



Project Report
on
Standardization of Disaster
Management Capacities
in District Headquarters

(Project No. 08/MM:04)

Prepared by
Micro Mission-04 (Infrastructure)
National Police Mission
2024-25

Bureau of Police Research and Development
Ministry of Home Affairs
Govt. of India

'Promoting Good Practices and Standards'



DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Project	Project Report on Standardization of Disaster Management Capacities in District Hqrs
Project No.	08/MM:04
Project Leader	Shri Paras Nath Rai, IPS (Retd.) Member, Bihar State Disaster Management Authority
Project Members	❖ Shri K.K. Sarangal, IPS, ADG (Est) Maharashtra police ❖ Shri S.S. Guleria. DIG, SB, FTR BSF, Kolkata, Served in NDRF ❖ Shri Manish Ranjan. Commandant, 102 bn BSF. Worked in NDRF located in Bihar from year 2010-15, and as Director of NDRF Academy, Nagpur (2015 to 2021) ❖ Col V. S. Supanekar, Director, Centre of Disaster Management Centre, YASHADA, (Govt. of Maharashtra) Pune ❖ NPM, BPR&D
Version No.	1.4
Approved on	29.10.2024



ABSTRACT

State governments have the responsibility for disaster management. But they are handicapped by the absence of trained professional response teams especially at the district and lower levels for handling disasters during the “golden hour”. Therefore the dependence and demand for specialized response forces such as NDRF and SDRF has been ever increasing, even for small incidents to fill the ‘gap’ left by unprepared local responders especially police, fire services, etc.

State governments and district administration also face rising expectations of people for timely and proper response. This is increased further by instant coverage by TV channels now working at district/city levels, hyper active social media and private video channels, and the millions of mobile phones with cameras. This makes it incumbent upon the police to respond adequately and timely, which requires sound preparedness among the first responders.

The above, combined with the changing profile of disasters from floods and earthquakes to heat waves, lightning, and road and rail accidents requires a paradigm shift in approach from reactive response to proactive pre-disaster preventive action, popularly known as disaster risk management/reduction. It requires a wholesome change in thinking too. For example in road safety, police should involve themselves in activities such as awareness, road design, and good enforcement which would prevent road accidents.

The Response to disasters is a necessity. If done with preparedness, it will surely save lives. Hence Disaster Risk Reduction includes capacity building. The most important element is: Police have to adopt disaster management as a primary function.



CONTENTS

Chapter	Sub-Head	Pg. No.
Chapter-1	Scope of Police as first responder	4
	1.1 Identification of risk/hazard in States/UTs	4
	1.5 Type and Levels of Disasters	5
	1.6 Disaster Management Cycle	6
	1.7 Police Intervention as first responders to the disasters	8
	1.8 Shortfalls in response effort	9
	1.9 Requirements	9
Chapter – 2	Provisions in Legal Framework & National/State level documents including policies regarding Role of Police as first responder	11
	2.1 High Powered Committee (HPC)	11
	2.2 Planning Commission	12
	2.3 The Second Administrative Reforms Commission	12
	2.4 The Disaster Management Act, 2005	13
	2.5 NDMA Guidelines on Incident Response System	13
	2.6 National Disaster Management Plan	14
	2.7 Legal and Policy Instruments of the States	15
Chapter – 3	3.1 Existing Police infrastructure	16
	3.3 Development of Additional Disaster Management Infrastructure	16
	3.4 Integration with existing ERSS, 101, 102	17
	3.5 Recommendations	17
Chapter – 4	Developing of Police Capacities in Disaster Management	19
	4.1 Developing Human Resource Capacities	19
	4.8 Equipment and Resources for Police Forces	21
	4.14 Recommendations	24
Chapter – 5	5.1 Funding Window	26
	5.4 Recommendations	27
Chapter – 6	6.1 Way forward	29
	6.6 Recommendations	30
	References	33
	Annexure – I	34



