

## Risk Management Practices Focusing on Pakistan

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### Abstract

*From past many decades, human beings are suffering from disasters leading to adverse impacts, also causing destruction of life, property and other infrastructure. Different regions of the world are suffering from different hazards and disasters because of different geographies. It has been observed that Asia is more prone to disasters because of its topography and climatic conditions. In the developing countries like Pakistan, disasters are occurring almost every year. The need is to ensure some good practices and involve community in order to reduce vulnerability. People living in particular areas are more familiar and well aware of their disasters and they have more relevant information. So in order to give a sense of involvement and self-respect, the need is to involve community in disaster management practices. There are different worldwide practices related to community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) and were of less concern in Pakistan before Kashmir 2005 earthquake and Pakistan 2010 floods. These two major disasters gave a lesson to the whole country and an institutional framework was established after these major disasters. In spite of Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), different projects were initiated with proper emphasis on the involvement of community and other nonstructural measures like awareness, training and education with focus to benefit the community in order to strengthen resilience and reduce physical, social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities.*

**Keywords:** *Community Involvement, Vulnerabilities, Nonstructural Measures*

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### INTRODUCTION

Asia is prone to different disasters like earthquakes, floods, cyclones, landslides and there are different underlying reasons and root causes associated with it. Disaster myth is changed now due to advancements in science and technology. From the past, it was considered to be an act of God but now there are different causes of disasters varying from poor design to inappropriate management.

Different countries of Asia suffer from different disasters and same is the case of Pakistan but need is to involve every stakeholder in disaster risk management framework. Every stakeholder involved has its distinct role like without Government it's difficult to achieve goal, private sector has its own interest. NGO's and volunteers play a vital role. Despite of all stakeholders, community is the key resource in disaster risk

management process. In same community, some people are more vulnerable as compared to other and in relative capacities also vary so need is to ensure good practices related to community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM). Different worldwide practices are adopted in different regions of Pakistan to benefit the community. Different projects are initiated with the aim to benefit the community.

### Disasters and Communities

Risk of disaster is increasing day by day. Over the past decades people and area affected by natural disasters are more than population growth. These disasters lead to physical, social and economic losses.

The impacts of these disasters are associated with socioeconomic conditions, traditions, and climatic conditions of the communities.

Various efforts have been made to minimize the adverse impacts of disasters at national and international level. In spite of participation of these sectors, it has been observed that many disaster management projects failed to be sustainable at local level. Without sustainability it is difficult to manage disaster management activities. A critical element to attain sustainable development is community participation. The elements of community participation include involvement, empowerment, partnerships and ownership of local people.

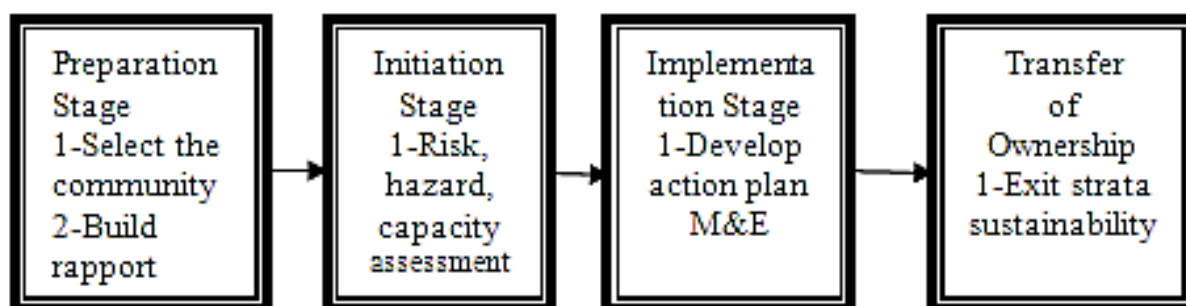
The emphasis of disaster management should focus on community and people living in them. All disaster management efforts must be sustainable in order to reduce losses. CBDRM is an opportunity for the people. People should participate and work with the government officials through community-based activities. The advantage is that people should own the problem, consequences, and challenges to figure out mitigation activities. Community involvement is significant in predisaster prevention, mitigation phases, postdisaster recovery, and response phases as well.

