

## Topic:

# Disaster Management in Pakistan: Challenges and Way Forward

## Outline

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Hook

1.2 Impacts of disasters

1.3 Thesis statement: Although Pakistan is facing various distress due to continuous climate change yet it is facing challenges, economic, institutional & socioeconomic developmental issues. It can be overcome by strengthening institutional capacity, disaster management and other developmental planning.

### 2. Challenges in Disaster Management

2.1 Vulnerability of Pakistan to disasters

2.1.1 Impact of location

2.1.2 Climate patterns in region

2.1.3 Various socio-economic vulnerabilities

2.2 Challenges

2.2.1 Institutional and Governance Failures

2.2.2 Reactive approach towards the problems



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b- Lack of Coordination among Provincial centres

c- Resource constraints and weak human capacity

### 2.2.2 Socio-economic and developmental issues:

a- Environmental degradation increasing continuously

b- Unplanned Urbanization

c- Lack of public awareness

d- High poverty level.

## 2.3 Impacts of poor disaster management

2.3.1 Loss of human lives

2.3.2 Economic & Infrastructure losses

2.3.3 Social disruption

2.3.4 Environmental degradation

## 2.4 Way Forward

2.4.1 Strengthening institutional capacity

2.4.2 Development of warning system

2.4.3 Community-based disaster management

2.4.4 Improving Urban planning & environmental policies

2.4.5 Education and awareness

2.4.6 Involving International organizations

## 2.5 Conclusion



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## The Essay

There is a famous motto of an organization, "Red Cross" that states "It is not the disaster that kills - it is the failure to prepare". Pakistan is facing a lot of climate issues due to continuously changing weather patterns. Disasters, whether natural or unnatural pose serious threats to human life, infrastructure and national development. Pakistan is facing floods, earthquakes and heatwaves recently. Despite various efforts, Pakistan continues to struggle with a great loss in these disasters. Starting from huge loss of 2005 Kashmir earthquake to recent 2022 and 2025 floods and few heat-waves, Pakistan has been facing the challenges to cater and save human lives and socio-economic losses. In these disasters, Pakistan realized how weak is the system and how much efforts it has to do to save its public.



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from the 1980s. It has always been a crucial duty of system to devise a proper plan for the disaster management. Pakistan is facing institutional, economic and developmental issues in solving and catering disasters. It must be overcome by changing and strengthening institutional capacity, proper urban planning, enhanced warning system, education and awareness and by taking help from international organizations. Although these challenges are hard to overcome yet it is achievable through continuous struggle and strong resilience.

Pakistan has a special geographical location on active tectonic plates and activities like melting glaciers have direct effect on country's changing weather. Moreover, Pakistan is one of world's most vulnerable countries impacted by changing climate patterns. Intense monsoon and flooding in one year and droughts in another are causing huge losses. Other than these changes



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Pakistan's increasing population and increasing poverty with unplanned urbanization and failure to meet the socio-economic challenges is causing the loss. There's been various events in recent years where Pakistan failed to save lives of people due to poorly handling the situation and weak warning systems. In 2015, Karachi was hit by severe heatwave and claimed almost 1200 people's lives. It ~~arose~~ a serious question to weak authorities and poor management. The recent floods of 2025 caused by heavy monsoon and poor system to store water, claimed not only human lives but a huge loss to infrastructure and economy of Pakistan.

The major challenge faced by Pakistan is institutional and governance failure. The problem is lack of proactive approach towards disasters. Rather the institutions like NDMA in Pakistan remained



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reacture which caused loss in early period of time. The failure to predict the coming disaster was very harmful. Either technological or human capacity failure, the country faced huge losses. Unlike Japan and USA and even India, Pakistan's system remained limited. Lack of modern technology for real-time monitoring and forecasting of disasters played role in failure of system.

The 18th amendment gives charge to cater disaster to provinces. There is a lack of resource management in provinces. Moreover the gap of communication between centre and provinces, employees and authorities and bureaucratic delays hindered effective response to disasters. So relief efforts which start after the damage has occurred causes disparities.

Another challenge is weak economic condition of Pakistan. The failure of govt to provide enough



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Funds remains a major issue. Proper budget allocation for disaster preparedness are minimum as compared to magnitude of risks. There is complete absence of local level emergency funds where there is high risk of damage. Poor warning system failed the preparedness and after the damage has done, country has to take help from foreign organizations and rely on funds provided by various countries which delays the progressive efforts and the damage increases.

The environment of Pakistan is degrading continuously. Intense heat in summers and heavy rainfalls in monsoon are causing the management of disasters more risky. The sudden rainfall after the burst of water in rivers by India caused the floods of 2025. But Pakistan failed to predict heavy rainfall and faced great damage to human lives and infrastructure.