Chapter-1

SCOPE OF POLICE AS FIRST RESPONDER

Identification of risk/hazard in States/UTs

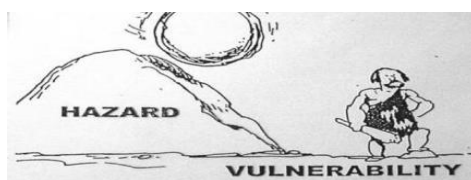
- 1.1** India's geo-climatic conditions, as well as its high degree of socio-economic vulnerability, make it one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. "Disaster means a catastrophe, mishap, calamity or grave occurrence in any area, arising from natural or man-made causes, or by accident or negligence, which results in substantial loss of life or human suffering, or damage to, and destruction of property, or damage to or degradation of the environment, and is of such nature or magnitude, as to be beyond coping capacity of the community of the affected area" (**Disaster Management Act 2005**).

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction defines a disaster as involving widespread human, material, economic, or environmental losses "A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources".

- 1.2** Disasters are classified as Natural disasters or human-made disasters. Disasters caused by floods, drought, volcanoes, earthquakes etc. are generally considered natural disasters. Disasters caused by a direct result of human activities like civil war, industrial accidents, road accidents, and environmental pollution are classified as human-made or human-induced disasters.

In order to understand disaster better it is important to understand key terms associated with it i.e., hazard & vulnerability.

- 1.3** A **hazard** is a rare or extreme natural or human-made event that threatens to adversely affect human life, property, or activity to the extent of causing a disaster. It has the potential to damage life, property, environment, flora and fauna, or cause social and economic disruption, or environmental degradation.
- 1.4** **Vulnerability** is the likely extent of damage due to a hazard. Vulnerability depends upon people, conditions (social & financial), place, time, event and environmental conditions. It indicates the susceptibility of the community to the impact of hazards.





Physical Vulnerability depends on the physical location of people and elements at risk, for example buildings, structures, and infrastructure. It also varies according to construction techniques, material used and location.

Social- Economic Vulnerability - Social and economic factors explain the level of physical risk, why people live where they do, whether buildings are safe, and what people can do to reduce that risk and absorb or recover from the effects of a disaster. Generally, socio-economically weaker sections are at greater physical vulnerability.

1.5 Type and Levels of Disasters

The **High Powered Committee on Disaster Management** constituted in 1999 has listed disaster categories into five major subgroups.

LIST OF VARIOUS DISASTERS	
i. Water and climate-related disasters	
a) Flood and drainage management	b) Cyclones
c) Tornadoes and Hurricanes	d) Hailstorm
e) Cloud burst	f) Heart wave and cold wave
g) Snow avalanches	h) Droughts
i) Sea erosion	j) Thunder and lightning
ii. Geologically related disasters	
a) Landslides and mudflows	b) Earthquakes
c) Dam failures/Dam bursts	d) Minor fires
iii. Chemical, industrial, and nuclear-related disasters	
a) Chemical and industrial disasters	b) Nuclear disasters
iv. Accident-related disasters	
a) Forest fires	b) Urban fires
c) Mine flooding	d) Oil spill
e) Major building collapse	f) Serial bomb blasts
g) Festival related	h) Electrical disasters and fires
i) Air, road & rail accidents	j) Boat capsizing
k) Village fire	
v. Biologically related disasters	
a) Biological disasters and epidemics	b) Pest attacks
c) Cattle epidemics	d) Food poisoning

The **Ministry of Home Affairs**, Government of India (GOI) has notified the following list of natural calamities - avalanches, cloud bursts, cold waves, cyclones, drought, earthquakes, fire, flood, hailstorms, landslides, tsunamis, and pest-attack. The **12th Finance Commission** recommended that man-made disasters including chemical and industrial or also air/railway accidents,



may continue to be taken care of by the respective ministries and left out from the Disaster Relief Funds.

