

*Comments on the Draft of*

# **Provincial Disaster Risk Management Plan Balochistan**



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# **Provincial Disaster Risk Management Plan, Balochistan [Draft]**

## **2.1 A Synopsis of Disaster Risks in the Province Page # 13**

### *Comments/ Suggestions*

Under the above mentioned topic numerous disasters frequently occurring in Balochistan have been discussed in detail. However, still some of very important disasters are missing from the list of the hazards. There is strong need to include those disasters as to ensure that policy measures should also be taken in the future to mitigate and manage those kinds of disasters. Some of the disasters missed from the lists are as under:

### **Mega Development Induced Disasters**

Globally the role of mega development induced or man made disasters is increasing day by day. Disastrous impacts of dam breaking, environmental and livelihood disasters due to technical flaws in the mega projects are some of the key causes of deaths and degradation of livelihoods. The heavy flooding due to small dam breaking in Balochistan during the rains of year 2003 is a case in point which resulted in deaths of dozens of local communities and devastation to their livelihoods.

There is strong need to include such development induced disasters in the list of the disasters in Pakistan as some the mega development projects are already wrecking disasters in different areas of Pakistan and there are fears of more disasters as a result of such kinds of ill planned and non participatory mega development projects.

### **Internal Displacement Due to Conflicts**

Balochistan many areas are tribal and semi tribal in nature. Tribal influence is strong due to lack of education and other factors. These tribes are frequently at war with each other, which results in deaths of dozens of poor communities as well as massive migration from the conflict zones by the poor communities to save their lives. Some times same kinds of conflicts also emerge between the state and the influential tribes. The recent tribal armed upsurge in Dera Bugti and Kohlu and the subsequent operation by the law enforcing agencies has resulted in the migration of a large number of populations from those areas. Those called as Internally Displaced People [IDPs] are living miserable life in Naseerabad, Jaffarabad districts of Balochistan and other areas of Sindh.

These kinds of internal displacements are considered as disasters globally and a large number of international agencies are working to minimize the risk and sorrows of such kind of displaced people. There is strong need to include this emerging phenomenon also in the list of disasters.

### 3.4 Strategies for Disaster Risk Management

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#### *Comments / Suggestions*

The strategies for disaster risk management cover the areas of institutional development, risk assessment and provincial risk mapping, knowledge management and training and other issues which are very much important to the disaster risk management framework.

However, the key issue which has not been addressed in this section is the reforms in the legal framework with regard to disaster risk management i.e. review and improvement of the laws and rules. It is because, although there are few provincial laws and rules to manage the disasters, however, these laws and rules are completely outdated. As a result of outdated, inadequate and flawed legal framework government functionaries miserably fail in providing proper warning, relief and rehabilitation to the affected communities hit by various disasters in the province. For example:

- Disaster Management is dealt with through Calamities (Prevention and Relief Act. 1958. First of all the Act is outdated and does not match with the present day realities. Besides, the Act has no rules of its own. West Pakistan National Calamities (Prevention and Relief) Rules 1969 have been adopted with minor changes.
- The Act covers only the relief measures once the disaster hits any area. There are no provisions for early warning systems, capacity building of the communities and departments with regard to proper disaster prevention. The Act is also silent on the issues of proper and long term rehabilitation of the disaster hit areas
- Interestingly even in the case of relief , there is only provision of food distribution as the Act does not cover the provision of medicines etc in the disaster relief activities
- The compensation amount to be paid to any family in the case of the human loss or the loss of their house etc is meager
- Livelihood loss , dislocation , joblessness , injuries and many other losses are not properly covered in the disaster relief package
- There are also legal and administrative inconsistencies in relation to disaster response in the local government ordinance
- Definition of disaster is limited in scope and it does not include many newly emerged disasters.

There is strong need that besides the institutional improvements, there is need to review the laws and rules at the federal, provincial as well as district level to improve those laws to ensure a positive legal framework to support the disaster management and mitigation efforts in Pakistan.

#### **General Comments and Recommendations**

It is widely known and accepted that disasters affect women and men differently. These effects have also a different impact depending on culture and socio-economic contexts. The vulnerability of women is much greater because of their subordinate position in the family arising out of patriarchy and traditionally embedded cultural values. This is reflected in unequal work burden due to productive as well as reproductive responsibility, lack of control over the means of production, restricted mobility, limited facilities for

education and lack of employment, inequalities in food intake relative to men, etc. The housewives and young mothers affected from floods and displaced find it more difficult to find wage labor and other income-earning opportunities. The women who lose all their meager belongings and their life-long savings usually are not able to compensate their losses even after decades. This situation threatens their security within the family relationship.

Despite different gender roles and the different levels of impacts of the disaster on men and women, the Balochistan Provincial Disaster Risk Management Plan is completely silent on the issue of gender mainstreaming disaster management and risk reduction. While keeping the separate gender needs, roles and impacts there is strong need of dealing with the issue of gender mainstreaming in the disaster management and risk reduction in the key policy document of Pakistan.

- The disaster risk management has to be approached holistically because it is difficult to isolate preparedness from other components of disaster management such as reduction, response, and recovery. There is need of a paradigm shift in disaster management from a relief-driven approach to a more preparedness-driven approach.
- The local communities should be at the centre of disaster management plans. They are the first victims of natural hazards and the first respondents. Local knowledge should be respected and combined with other knowledge to improve the design and implementation of disaster management activities.
- Research should be continuous process into disaster management that adapts to the cultural, geographic, and social system. There is need to review the laws and rules at the federal, provincial as well as district level to improve those laws to ensure a positive legal framework.
- There is also strong need to launch a campaign to revive volunteerism in the province by creating a larger pool of volunteers to face the onslaught of the future disasters because there are fears of more disasters in Balochistan including the floods, cyclones and earthquakes etc.