

Disaster Management and Our Preparedness

Outline

A. Introduction

Thesis statement: Pakistan is one of the most climate vulnerable countries, heavily exposed to natural disasters. ~~Disaster management in Pakistan includes some national level institutes, such as National disaster management authority (NDMA).~~ However, Pakistan is not prepared completely to face havoc disasters due to various reasons: institutional failure, lack of inclusivity and cooperation, widespread corruption, ~~and~~ lack of human resource training, funding constraints, and weak infrastructure.

B. Disaster management plans in Pakistan

c. Why Pakistan is still not prepared for future disasters?

a. Lack of institutional capacity

b. Funding constraints and widespread corruption

c. Absence of political will to implement policies effectively.

d. ~~the~~ lack of training programs to ~~handle~~ manage disasters.

e. Weak infrastructure

D. Way forward.

E. Conclusion

ESSAY

What if tomorrow

What if flood hits our city tomorrow?
What will we do? Do we know where to go?
Where to live? and how to survive? These questions
reflect our preparedness for disaster. Disasters are
the climate shocks that produce unexpected
devastations and human losses. Pakistan is among
top ten countries in the world which are highly
exposed to the risk of frequent disasters. Common
disasters in Pakistan are floods, earthquake,
landslides, droughts, and heavy snowfall. These
disasters have produced heavy economic and
human losses in past. Despite failures to reduce
damages, Pakistan is still not prepared to face
another disaster. Some national level institutions
are working in Pakistan, such as National disaster
management authority (NDMA). and Pakistan
meteorological department (PMD). However, Pakistan
is not fully prepared to face disasters due
to myriad of reasons. There is institutional failure
with less capacity to ~~face~~ manage ^{huge} ~~large~~ disasters.
Along with this, Pakistan faces funding constraints
and widespread corruption that ^{further} widens those
constraints. Formed policies are not ~~com~~
implemented effectively due to lack of political
will. Institutions lack training programs so,
it leads to absence of efficient human resource.
Besides this, Pakistan has feeble infrastructure.

that can't withstand heavy disasters. However, these issues can be resolved with some effective measures. Pakistani government should take steps to ~~mitigate~~ resolve above problems and help the country in preparedness for disasters.

Pakistan has faced major disasters in past. There are institutions that have improved disaster management capability of Pakistan as compared to past. In 1958, West Pakistan National calamity act was passed. Through this act ~~the~~ aftermath of calamities and emergency response was managed. In 2005, northern Pakistan faced intense earthquake that led to 80000 casualties. After this ~~eq~~ earthquake, National disaster management act was passed in 2005. However, formalized institutions was formed after 2010 floods that impacted 12 million people. National disaster management authority (NDMA) is a national level institute with provincial and district level management units. It works for disaster relief, rescue and rehabilitation. Another working unit is Pakistan meteorological unit (PMD) that gives ^{alerts} ~~warning~~ in the country regarding early warning systems and forecasting. Despite these steps, Pakistan is not fully prepared for future climate shocks.

Firstly, national institutions in Pakistan lack in-built capacity to deal with heavy disasters. These institutions lack

effective leadership to work in a cooperative manner. Disaster relief institutes work separately and lack of cooperation leads to funds ~~use~~ exploitation and lesser results. In 2018, a Pakistani professor, Farukh A. Khan warned about institutional failure. He said that Pakistan suffers from institutional failure. Failed institutions are unable to correct problems of the society, which eventually leads to economic failure! Integrated planning among disaster management, environmental management, and development planning are absent. Lack of coherent and inclusive approach between institutions reduces their capacity to manage disasters in Pakistan.

Secondly, funding constraints, lack of accountability, and widespread corruption obliterated Pakistan's preparedness for disaster management. Pakistan was on the brink of default two year back. Today, ~~but~~ it is on the path of macro-economic growth but it ^{still} lacks adequate funds to allocate for disaster preparedness. Besides this, lack of accountability led to widespread corruption in Pakistan. ~~These~~ Former president of ^{America} Pakistan, Soe Biden, said that corruption is like a cancer; cancer that eats away a citizen's faith in democracy and instinct for innovation and creativity. Hence, corruption in these institutes of disaster relief further constraints the available resources. Hence, lack of adequate funds and corruption are hindrance in the preparedness for disaster management.

Thirdly, Pakistan faces lack of political will to implement policies effectively. The government has prepared five-year disaster plans and 10 year disaster and development plans. But there are gaps between formulation and effective implementation of these policies. Floods of 2022 was a prominent example where areas of higher political and economic influence were saved and ^{major} water flow was diverted to remote areas of KPK and Balochistan. With political will and effective leadership, the disaster management institutions will take pro-active approach instead of reactive policy. This with hence, absence of political will has hindered the preparedness for disaster management.

Fourthly, there are lack of training programs in disaster management institutes. Due to lack of efficient human resource, the workforce is unable to rescue the public. Most of the time, government has to call army at ~~the~~ disaster flood areas to provide ration and relief operations to the public. Besides this, after 18th amendment the powers of disaster management were decentered to the provinces. When floods struck in 2022, provinces had no capability to manage and they called to the center for help. This highlights that local authorities ~~are less~~ lack skills which are required for rescue operations. One incident that emboldens

this fact happened in Srinagar. In 2022 floods, five men stuck on a rock surrounding by flood water. They held themselves tightly with ropes and waited for help for almost 3-4 hours fighting for life. The disaster management authority was unable to rescue. ~~and~~ four of them drowned in flood water while only one of them was saved. This incident shows incapability and lack of skill in ~~the~~ the workforce demonstrating our unpreparedness for disaster management.

Finally, feeble infrastructure is another significant factor that makes Pakistan even more vulnerable to natural disasters. According to world bank report, Pakistan is ranked 18 out of 191 countries which are prone to disaster risk due to poor infrastructure. After the floods of 2022, ~~more~~ less than half a million people became homeless and displaced from their villages. The water sanitation, ~~and~~ education health infrastructure are very old and weak. Public suffers from homelessness, diseases, and other socio-economic crisis due to poor infrastructure. Hence, another cause of failure for disaster preparedness is feeble infrastructure.

The problems which are described above are manageable if ^{the government takes} some effective measures. The disaster management institutions should work with cooperation and inclusivity. They should make policies for a long term

benefits. Adequate funding and accountability on spending can reduce corruption. Besides this, training programs should be initiated to produce effective workforce. There should be pro-active approach instead of reactive approach after the disaster. It will reduce not only human losses but also economic losses on the state. Public development plans should be started for infrastructure development. Earthquake resistant building, rainwater harvesting, green infrastructure, and climate-friendly buildings for heatwaves are some of the examples for infrastructure building. With these measures, Pakistan will be prepared for disasters in the future.

In conclusion, Pakistan ^{despite} instead of being ~~at~~ one of the most climate-vulnerable country has remained unprepared for the disaster management. The reasons behind this failure are lack of institutional capacity and absence of training programs in disaster management institutes. Funding constraints and corruption further hinders the pathway. Another reason for unpreparedness ~~is~~ is poor infrastructure of Pakistan that is unable to withstand in floods and earthquake. These are ^{also} due to absence of political will to effectively manage the institutions. However, efficient workforce and empowered institutions that ~~can~~ work for long-term policies can prepare Pakistan for impending disasters in future.