The 14th Finance Commission recognized the need for flexibility regarding state-specific disasters and recommended that up to 10 percent of the funds available under the State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) can be used by a State for occurrences which it considers to be 'disasters' within its local context and which are not in the notified list of disasters of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

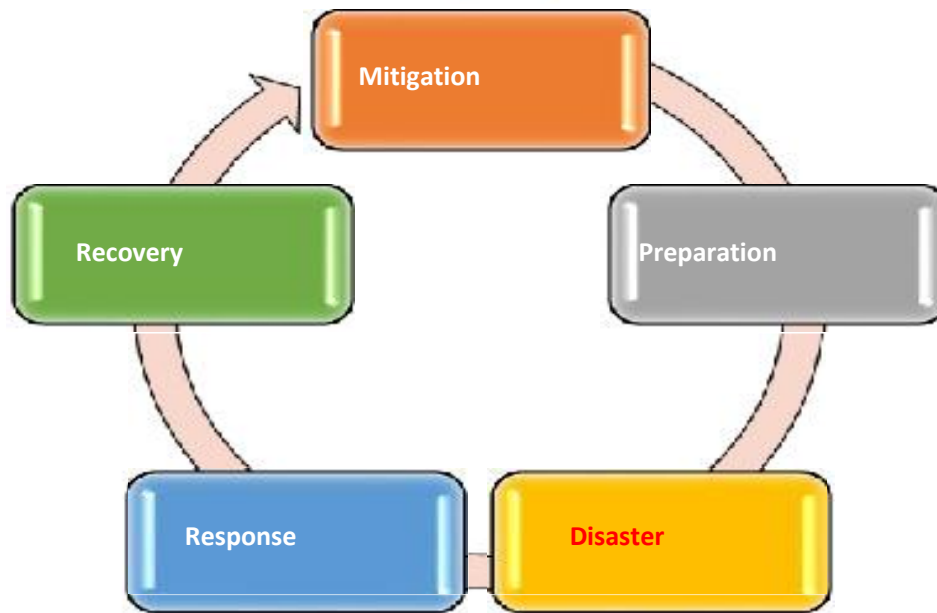
Level of Disasters

Disaster Management and its planning at various tiers must take into account the vulnerability of disaster-affected areas, and the capacity of the authorities to deal with the situation. Under this approach, the **High Power Committee on Disaster Management**, in its report of 2001, categorized disaster situations into three levels: L1, L2, L3

- Level-L1: The level of disaster that can be managed within the capabilities and resources at the district level. However, the state authorities remain in readiness to assist if needed.
- Level-L2: The disaster level that requires assistance and active mobilization of resources at the state level and deployment of state-level agencies for disaster management. The central agencies must be vigilant for immediate deployment if required by the state.
- Level-L3: A nearly catastrophic situation or a very large-scale disaster that overwhelms the state and district authorities.

1.6 Disaster Management Cycle – has the following components which are often expressed in a cyclic way:

- a) Mitigation
- b) Preparation
- c) Disaster
- d) Response
- e) Recovery



A paradigm shift in the approach towards disaster management, from relief to prevention and mitigation through a holistic and comprehensive approach was triggered by the UN's move to observe the 1990's as the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR).

A proactive disaster management cycle places more stress on the mitigation of disasters, preparation for preventing disasters and then preparation for responding to them when they strike. Mitigation and preparatory stages lay the ground for the comprehensive response at the same time. Good mitigation of disasters and advanced preparation for a response when a disaster happens reduce the possibility of large-scale damages, so the response, relief, and rehabilitation stages require less effort. Advance preparation facilitates a comprehensive and organized response which also reduces the response time thus leading to the saving of more lives and property, and less damage to the environment.

With a clear understanding of the disaster process, nature of disasters, and their types, the disasters require a specialised response by specialised agencies as each of the different disasters caused by different agents leads to different consequences. A flood produces different kinds of consequences and requires a different kind of response than a fire incident or an earthquake. Many times, various agencies have to respond in tandem, as witnessed in response to the **9/11 catastrophe in the US** when the NYPD and NYFD worked side by side (though in an uncoordinated manner thus causing human losses to NYFD) in rescuing and evacuating people from the twin WTC towers.

