**CDC emergency response work in Mozambique (2019)**

Dr. Alfredo Vergara, PhD, Mozambique Country Director, CDC, Global Health Center, shares the story of how global health brings hope after destruction and how it prevents, detects, and responds to disasters. Two powerful cyclones made landfall in Mozambique in March and April 2019. Cyclone Idai, recorded as the second-deadliest tropical cyclone in the South-West Indian Ocean basin, caused significant destruction.

Getting to the affected areas was very difficult. They found destroyed health centers with no electricity or running water, debris everywhere, and mold starting to build up in the remaining structures. From experience, they knew that when resources and facilities are impacted, there is a great potential for disease outbreaks.

Working with the Mozambican health authorities, specifically the National Institute for Health, the World Health Organization, and other partners, they set up an Early Warning Alert and Response System (EWARS). During humanitarian emergencies, detecting and responding quickly to disease outbreaks is key to reducing illness and death. EWARS is often the only source for health data collection after a disaster that disrupts routine public health surveillance systems.

EWARS training was conducted, and epidemiologists started working on disease outbreaks, including cholera. A total of 900,000 people were vaccinated. CDC and UNICEF trained and deployed Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene assistance teams. CDC also supported Malaria prevention and response work. In partnership with USAID, malaria bed nets were distributed as part of the cholera vaccination campaign.

In Mozambique, it is traditional to finish conversations with the phrase "Estamos juntos" or "We are together." It truly describes the collaboration and positive results for global health work in emergency response.