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Another challenge Pakistan is facing is unplanned urbanisation. Population of the country is increasing but the management of that population their housing, accumulation and other life needs are poorly faced. People are cutting trees, increasing deforestation, for the sake of accomodation. This is causing harmful change in climate and the pattern of rainfall.

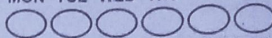
High level of poverty makes people to adjust in remote areas where there is a risk of floods. The public faces it difficult to evacuate from remote places and there is almost no communication of them to authorities. The authorities has to reach them on their own and it occurs after the damage has done. This is claiming human lives more and more.

Moreover awareness of public remain the greatest challenge of all. Public is unaware of the authorities and



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fails to contact them. Thus loss occurs and authorities has to help them after the damage. Most of the victims of disasters lack the knowledge and responsibilities of government and authorities and remain uneducated of safety measures suggested by authorities. Also There are people who look up to social media for information got caught up in various rumours which lead to chaos. Misinterpretation of some disasters causes havoc more that actual disasters.

All of The above mentioned challanged result into human lives' loss. This year, in 2015, flood claimed 900 and some more lives. Heatwaves, in Karachi, of 2015 claimed almost 1200 people's lives. Not only this but also 60,000 houses were destroyed. 6.3 million people were displaced and this caused a great damage to overall situation of the country. Hygiene issues and various other diseases like skin diseases increased



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Environment has already been effected in past years. This year's floods increased the climate change and caused rapid destruction of forests. Agriculture was affected and thus country faced challenges in economic stability of the country.

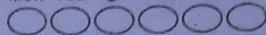
Although there are challenges faced by government of Pakistan but they can be overcome doing a little effort and symmetrizing the institutions.

Most important of all is the development of already existing institutions like NDMA and PDMA's. There must be an explained budgeting system for these authorities. Moreover communication between the central and provincial authorities is a key aspect to be focused on. There is a lack of human resources faced by NDMA so they have to appoint police personnels and army for the help. There must be proper job opportunities for these authorities.



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Another very important challenge to face is the development of proper warning system. As Chris Lyon says 'There is no preparation when the disaster has come'. It is so true and disasters like earthquake and floods need pre-paration and instant action when the calamity comes. The role of technology is very important in this sense. Modern instruments and technology is needed to measure the risk of coming calamity. How <sup>much</sup> the disaster is going to destroy is also very important. to know. It will help in decreasing the loss both economic and human life.

Another very important way to decrease loss is community based disaster management. There should be a proper and managed service group in community to volunteer or help the victims. It will lead to instant evacuation and quick relief.



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systems for victims. Moreover it will also increase the communication level of authorities and victims, by the groups playing important role as a bridge. Central and provincial governments find it difficult to reach each and every area due to damaged services in case of earthquake and floods. This action will ease the issue of locating remote areas.

With the increase in population, it is important to improve urban planning and environmental policies. Deforestation is continuously increasing to make space for the adjustment of migrated population. Government and authorities must devise a proper committee to address this issue. Moreover people who become victim of floods are mostly those living on the bank of canals and rivers. There must be proper housing at safe places



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far from waterbodies with proper management to face calamity. Similarly earthquakes can be made less harmful for people living in mountains. There must be a proper housing system in areas of landsliding and earthquakes. Government must keep check on earthquake sensitive areas.

As far as environmental policies are concerned, government, both central and provincial must put ban on cutting trees which will surely stop the flood water. Heatwaves will also be controlled if there are more trees to absorb sunlight and heat.

A very important step is spreading awareness and education for the people living in villages and far off areas where there is limited access to first aid facilities. The people should be taught when to evacuate and how difficult it will be if they stay at dangerous places. There must be an awareness system to tell the



people about how to maintain hygiene and what impact it will have if they got caught up in calamity

There must also be a proper committee to engage world organizations to help people of Pakistan. Government and non-governmental organizations must ~~visit~~ and discuss the solutions of calamities and initiatives the other countries have taken to make their disaster management system more impactful. Japan has most effective management system and US has it as well. There must be meetings between the countries engage discussing the management of the uncalled disasters.

B. Concluding The whole discussion the disasters, natural or man-made, have very harmful effects on people of every age, class and gender. All the disasters including hailstorms, floods



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earthquakes, heatwaves etc have very harmful impact on country like Pakistan due to weaker management of issues. Although Pakistan is facing challenges in management of these disasters but recent years the loss has been increasing with increasing risk of uncalled and un-prepared severe calamities. We must make sure to develop the system on both public and official level so that there is less harm to people's lives at least. The disasters not only bring economic, social but also a ~~po~~ huge condition of chaos. The sudden economic pressure and the migrations of large number of people put pressure on whole public and they have to bear with sudden inflation and loss to infrastructure. There is still hope that government, in spite of these challenges, will help the institutions of disaster management and there will be no more a sudden calamity but a prepared disaster with less harm to people's lives.