The police have not only been the original, sole responders to disasters since government started responding to the disasters, but they are still the lone agency that is required to respond to all types of disasters, irrespective of their



nature, scale or intensity as first responders and also as lead or main responders. It has been found that responding to disasters through the police alone is grossly inadequate, which led to a paradigm shift in the Disaster Management field.

The mitigation, prevention, and preparedness model of disaster management has necessitated initiatives by other departments that are responsible for economic development and urban planning. However the police being an agency having a presence on the ground at all hours of day and year continue to be the preferred stakeholder by the public especially as **first responders**.

The first response has emerged as a critical component in the disaster management cycle after the disaster has struck, as the first few hours pose the biggest challenge to the agencies to save lives and property. However prepared the agencies may be, the initial period of any disaster is always a time of ambiguity, uncertainty, and confusion, especially in the case of sudden disasters such as earthquakes, fire, or bomb explosions. In such situations, the first responders, be it the community, police or fire brigade, or volunteers, provide continuity to the process of response and help not only save precious lives but also emerge as a launch pad for the lead and specialised agencies to respond with their full might.

1.7 Police Intervention as first responders to the disasters

Several agencies of the Central and State Governments including armed forces, NDRF, SDRF, Police, Fire, Civil Defense, and Home Guard volunteers are responders in emergencies. However, the police have an advantage over others in terms of their proximity to the place of incident, organizational capability, tried and trusted communication systems and authority to command people and resources.

On the other hand, the armed forces and specialized forces face costs in terms of time lag, which may be critical many times. They have to operate in unknown territory, among unfamiliar people in different cultural/ language sets. Police, being closest to the scene, reach the site at the earliest to start the rescue work. The "golden hour" and now "platinum 15" are critical to any incident. In spite of this, there is little or no appreciation of the need to train and equip police to respond appropriately in a manner that paves the way for specialised forces.

The National Police Commission (NPC) in its Second Report, aptly framed the issue of the fluid nature of police duties, when it underlined the fact that providing relief to persons in distress is an important area of police work that relates to the service-oriented functions.



During disasters police perform numerous activities that are not related to either enforcement of law or maintenance of order. Examples are the rescue of the marooned, rendering first aid to the injured, clearing the debris, opening the roads, disposing of corpses and carcasses, and helping in the distribution of food and clothing. The NPC recommended that the Police Act may spell out the duties and responsibilities of the police to provide other appropriate services and afford relief to people in distress.

Modern disasters such as train derailments or large-scale poisoning, chemical or gas leaks or fire incidents, or industrial accident can also arise out of acts of sabotage and subversion and police cannot perceive them as pure accidents not warranting attention or legal response. Every accident or disaster site is a potential crime scene also. Disruption of the scene by notified responding agencies in the absence of police response may itself have disastrous consequences from a justice point of view.

1.8 Shortfalls in response effort:

Even though India has a **well-designed institutional mechanism at the National, State & district levels** in the form of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), State Disaster Management Authority (SDMAs), and District Disaster Management Authority (DDMAs) supported by specialised forces like the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), the **response remains inadequate due to;**

- Absence of an appropriate response plan
- No clarity of roles and responsibilities and therefore duplication and overlapping of efforts, resulting in excessive costs and sometimes delay in the response itself.
- Designated authorities not backed by professional response teams.
- Lack of coordination leading to uncertainty, and confusion.

1.9 Requirements:

These shortcomings could be overcome by providing proper training and equipment to locally available police personnel. This has been reinforced through the recommendations of several commissions, committees, acts, etc. In spite of all the above, the National/State Disaster Management Acts, policies, plans and SOPs, Police Acts and police manuals do not contain clear-cut roles and responsibilities for police in disaster management, sparing which is absolutely essential for effective action; nor has the critical requirement of their capacity building been addressed.

To achieve convergence and coherence among departments and agencies, and because of the holistic nature of disaster management which necessitates cutting across sectors, there is a need for a broad uniform institutional



framework.

