



NEED FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN PAKISTAN: A CRITICAL VIEW

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ABSTRACT

Disasters are all about losses and destructions, in term of lives, property, social, economical and environmental. The frequencies of disasters are increasing steadily over the past few years in the world especially in the Asian countries. Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries against disasters both natural and manmade, and still it lacks proper disaster management policies. The paper focuses on some of the key benefits that may be achieved in presence of a proper disaster management framework or policies and also proposed a simple methodology to start with.

Key Words: Disaster, Catastrophe, Economic Growth Rate, Pre-Disaster, Post-Disaster, Disaster Recovery

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* The material presented by the author does not necessarily portray the viewpoint of the editors and the management of the Institute of Business & Technology (IBT)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Disaster or a catastrophe creates a time of great difficulty and misery for the individuals, families, communities, government and nations. It is a turning point that decides the growth and future prospective of the nation or country in term of cultural, social and economic parameters (Aziz et al, 2015). The disaster always create a crisis that leads towards the increasing losses and need to be addressed soon as possible to reduce its impact (William Yule et al, 2000).

In third world countries like Pakistan that is still unstable economically, can be affected at greater extent even if faces a disaster of medium scale. Pakistan is raked as 4th most vulnerable population in the world against natural disasters (Reuters, 2016). It should also be noted that 5 of the top 10 countries affected most by natural disasters are located in ASIAN region. It is predicted that the increasing frequency of natural disasters (Warren, 2010) are likely to disturb the economic growth rate (Bayrak, 2009) of these countries unless disaster management program is strengthen in this region.

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The generic disaster management framework is available and can be used in Pakistan to initiate a basic program and to create public awareness and a step forward to mitigate the impact of disasters (Clerveaux et al., 2010). The frame work focuses on four basic modules as shown in figure 1:

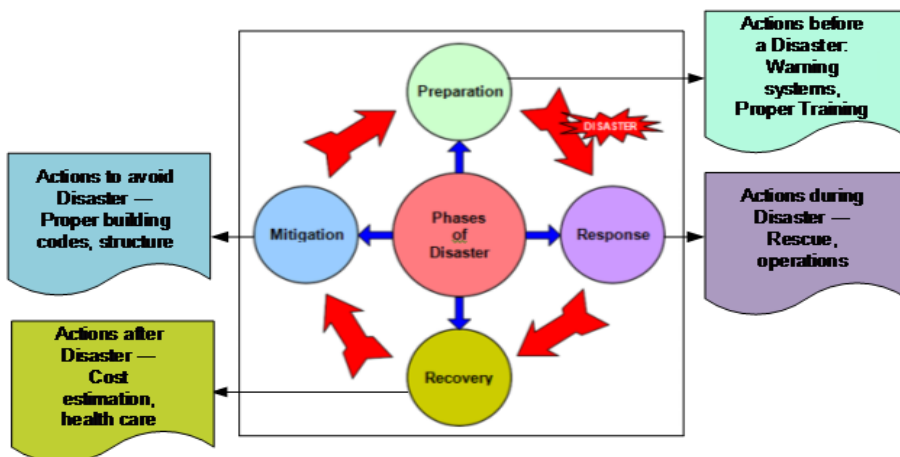


Figure 1: Disaster Management Framework

The framework shows four phase which can be further divided into two categories

disaster and post-disaster phases. Pre-Disaster include Mitigation and Preparedness, Post-Disaster includes Response and Recovery. The framework starts with the occurrence of a disaster and immediately enters the response phase that deals with the reliefs efforts. After some time second phase started and work is carried out to put life on track as a result of recovery. Based on the data and lesson learned from previous two phases we start planning how to avoid such incident or to mitigate the impact in future and then to make action plans and implement policies that make us prepare to face any such situation in future.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Need For Disaster Management Program

National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), is the lead agency in Pakistan at the Federal level that deals with whole spectrum of Disaster Management Activities in the country. The agency is working but it is very unfortunate that no related actions are seen on the ground. There is a need to make this agency more effective to gain required goals out of it. Here we discuss some of the core benefits that can be achieved for the betterment of the country and countrymen.

2.2 Disaster Prevention

Proper Disaster Management policies can help preventing future disasters well before they appear. Now we can debate that a disaster cannot be illuminated but yes the impact can be minimized. The policies will focus in this direction, to minimize the impact. The policies can examine the current facilities for any weakness or vulnerability and proper measures may be taken in advance to mitigate the losses (Aziz et al. 2014).

2.3 Performing Rescue Operations

Disaster management is a set of dynamic activities which are dependent on the updated information from the disaster site (Pourezat et al., 2010). The disaster management teams can work more efficiently in rescue operations on the basis of such information provided by the disaster management cell. The people are well aware of their responsibilities and to whom they need to contact if the disaster occurs. Trained people are more effective, organized and productive and create less panic at time.

2.4 Providing Relief

After the disaster, assistance is needed in term of different aspects to provide relief to peoples (Moe et al., 2007). We may have multiple teams of doctors, para-medical staff, engineers, communication persons, law enforcement agencies personnel's who can provide instant relief at the disaster site. Such measures will reduce the impact and soreness of disaster.

