

Future Plans to address International Public Health Emergencies in Sri Lanka.

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Introduction

Public Health Emergencies transcend borders, affecting communities, economies, and healthcare systems worldwide.

The interconnected nature of our world requires a unified global response to effectively prevent and mitigate the impact of these emergencies.



So Global Collaboration is very Important



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Introduction

Developing countries like Sri Lanka face numerous challenges in responding to public health emergencies.

These challenges are often complex and multifaceted, reflecting a combination of systemic, infrastructural, and socioeconomic factors.



Challenges faced by developing countries in responding to public health emergencies

Sri Lanka also facing these challenges more or less in this context.

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and Hygiene

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Introduction

To overcome the mentioned challenges, we need a collaborative approach which demands swift, unified and proactive actions.

Rapid response
& containment

Resource
Optimization

Information
Sharing

Cross-Sectorial
Coordination

Community
Engagement

Global

Research and

Policy

Proactive and collaborative approach is a strategic necessity. By working together across sectors, borders, and disciplines, we can strengthen our collective ability to respond to Public Health Emergencies



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Addressing PHEIC

Preparedness and future plans to address PHEIC in Sri Lanka.

Preparedness and implementation of necessary capacities done as per the WHO IHR which is in effect at present.

Out of 13 care capacities, development of capacities at PoEs directly involves Aviation field.

Civil Aviation Authority , Air Port and Aviation Services and Ministry of Health play a vital role in maintaining core capacities at PoEs.

However . there are many other stakeholders are also important for successful implementation of IHR core capacities



Functions of the Civil Aviation Authority in IHR implementation

- **Regulatory Authority for Civil Aviation under Civil Aviation Act 2002.**
- **Implementing agency of ICAO resolutions**
- **Coordinate activities with ICAO , Ministry of Health, WHO and other Stake Holders.**
- **Monitoring of implementation process of National Civil Aviation Plan for PHEIC at PoEs and Airlines.**



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Addressing PHEIC – Aviation involvement

Aviation involvement at PoEs

There are three international airports in Sri Lanka

- **Bandaranayake International Airport (BIA)**
- **Matthala Rajapaksha International Airport (MRIA)**
- **Jaffna International Airport**

However , 99% of the traffic is handled by the BIA

Average number of flights per year handled was around 55,000

Total two way passenger traffic is 5 million.





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Addressing PHEIC – IHR Core Capacities

IHR core capacities development at PoEs (Airports)

Assessment of core capacities was done in 2009, 2013 using WHO standard tools and latest assessment was done in September 2023 by conducting WHO JEE.

Results from JEE 2023 – under PoE – Airports were able to secure score 4 on developing & implementing core capacities.

We have Strategic plan which was developed and implemented for improvement of IHR core capacities at PoEs with the participation of MoH, CAA and other key stakeholders

Technical support was provided by IOM , WHO and ICAO to strengthen core capacities



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Addressing PHEIC - preparedness

Preparedness & Core Capacity development at PoEs done under two major themes

CAPACITIES AT ALL TIMES

CAPACITIES AT PHEIC



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CORE CAPACITIES AT ALL TIMES

Medical care for passengers

- An appropriate medical service including some diagnostic facilities located at BIA, so as to allow the prompt assessment and care of ill travelers
- Public Health Service provision to travelers is mainly done by Airport Health Office(MoH) in collaboration with Airport Medical Unit(AASL)





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CORE CAPACITIES AT ALL TIMES

Transport of ill travelers to an appropriate medical facility

ill passengers will be transported either to a designated government hospital or to a private hospital

Well equipped Ambulances are available from

- Air port and Aviation Services
- Ministry of Health
- Newly established emergency ambulance services





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CORE CAPACITIES AT ALL TIMES

Trained personnel for the inspection of conveyances

- **Under the Quarantine unit , Air Port Health office is manned by 6 medical officers and 8 PHIs for inspection of conveyances and premises**
- **They have undergone many in service training on different aspect of quarantine services .**



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CORE CAPACITIES AT ALL TIMES

Ensure a safe environment for travelers using point of entry facilities

- Monitoring system and Regular inspections for restaurants and catering facilities are in place . Regular water quality monitoring for bacteriological and chemicals agents also done.





