Disaster Mismanagement In Pakistan: Challenges And Way-Forward.

1. Introduction:

1.1. Pakistan is among the most disaster prone countries, ranked 6th most climate vulnerable (GCRI 2024).

1.2. Disaster management framework exists (NDMA, PDMA, DDMA) but execution is weak.

1.3. Pakistan faces major challenges like poor planning, limited funds, and low community preparedness.

1.4. The way forward lies in strengthening institutions, better budget allocation, and promoting community based resilliance.

Thesis: Pakistan faces serious challenges in disaster management due to weak coordination, poor planning, and limited resources. The way forward lies in stronger institutions, better funding, and active community participation.

2. Major Challenges in Disaster Management

2.1. Institutional and governance challenges.

a. Poor coordination among NDMA, PDMA, and DDMA.
b. Overlapping roles, weak local goverment involvement.
c. Slow implementation of NDMP (22% goals met - NDMA report 2024).

2.2. Financial and Resource constraints.

a. Budget below 0.05% of GDP (WB 2024).
b. Delayed fund release and reliance on foreign aid.
c. Shortage of trained staff and modern equipment.

2.3. Technical and Capacity gaps.

a. Vileak early warning and forecasting systems.
b. Inadequate disaster research and risk mapping.

c. Poor enforcement of building codes and urban planning.

2.4. Social and environmental factors.

a. low public awarness and community preparedness.
b. Encroachments, deforestations, and poor drainage.
c. Climate change intensifying disaster frequency.

3. The Way Forward for effective Disaster Management in Pakistan.

3.1 Institutional strengthning and governance improvements.

a. Clarify NDMA, PDMA, DDMA roles, and enhance local autonomy.
b. Establish National Disaster Data Portal for real-time coordination.
c. Regular audits and post disaster reviews.

3.2. Financial Reforms.

a. Allocation maximum % of GDP

for disaster risk reduction.

b. Introducing disaster insurance and emergency reserve funds.

c. Encouragement of public-private partnership for resilient infrastructure.

3.3. Technological and capacity development

a. Expand AI-based early warning system

b. Invest in research, mapping, and modern equipment.

c. Training for rescue and district teams.

3.4. Community and Climate resilience.

a. Integrate disaster education in Schools

b. Promotion of community based disaster management.

c. Implement climate adaptation projects like Recharge Pakistan.

4. Conclusion.

4.1. Disasters are natural, losses depend on preparedness.

4.2. Shift from reactive relief to proative risk.

Pakistan is the land of diverse landscape and climates, remains one of the most disaster prone countries in the world (ranked on 8th most climate vulnerable nation According the Global climate risk Index 2024). Pakistan frequently suffers from floods, earthquakes, droughts and heatwaves. The 2022 floods alone affected 33 million people and caused over $30 billion damages. Despite having an institutional disaster management framework - comprising the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and its provincial & district branches Pakistan's response to disasters remain largely reactive. Weak co-ordination, limited financial resources and inadequate preparedness continue to widen the gap between policy and practice. However, where there are challenges, there are also opportunities for reforms. Strengthening institutions, modernizing technology and involving communities can turn the tide. Thus, understanding the challenges in disaster management is the first step towards building

resilient Pakistan and designing practical way forward for sustainable safety.

Pakistan's disaster management system faces a web of institutional, financial, technical, and social weaknesses that keep the country trapped in a cycle of reaction rather than prevention. These challenges overlap and reinforce each other, poor governance leads to resource shortages, which limit technology & community outreach. Understanding each dimension helps trace the root of failure and identify entry points for reform.

To begin with, institutional and governance challenges remain at the heart of disaster mismanagement. Firstly, poor coordination among NDMA, PDMA and DDMA is the biggest bottleneck. Overlapping roles causes confusion and duplication of work during crisis as too many cooks spoil the broth. Secondly, decentralization is weak. District authorities lack decision-making powers, forcing every request through

through Islamabad, which delays quick response. Thirdly, accountability machanisms are fragile, auclits and post disaster evaluations are rare so lessons are seldom learned. The NDMA review (2024) admitted that 22% of the NDMP's goals were implemented. To addrene these issues institutional clarity and empowered local governet are indispensable. However strong institutions alone cannot deliver results without financial support, which forms the next major challenge in disaster.

Moving forward, financial limitations remains a major stumbling block. First of all, Pakistan invests less than 0.5% of GDP in disaster risk reduction (world bank 2024), leaving agencies underfunded. Secondly, dependance on foreign aid & delayed funds release results in reactive rathan prevention action. Thirdly, a shortage of trained staff slowed the rescue operations. Therefore, prioritizing financial transparency is important to escape this trap.

Furthermore, technical and capacity

gaps severely weakens disaster management performance. Firstly outdated early warning system means over 60% of districts lack forecasting system (NDMA 2025). Secondly, the absence of hazard mapping and research keeps risk planning outdate.