2.5 Rehabilitation

The rehabilitation is the most important part of post disaster activity that involves the settlements, housing, medical and food facilities in the disaster effected area.

2.6 Liaison

The collaboration between different departments is handled by disaster management team that ensures that in case of natural disaster rescue and relief teams should know where to focus. The collaboration is essential between hospitals and relief teams this liaison if properly trained and synchronized can play a Vitol role in reducing loss of lives due to delay.

2.7 Trauma Alleviation

As we know that disaster can be of two types Natural and man-made disasters in both the cases tension that exist can be removed this part is addressed before a catastrophe and comes under the umbrella of preparedness since in this phase the focus is entirely on preparing people to stand firm in advent of a calamity and training them so they can save their lives and lives of others if such an incident happens, after disaster the teams are trained to mentor the survivors so they can come out of the trauma that includes, losing loved ones, financial loses, injuries and psychological impact due to some unprecedented event.

2.8 Safeguarding the Environment

To conserve the environment the teams should visit Schools, Colleges, Universities and give presentations about the importance of planting trees and cleaning sea shores, the trees act as first line of defense in case of flooding and cleaning the shores ensures safety for birds and marine life.

3 METHODOLOGY

The paper discusses about a conceptual framework that can be implemented without incurring heavy investment from the government, having real intentions to cope up with the problems that may occur as a result of disaster. In Pakistan no proper hierarchy exists to cater the problems that can be inflicted by natural disasters though after the great earth quake of 2005 it was expected that reforms in this area would be done but ironically no such advancement was achieved at the grass root level, to counter the wrath of nature a systematic structure of trained volunteers are required who can not only take the pressure under extreme circumstances but can also guide others and tell them how to survive if a disaster should cross our paths, and it is predicted that Karachi could sink in 35 to 45 years these are the warnings generated by national institute of oceanography (GEO news 2016) to achieve this a group of 5 or 6 individuals must be formed headed by one of the individual who is considered as most suitable by the group this would be the first tier or street level committee or Mauhalla committee this

Mauhallah committee will remain in touch with the union council at UC level will incorporate several streets at this level trainings will be conducted and to enhance the interest of the people special benefits will be given to individuals participating in these committees, since there is lack of civic sense in our society so we will have to attract them. Finally the UC committees will be joined at the district level and then the Provincial level the initiation at the grass root level of such activities will not only resolve the management issues that might prop up otherwise if only government at the higher level recruit people.

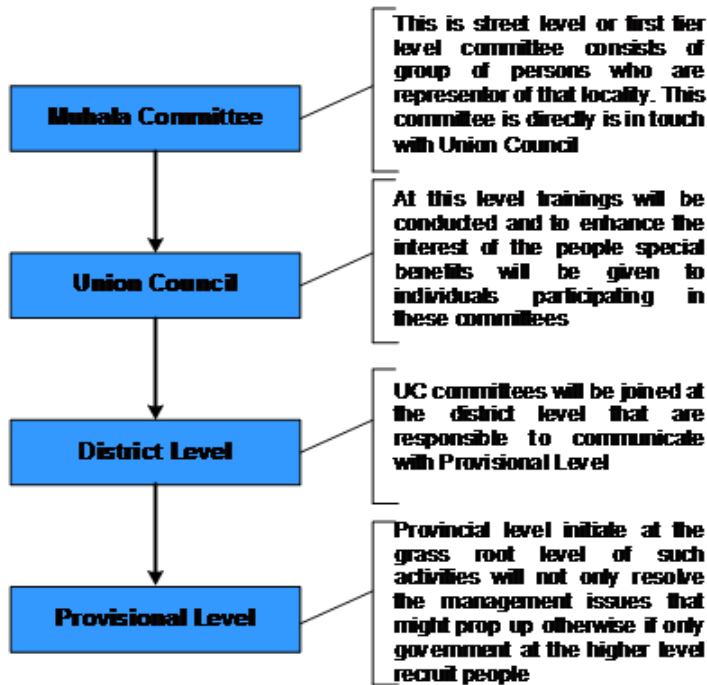


Figure 2: Hierarchy of different committees

As discussed earlier that this is a conceptual framework that needs to be implemented and after that we can test and present results analysis by applying a pilot simulation in real time.

4. RESULT & DISCUSSION

The proposed framework is aimed towards the preparedness phase of the disaster management lifecycle to prepare our people for the disaster and to reduce its effects by responds to the situation that arises in the vulnerable populations and areas. The activity will be placed as a goal to mitigate the consequences by common civilians rather than a specialized program that may need heavy inputs in term of finances by the government. The only thing that is needed from the official is the will to implement

this framework with clear intentions that will make further processes smoother and effective which may include shelter, food, logistics and health care services in the affected areas.

CONCLUSION

The paper discussed some of the key benefits of disaster management to a country or nation. Country like Pakistan which is highly at risk of disasters both natural and manmade must establish strong disaster management policies and implement it in good faith. As the paper also lay down a simple concept that may be adopted and implemented immediately, that may help to minimize the impact economically, socially and environmentally.

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