limil 400 casos de la socasserba-

De 2 mil 762 homicidios La mayoría de crimenes registrados, 74% fue cometido con esa arma.

HOMBRES SE ACABAN son cometidos contra el sexo masculino.



Plan no frenó los asesinatos



LESSONS LEARNED

You are not too "little" to change an attitude or politics of health if you have the correct data and strategic alliances.

If you "catch the media" you can reach politicians and generate a necessity to be included with principal actors on an issue.

We can change the "Medical Paradigm" and show the limitations of a curative intervention and the impact of the nature of war on human development.

We have to act in advance of events: A practitioner needs to have enough information to respond according to the moments, it means The practitioner must always have an opinion on the issue.

mproving methodologies and interventions in order to replicate them in the future.

Systematizing the personal experiences of practitioners including feelings, obstacles, challenges, suggestions to work on the field. Collecting official opinions and public's point of view after interventions.

Funds for activities could multiply with a little amount of grant money



"Let us not allow the violence perpetrated by a few to deflect us from adressing the aspirations of billions of our fellow men and women who are demanding change"

Koffi Annam

7th July 2005