In particular, there are two requirements that need to be taken up on priority:

- Developing standard infrastructure at various levels
- Development of suitable training modules



Chapter-2

PROVISIONS IN LEGAL FRAMEWORK & NATIONAL/STATE LEVEL DOCUMENTS INCLUDING POLICIES REGARDING ROLE OF POLICE AS FIRST RESPONDER

2.1 High Powered Committee (HPC)

Realising that the disasters not only cause substantial loss of human life and property but also reduce the pace of sustained economic development as they involve the diversion of funds from developmental programs, the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, set up a High- Powered Committee (HPC) on Disaster Management with the approval of the Prime Minister, on 20th August 1999. It was the first attempt in India to draw up a systematic, comprehensive, and holistic approach toward disasters.

The mandate and scope of the HPC was enlarged in April 2000 to cover man-made disasters as well, by including chemical, industrial, and nuclear disasters. The HPC Report, published in October 2002, proposed a new culture of disaster management with four pillars:

- Culture of preparedness.
- Culture of quick response.
- Culture of strategic thinking; and
- Culture of prevention

The concept was based on the rationale that while hazards are inevitable, the consequences that follow need not be that inevitable, and society can be prepared to cope with them effectively whenever they occur.

The HPC also opined that the Police are primarily to respond in case of emergencies Police mobilize themselves to reach the site of the disaster immediately to carry out relief and rescue operations in coordination with other agencies. It is also the responsibility of the police to maintain security and law and order at disaster locations where there might be chaos and miscreants may take advantage of the situation. Police personnel deployed for such relief operations prevent the occurrence of cognizable offences including all offences against property, human body, and public tranquility. The police communication system is made available for the transmission and receipt of messages in connection with disasters. The police also regulate the movement of victims, carry out rescue and relief, and provide medical assistance, and supplies. The role of paramilitary forces is similarly important as they may be



called upon for additional assistance in situations requiring it.

Therefore the HPC prescribed that:

- The police organizations should have trained and equipped disaster rescue teams as part of the local plans.
- A coordinating agency amongst the CAPFs benominated for disaster management.
- Separate budgetary provisions be made for disaster management-related training and equipment.

The HPC thus recognized the critical role played by the Police and the Para-Military Forces in disaster situations and made a case for their operational readiness.

2.2 Planning Commission

Disaster Management was further recast from a development perspective in the first decade of the present century by the erstwhile Planning Commission (Commission) of India. The Orissa Cyclone (1999) and the Gujarat Earthquake (2001) became the reference points for pushing the disaster management agenda from a development perspective by the erstwhile Planning Commission of India.

The Tenth Five Year Plan: 2002-07, included a chapter titled “**Disaster Management- The Development Perspective**”. The Commissions noted that with the kind of losses and developmental setbacks that the country has been suffering year after year, the development process needs to be sensitive towards disaster prevention and mitigation aspects. There is, thus, a need to look at disasters from a development perspective as well. While it also recorded that the police, paramilitary forces, civil defense, home guards, and fire services have important roles to play.

2.3 The Second Administrative Reforms Commission

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC), in its Third Report, “**Crises Management-From Despair to Hope**” has tried to capture the ground reality in the correct perspective, stating that:

The police are among the first responders in any crisis. This response normally comes from the nearest police station or police outpost. Their immediate responsibility is to communicate the information and mount rescue and relief efforts with whatever resources are available to them. It is essential, therefore, that policemen at field level who would be the first responders are sufficiently



trained. The training need not be generic but specific to the types of crises anticipated in an area. More importantly, they should be fully involved in the preparation of the local crisis/disaster plan and should be fully conversant with the area.

The ARC Report also identifies local self-governments, both rural and urban, as among the first responders besides police.

Governments across the world have now realised that the community-based response to the management of disasters has great virtue. As there is always a time-lag between the disaster impact and information reaching the first responders for organising the response, the buffer time between the impact and activation of first responders emerges as a golden period in which many lives can be lost if the communities do not respond to the disasters themselves.

