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Disaster Management in Pakistan: Challenges and way Forward.

1. Introduction

1.1. Attention Grabber

1.2. Thesis statement

Pakistan's disaster management system faces challenges from resource constraints and inadequate implementation of policies. An integrated way forward that involves improving institutional coordination, strengthening community-level preparedness and investing in resilient infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of frequent natural disasters.

2. Main body

2.1- Central Authority

2.2- Legal framework

2.3- comprehensive cycle

2.4- National plans

2.5- coordination and response

2.6- Focus Areas

2.7- Capacity Building.

2.8. Major Disasters in Pakistan

→ Earthquakes:

The 2005 Kashmir Earthquake.

→ Floods :

2010, 2022, 2025 floods displaced millions.

→ Droughts :

In Sindh and Balochistan.

→ Heatwaves :

In 2015, Karachi heatwave.

→ Glacial lake outburst floods:

In Northern area like Gilgit Baltistan.

→ Man-made disasters:

Industrial accidents, deforestation and unplanned urbanization.

2.9-

Challenges in Disaster management

→ Institutional weaknesses

→ Poor Early warning systems

→ Lack of public awareness

→ Inadequate urban planning

→ Climate change impacts

→ Coordination gaps

→ Resource constraints

2.10-

Way Forward

- Strengthening institutions
- Enhancing early warning systems.
- Community based disaster management
 - Train local volunteers and strengthen grassroots resilience programs.
- Improving infrastructure and urban planning.
 - Develop flood-resilient housing and draining systems.
- Integrating climate adaptation
- Disaster education and training
- Leveraging technology
- International cooperation
 - collaborate with global organizations for technical expertise.
 - Share best practices with neighbouring countries facing similar challenges.

3. Conclusion

'Sometimes it takes a
natural disaster to reveal
a social disaster'.

Jim Wallis

Pakistan stands among the world's most
disaster-prone nations, affected by floods,
earthquakes, droughts and other natural
calamities. Despite numerous experiences, the
country continues to struggle with disaster
preparedness and management. The increasing
impact of climate change further
compounds these challenges. Effective disaster
management is essential not only for
saving lives but also for ensuring
sustainable development.

"The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining."

John F. Kennedy

Disaster management refers to the systematic process of preparing for, mitigating, responding to, and recovering from disasters. It involves coordination among various institutions, effective communication and active community participation. In Pakistan, the National Disaster Management Authority was established in 2007 to lead disaster risk reduction and response efforts at the national level supported by provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs).

Pakistan's history is marked by several devastating disasters

The 2010 and 2022 and 2025 floods submerged one-third of the country affecting millions. The 2005 Earthquake claimed over 73000 lives. Droughts in Balochistan and Sindh have led to severe water and food insecurity. Heatwaves, such as the 2015 Karachi disaster, have claimed over thousands of lives.

"Natural disasters are not always
act of God, but often failures
of human preparedness". - Anonymous.

Pakistan's disaster management structure is decentralized. NDMA handles policy and coordination at the federal level. PDMA's manage provincial level planning and response. DDMA's are responsible for local

local implementation. Despite this framework inefficiency and poor coordination often result in delayed response and inadequate relief efforts.

The disaster management authorities lack proper resources, coordination and technical expertise. Bureaucratic red tape and overlapping mandates hinder effective action. Meteorological systems are outdated and rural communities receive little to no timely warnings. A large part of the population is unaware of disaster risks and basic safety practices. Disaster education is almost absent from school curricula. Rapid unregulated urbanization, deforestation and construction on

flood plain amplify disaster risks. Rising temperatures, glacial melting and erratic rainfall patterns are increasing both the frequency and severity of natural disasters. Limited funding and dependance on international aid weaken Pakistan's ability to prepare for and cover from disasters. Weak linkages between federal, provincial, and local agencies lead to fragmented disaster response mechanisms.

"Failure to prepare is preparing to fail" - Benjamin Franklin

NDMA and PDMA's must be empowered through adequate funding, training and authority. Clear roles should be defined for all levels of government. Investment

in advanced forecasting technology and rapid communication channels can help reduce casualties. Empowering local communities through awareness campaigns, training and volunteer programs can create the first line of defense. Promoting afforestation, water conservation and sustainable agricultural practices can mitigate climate-related risks. Disaster preparedness should be integrated into school curricula and public awareness programs. Geographic information systems, drones, and mobile alert alarms can enhance monitoring and response efficiency. Pakistan can benefit from global partnerships, sharing best practices.

and accessing modern disaster management technologies -

"Resilience is not about avoiding stress but about learning how to thrive through it"

Disasters are inevitable, but their destruction is not. Pakistan's vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters demands a proactive, well-coordinated, and community-centered approach. Strengthening institutions promoting awareness and integrating climate resilience into national planning are key to transforming Pakistan into a disaster-resilient nation.

"It is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one, than to have an opportunity and not be prepared." - Whitney.