### **Community Empowerment**

Disasters can hit a wide community and its impact can hit at community level. Communities should be involved in managing the risk. Without understanding community needs and involving community it is difficult to address the risk and most projects fail because of lack of community empowerment. Enabling community for disaster risk management demands community participation in all the phases—mitigation, preparedness, capacity building, implementation and monitoring to ensure community needs over time.

### **Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM)**

In case of any disaster, it is the community which is affected more whether major or minor. They are most and first one to be more vulnerable. Through CBDRM, peoples' capacity to respond to emergency increased by providing more access and control of resources. It also provides opportunity to evaluate the performance based on other experiences. Stages of CBDRM are shown at Figure 1.



**Fig.1:** Community-Based Disaster Risk Management Stages.

### **Literature Review**

The United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) has incorporated CBDRM as its approach in disaster management planning under the overall organizational mandate of sustainable regional development and human security. The UNCRD Disaster Management Planning Hyogo Office focused on the community initiatives in the Asian region targeting different stakeholders, from local government decision makers to schoolchildren.

In all the initiatives, attempts were made to ensure that communities are engaged in

disaster risk management phases and are empowered to carry over them in long term run [1].

In the year 2002, UNCRD launched a three-year project titled “Sustainability in Community-Based Disaster Management”, to study the effectiveness of the grass-root projects and suggest policy input for sustainability, which will be useful for different communities to take future actions.

This was to understand the gaps in the community initiatives, and take corrective actions in the future [2].

**Followings were found as key factors for enhancing sustainability:**

- The existence of “culture of coping with crisis” and “culture of disaster education” exist.
- Risk assessment process involves participation of people and incorporating their perception of vulnerability and capacity.
- Community and supporting agencies share common motivation and ownership for the initiation and sustainability of CBDRM.
- Genuine people’s participation within capacity building objectives, with specific focus on sectorial groups like women, elderly, children and ethnic minorities.
- Well-delivered training inputs in accordance with the objectives of the project and the needs of the community for training.
- Wider stakeholders involvement and participation.
- Accumulation of physical, technological and economic assets to reduce hazards and vulnerability [3].

The UNCRD is currently promoting School Earthquake Safety Initiative through a project “Reducing Vulnerability of School Children to Earthquakes” jointly with UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in the Asia-Pacific region. The project aims to make schools safe against earthquakes and build disaster-resilient communities through self-help, cooperation and education.

The project includes retrofitting of school building in a participatory way with the involvement of local communities, local governments and resource institutions, trainings on safer construction practices to technicians, disaster education in school and communities. These activities are carried out in Fiji Islands, India, Indonesia and Uzbekistan as demonstration cases which will be disseminated throughout the respective geographical regions [4].

**Good Practices of CBDRM in Pakistan**

In Pakistan institutional framework was established after two major disasters— Kashmir 2005 earthquake and Nowshera 2010 floods.

***Related to Awareness: “Generation Involving the Expression, Dissemination of Knowledge”***

- To generate awareness among communities related to CBDRM is imperative. If community is aware of disaster than it can save itself from sudden shock and achieve resilience state earlier.
- Pakistan initiated many awareness-related campaigns for community by creating community-based organizations. Soon after 2010 floods which caused greater loss to life and property, disaster emergency committee launched an appeal in the UK which invested in Pakistan and the committee also commenced awareness programs and focus group discussions with men, women and children in the southern Sindh district.
- Besides this mobile knowledge, resource centre project was initiated to benefit boys and girls of different schools by facilitating different mock exercises and conducting seminars and workshops with an objective of reaching the unreachable. School safety initiatives inaugurated in different areas of Baluchistan.
- Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) DRM program was also initiated at AJK, Neelum Bagh, Abbotabad to generate awareness, building capacities and stockpiling.