2.4 The Disaster Management Act, 2005

Intending to keep pace with the global developments in the field of disaster management, the Union Government enacted the Disaster Management Act in 2005, as:

“An Act to provide for the effective management of disasters and matters connected there with or incidental thereto”.

The definitions noted in the Act do not define the responders or the first responders, though it includes, inter alia, in the definition of disaster management the following three sub-clauses regarding the response:

- *Prompt response to threatening disaster situations or disaster.*
- *Assessing the severity or magnitude of effects of any disaster; and*
- *Evacuation, rescue, and relief.*

Although, the Act must be read with a plethora of Guidelines published by the National Disaster Management Authority in pursuant to powers conferred upon it by Section 6 of the Act, but the Act and the Guidelines are nearly mute on the role of police and other institutions such as the Home Guards, Civil Defence, etc. in disaster management. A study of the National Disaster Management Plan and State Disaster Management Plans becomes crucial in configuring the role of these agencies.

2.5 NDMA Guidelines on Incident Response System.

These Guidelines were enacted in July 2010. It says that the lowest administrative unit (Sub-Division, Tehsil, or Block) will be the first responders. If the incident becomes complex and is beyond the control of the local IRT



(Incident Response Team), the higher level IRT will be informed and they will take over the response management.

It is evident that the Guidelines envisage a role for the first responders in disaster response, but its articulation lacks conceptual clarity. It seeks to equate the IRT with the first responders and speaks of escalation of response to higher level IRT depending upon the complexity of the disaster. It may not be out of place to mention that the IRT is an organised team comprising of trained people from all government units. In these terms, the Guidelines also do not provide us conceptual and functional clarity as to the profile of the first responders and the nature and scope of their work before the organised response takes over.

2.6 National Disaster Management Plan

The revised National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) was issued in November 2019 by the NDMA. It postulates that the state government is primarily responsible for disasters. However, in situations where the resources of the State are inadequate to cope effectively with the situation, the State Government can seek assistance from the Central Government. In addition, there may be situations in which the Central Government will have direct responsibilities in certain aspects of disaster management.

While the NDMP pertains to both these exigencies, in most cases the role of central agencies will be to support the respective State Governments. Barring exceptional circumstances, the State Governments will deploy the first responders and carry out other activities pertaining to disaster management.

Except this, the NDMP does not make any reference to the first responders, nor does it define the term. It also does not explain the nature and scope of their duties.

As far as the role of the police is concerned, it has assigned some role to Police in respect of children. It records that 'sensitize all agencies and key personnel associated with the protection of child rights and safety, including those connected with juvenile justice such as police, CWC, JJB, CARA, and DCPU'.

In respect of capacity development in the field of cyclones and wind, the police have been earmarked for training and reorientation programmes along with other State agencies. On the other hand, the police have also been assigned a role for awareness generation under the head of capacity building in the area of cyclones and wind. It has also sought police involvement in preparing for disasters including participation in exercises, mock drills etc.



But overall, the NDMP does not discuss the role of the first responders in a focused manner that is warranted in view of the critical role the first responders do play in responding to disasters.

2.7 Legal and Policy Instruments of the States

As the States are the primary entities which are statutorily required to manage the disasters at the district and block levels, the States with their vast experience in responding to all kinds of disasters, natural as well as man-made disasters, have done pioneering work in the field of disaster management.

Almost all the States and districts in the country have now prepared and promulgated the Disaster Management Plans which they invoke during the disasters with varied degrees of success.



Chapter-3

EXISTING POLICE INFRASTRUCTURE

3.1 State governments have established dedicated institutions at the state, district, and block levels to address disaster management. For instance, in Bihar, there is an independent Department of Disaster Management, a State Emergency Operation Centre, a District Disaster Management Authority led by the district magistrate, and designated officials like Additional Collectors (ADM), and Deputy Collectors responsible for disaster management at the district level. Circle officers also play a crucial role in disaster management at the block level. Districts are equipped with a wide range of equipment and resources for rescue and response operations, complemented by the support of SDRF/NDRF, Civil Defence, and other agencies.

