

Bridging the Gap Between Disasters and Disaster Management in Pakistan

OUTLINE

1) Introduction:-

Thesis Statement:-

The natural and man-made disasters in Pakistan are severely affecting the populace, while the disaster management setup is failing to keep up with this rising tide of disasters. Bridging the gap between disasters and disaster management is the need of the hour and needs emergency response.

2) Vulnerability of Pakistan to Disasters and What an Efficient Disaster Management can Achieve.

3) A Look at Disasters in Pakistan and Associated Losses

a) Pakistan's Vulnerability Profile

b) Recent Natural Disasters

Case in Point: GLOF and landsliding in KPK (2025)

c) Increased Intensity of Disasters due to Climate Change

Case in Point: Cloudburst events in GB (2025)

d) Recent Man-made Disasters

Case in Point: Petrol Spill Incident

in 2019 claiming lives of 200 people

e) Increasing vulnerability to disasters.

Case in Point: Climate Risk Index Score

4) A look at utterly insufficient performance of Disaster Management infrastructure in Pakistan

a) Analyzing the performance and mandate of NDMA

Case in Point:- Stats from National Disaster Management Plan, 2025

b) Anemic performance of Disaster Management Officers at District Level.

c) Technological and Budgetary Gaps

~~Gaps~~ Case in Point: Budget set for Disaster Management in KPK

d) Coordination gaps between federal and provincial authorities

e) Lack of Urban Planning

Case in Point: Ignorance of SDGs.

5) Priority steps to bridge the gap between disaster and disaster management (NDMA Recommendations)

a) Integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR) infrastructure with SDGs.

b) Prioritizing Anticipatory Action

c) Functionalizing Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs)

d) Focusing on vulnerable communities to enhance their disaster resilience

Case in Point: Gender and Child

Cell (GCC) of NDMA

e) Increasing financial and functional resources of management authorities.

f) Community engagement to enhance disaster resilience.

6) Conclusion

According to 3rd and 4th Climate Assessment Report of UN, the disasters all over the world are predicted to get worse. The frost free zone is going to lengthen, changes in precipitation patterns are going to be drastic, and more droughts and heatwaves will occur. In ~~such~~ such a condition, the world has two options: work on climate change mitigation and adapt to increasing intensity and frequency of disasters via disaster management. And while there is a lot of buzz for climate change mitigation, there is little focus on accepting the inevitability of climate change and developing management strategies. This is especially true for the third world countries and developing nations like Pakistan. The country's main strategy to natural or man-made disasters is rehabilitation not pre-emption. A look at the periodically-occurring disasters and global reports reveal that the country is increasingly faced with natural disasters (owing to changing climate) and man-made disasters. However, the disaster

management regime has been stuck with archaic policies and age old institutional setup. There are issues at several levels including federal-provincial communication gap, anemic role of local authorities and budgetary issues along with poor planning. The country desperately needs to ramp up its efforts to build a disaster management setup that is able to keep pace with the disasters in Pakistan. For that institutional overhaul, economic allocation, community inclusion and long-term planning is crucial. It is crucial for those in power to realize that the natural and man-made disasters in Pakistan are severely affecting its populace, while the disaster management setup is failing to keep pace. Bridging the gap between disasters and disaster management is the need of the hour and needs emergency response.

Pakistan's vulnerability to disasters is incredibly high. This vulnerability is a sum total of

Pakistan's geography and rapidly changing climate of this region. Stressing on this vulnerability, Anatol Lieven in his book Pakistan: A Hard Country writes "In the end, the greatest threat to Pakistan's existence is not insurgency, but ecological change." With such high risk, the only two options are climate change mitigation and disaster management. NDMA defines disaster management as "the organized process of planning, organizing, and directing resources to mitigate the risks and adverse effects of natural or man-made disasters." This is exactly what effective disaster management can achieve; risk mitigation & lowering of adverse effects. A truly effective disaster management can achieve all those goals. Take USA for instance whose disaster occurrence is way higher than Pakistan, yet the losses are 60-70% lower (NDMA, 2023).