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CORE CAPACITIES AT ALL TIMES

Ensure appropriate solid and liquid waste disposal services and other potential risk areas, by conducting inspection programs

- Incineration facilities and proper waste disposal methods are available at BIA
- Airport and Aviation Services is responsible for such services
- Air-port health office is regularly monitoring the waste disposal activities





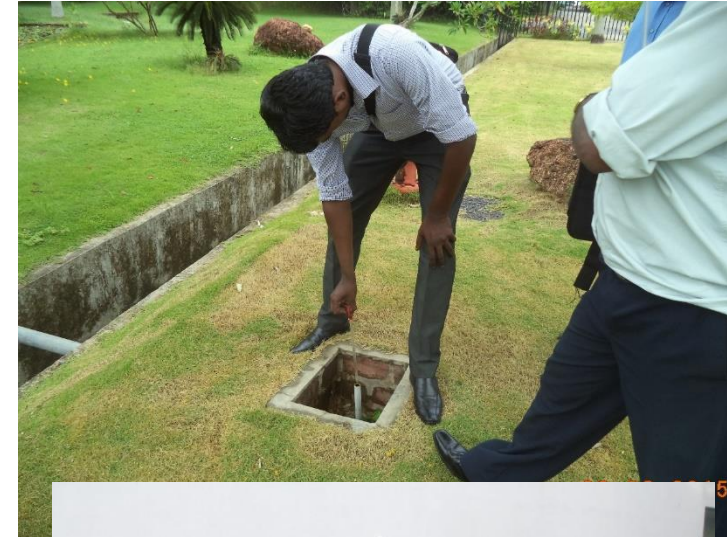
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CORE CAPACITIES AT ALL TIMES

Control of vectors and reservoirs in and near points of entry

Key components of the program are –

- Surveillance for identify selected medically important vectors – such as mosquito , cockroaches , bedbugs and rodents
- regular entomological surveillance activities on mosquito
- control activities are conducted by private firms hired by air port authority– for medically important vectors
- Supervision is done by the Airport Health Office of Ministry of Health.





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CORE CAPACITIES AT ALL TIMES

Strengthen communication and coordination with public and stakeholders

- Travelers – display health messages on LCD screens and information available at immigration counters , and health office
- All non health Staff at PoE- lectures and discussions on current health topics are done regularly . General public – web site and media seminar
- Airlines and other stakeholder – meetings with airline operators committee and other stakeholder on regular basis
- WHO , UNHCR , IOM and other stakeholder
- Utilizing WHO PAGNet web site for information sharing with other regional PoEs and WHO





Public Health Emergency response by establishing and maintaining a public health emergency contingency plan

- Developed a collaborative public health emergency contingency plan (Ministry of Health and Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka as main stakeholders)
- Regular stakeholder meetings to discuss the plan and operationalize
- Desk top review of the plan was done
- Table top exercises
- Physical drills are done regularly (major drill- once in two years, Partial drill including medical emergencies – every year)



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CAPACITIES AT PHEIC

Established arrangements with local medical and veterinary facilities for their isolation, treatment and other support services that may be required

- Designated hospital for ill traveler during a PHEIC : Infectious Disease Hospital
- veterinary quarantine facility is also available at BIA





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CAPACITIES AT PHEIC

To provide appropriate space, separate from other travelers, to interview suspect or affected persons

- Designated bay for aircraft parking has been identified even before COVID.
- screening of travelers
- Interview rooms for suspected travelers , however we need to have more space to carry out these functions effectively
- Temporary isolation space is limited at BIA . Hence , Ambulance facilities are available immediately transfer ill passengers to medical facilities for quarantine / isolation





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Training and Capacity Development

Training & Capacity building is important to stay current

- **Continuous learning allows individuals to adapt to new tools, software, and methodologies, enhancing efficiency and productivity.**
- **Ongoing education equips health professionals & staff at PoEs with the latest knowledge and skills**
- **In regulated industries such as aviation, ongoing education is essential for staying compliant with changing laws and regulations**
- **Training in communication and interpersonal skills – Mainly we focus on this as during pandemic we have found out the communication gap was significant**



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Addressing future public health emergencies

Addressing future public health emergencies requires forward-thinking, collaborative, and comprehensive planning.

Sri Lanka has determined key future plans and strategies to enhance preparedness and response as per the lessons learnt from COVID pandemic.

Create rapid response teams equipped with the expertise to deploy quickly

Develop a comprehensive framework for the equal distribution of vaccines during pandemics

Invest in and strengthen healthcare infrastructure

Establish contingency plans for the rapid deployment of medical facilities and resources

Promote collaboration across sectors

Focus on building and strengthening healthcare capacity



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As service providers at PoE