3.2 However, the same cannot be said for most state police organizations. Some states may have provided some equipment at various levels. This is because many states have created SDRF. In many states, it is composed of police personal only. Moreover, there is a strong presence of NDRF in most disaster-prone states, as well as easy availability of NDRF units from GOI for the management of serious disasters.

In this background, this report has attempted to understand whether the state police force has developed any infrastructure for DM at various levels. It needs to be mentioned here that no significant information/data could be gathered in this regard.

3.3 Development of Additional Disaster Management Infrastructure

3.3.1 Some states have taken further steps by developing a dedicated institutional framework, such as West Bengal's setup at the Block and Panchayat levels. Various positions are designated at different administrative levels within the district to ensure a comprehensive approach to disaster management.

3.3.2 In Bihar, the state has developed the Bihar State Disaster Resource Network (BSDRN), which is seamlessly integrated into the Indian Disaster Resource Network (IDRN). BSDRN serves as a comprehensive state repository of databases for emergency and disaster management. Its primary purpose is to support stakeholders and administration at various levels in enhancing preparedness and response during emergency situations. The data available through this platform is designed to empower emergency response managers with the information they need, including equipment, skilled human resources, and critical supplies for an effective response. The portal's main



focus is to provide decision- makers with quick access to information regarding the availability of essential resources for responding to specific disasters. The ultimate goal of BSDRN is to establish a systematic inventory of equipment and skilled personnel, enabling disaster managers to swiftly locate and utilize resources for immediate and effective responses, particularly within the critical "Golden hour" that plays a crucial role in minimizing casualties.

This represents a robust system for ensuring the integrated availability of resources at all administrative levels.



3.4 Integration with existing ERSS, 101, 102

Numerous state governments and police agencies have set up Emergency Response Support Systems (ERSS-112), which now serve as the central coordinating entities for various types of emergency response agencies.

Their influence extends far and deep, with many states witnessing a significant enhancement of their system. This improvement is notably reflected in reduced response times. However, it is important to note that their coverage may still be limited in many areas where various disasters, such as drowning, lightning strikes, and floods, commonly occur. These incidents often originate in villages, where the presence of the 112 system may not be robust. Therefore, while acknowledging these achievements, we must exercise caution.

When the police organizations at the state, district, and police station levels successfully establish and institutionalize their disaster management infrastructure, it can be seamlessly integrated with the district administration.

3.5 Recommendations

- The State Govt. should explore the development of a framework for standardizing infrastructure creation at the district and police station levels in a subsequent phase with the help of NDRF.



- Nonetheless, the disaster management response mechanism must converge with the Emergency Response Support Systems (ERSS). The services of 112 should be integrated with the state Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to ensure a coordinated and unified response.



Chapter-4

DEVELOPING OF POLICE CAPACITIES IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

(A) Developing Human Resource Capacities

4.1 This chapter seeks to understand the prevailing conditions in respect of training for policemen in states

Are policemen trained for responding to district-specific disasters:

Many times policemen believe that DM is something different from their core function of maintenance of law and order and crime control. DM is also apart of the same as poor handling or management of disasters/incidents results in law and order. Here it may not be out of place to mention that 75% of incidents of law and order are born out of this. Inadequate response on the part of police results in law and order and security issues which also adversely affects the police image.

- The golden hour is the time when most lives can be saved and it is to be handled by police and the local community. This will also give an immense boost to police image as was observed during covid.
- The response has to be more comprehensive, effective, swift, and well-planned based on a well-conceived response mechanism.
- Home guards and fire service too should be included as first responders. Fire service should be built as a multi-hazard response force. They could be a big force multiplier.
- NDRF and SDRF, wherever available have done a tremendous job. However, they should be called where the local responders seem inadequate to avoid over deployment. Police and the Local community support the NDRF and SDRF on their arrival and both are complimentary to each other.

4.2 Unfortunately, most state police organizations have not met the requirement of preparing the policemen and creating infrastructure including training in their organisation for disaster management, even with the creation of State Disaster Response Forces (SDRF) by several states of different structures and sizes.