***Related to Gender Mainstreaming; “Empowering Womenfolk”***

- Involvement of women in CBDRM practices is essential because women are more vulnerable as compared to men because of productive and reproductive burden, low status of society and other reasons.
- For the very first time, gender child cell was created after 2010 floods by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to ensure sense of precedence for women.
- Other gender practices were adopted as well which includes empowering Pakistani women in DRR programming by the UNISDR in Northern Pakistan. Conservative culture of Pakistan and less involvement of women in different activities is a big challenge. So this project

with assistance of UNISDR was initiated which deals with all basic rights, legal rights of property, and rights related to compensation were ensured. Besides this, Potohar organization for development advocacy was also instigated for benefits of women in Bagh district.

***Related to Involvement of Community: “A Phase towards Realization of the People, by the People, for the People”***

- Community has a central role in disasters. A community is well aware of the location in which they live and subsequent disasters they faced. It is of significant concern to give a sense of involvement to the community.
- The highlighted projects in which community involved are community capacity development in search and rescue in which community participate with full interest and trainings related to causality handling, fire-fighting, first aid were given.
- ERRA also initiated different projects of making school to benefit the community

and organized different workshops and trainings in which community participate with keen interest.

- Another plan was initiated which was Pakistan flood relief and early recovery response plan which ensures survival strategy to provide basic necessities, education and health to community members.
- Another project initiated is age friendly project which provides training and develop plan in consultation with agriculture, health, education, police etc.

***CBDRM and Livelihood Program in Drought, Flood and Cyclone Prone Areas of Pakistan:*** Improving disaster preparedness capacities on community & district level at AJK Pakistan. This project was initiated to improve disaster preparedness capacities on community. Due to the lack of awareness and people living in secluded areas, there is a need to give trainings related to first aid, search and rescue and other trainings to strengthen preparedness. Details are given at Table 1.

***Table 1: DRR Mainstreaming Training.***

1	Training Course for Ministry of Industries & Production on Mainstreaming DRR into Development Process; January 28–29, 2010; Islamabad, Pakistan.
2	Seminar on DRR Sensitive Housing Policy & National Planning Standards; February 23, 2010; Islamabad, Pakistan.
3	Workshop on Minimizing Industrial Hazards and Encasing Opportunities through Mainstreaming DRR Initiatives in Marble Sector; March 2, 2010; Islamabad, Pakistan.
4	International Seminar on Implementation and Enforcement of Building Code of Pakistan, Seismic Provisions 2007, Ministry of Housing and Works; April 6, 2010; Islamabad, Pakistan.
5	Consultative Workshop on Integration of DRR into Development Process; August 11, 2010; Islamabad, Pakistan.
6	Workshop on Multi-hazard Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan for Marble City Risalpur through Mainstreaming DRR into Development Initiatives; December 1, 2010; Islamabad, Pakistan.
7	Workshop on Role of Development of Instruments in Disaster Resilience Development; December 28–29, 2010; Islamabad, Pakistan.
8	Training Course on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into Development Process of Ministry of Defence. December 30–31, 2010; Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

***Related to Merging and Partnership: “Integrated We Stand”***

- Pakistan in association with other countries especially with International NGOS did a lot to benefit community. The emphasized projects include UNICEF initiated community-based disaster risk reduction projects in Pakistan.
- Another project initiated was post flood wash rehabilitation project implementation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Community involvement and to communicate with community is necessary to achieve sustainability in CBDRM.
- Holistic approach enhances sustainability.
- Community-based trainings encompasses on community's problem solving skills.

- Disasters are unpredictable so it is necessary to build awareness-related systems and protocols.
- Transparency of actions and activities and dissemination of information encourage participation by the community.
- Financial resources considerations are major contributors for CBDRM.
- Acceptance is more important than what is necessary. So need is to understand the community first.
- Institutionalizing the community and private sectors result in sustainable disaster management programme
- Community should be involved in prevention, preparedness and response phases.

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