4.3 Where SDRF have been established, often the police leadership can erroneously assume that once an SDRF is operational, there is no need for further training or recruitment of police personnel in disaster management. Consequently, it has been seen there is no institutional framework for disaster



management training or recruitment at the state, district, or police station levels.

4.4 Police leadership must acknowledge the inherent limitations of both the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and SDRF, such as their distance from the incident site, extended response times, and potential lack of familiarity with local conditions. This limitation makes it incumbent upon police leadership to consider strengthening the local police which responds to various disasters, but without requisite training and equipment. These constraints necessitate that police leadership consider involving the local police, who are often ill-prepared to respond to various disasters despite their active involvement. Local police are typically the first to arrive at the scene, operating from police stations, along with auxiliary agencies. A poignant example of this is evident in past incidents like the train accidents in Balasore and Buxar. (2 June 2023 and 11 October 2023 respectively).



Train accident at Balasore



Train accident at Buxar

4.5 In Buxar, the local police took charge of rescue operations and implemented other measures long before the NDRF/SDRF and railway rescue teams could arrive, mainly due to their close proximity to the incident site. Both SDRF and NDRF had to travel a significant distance of 80 kilometers. As a result, the police are typically the first responders in situations, whether they are minor or major incidents. This has been evident in numerous incidents across the country, where lives are at stake due to drowning, with the police often reaching the scene ahead of the NDRF or SDRF, depending on the circumstances.

Developing Training modules on DM in Police Training Centers:

4.6 As per information collected during the study- not much though, few states have developed their systems for preparing the police for DM. For instance, Maharashtra, UP, and Bihar are known to have elements, (to say



the least inadequate) of disaster management in training modules for policemen in the training centers. Most states do not have district/ police stations police have been somewhat trained and equipped for first response. However, it does not seem to be in an organized way or in a standardized form.

4.7 The Bihar State Disaster Management Authority, in collaboration with the police headquarters, has devised a comprehensive training module titled "Training of Bihar Police Service Officers on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Management." for the ranks of Deputy Superintendent (Dy. SP) and Additional Superintendent (Add. SP). The training module can be accessed on the www.bsdma.org.

Furthermore, BSDMA and the police department have collaboratively designed a training module and program aimed at enhancing the capabilities of police personnel. This training, specifically tailored for sub-inspectors and those below their rank, is conducted at the Bihar Police Academy in Rajgir. Notably, the training module for Bihar police officers has been seamlessly integrated into the foundational training curriculum for Deputy Superintendents (Dy. SP) at the Bihar Police Academy.

In a similar vein, the Uttar Pradesh Police training center also includes a component on disaster management in its training program, although the level of detail provided to the police personnel is comparatively limited.

(B) Equipment and Resources for Police Forces

4.8 A lathi-wielding policeman is not an appropriate resource to respond to disaster situations. He is necessary to be trained and equipped to respond to the disasters.

With training the trained police force could be able to utilize equipment available with disaster management authorities at district and lower level as in some states, including municipal bodies. NDRF and SDRF are equipped with a lot of equipment. But, there is a time lag which could be substantial and fatal in many cases therefore, the need for urgent rescue must be kept in mind.

4.9 The disaster management discipline has evolved rapidly over the previous two decades, but the policeman, the first responder, has not been so well trained or equipped as far as his response is concerned. His skill level, cultural practices, and mental model have not been upgraded. In a recent flood situation in a coastal town in a state which has been devastated by floods almost every year for the past three years due to some developmental issues, the police found itself in a piquant situation when it had to respond to three landslides in the rural areas, one of which washed away the entire village killing



89 people those who were present in the village. The nearby town was submerged in 10 feet deep water due to torrential rains and cloud burst in the adjoining district. The police station was cut-off from the rest of the town rendering it dysfunctional. The communication system also failed and it could be restored only after two days of effort whereas the police station functioning resumed after a week. After the event when the Superintendent of Police and his team took stock of their capacity in responding to future disasters, they found themselves grossly inadequate as far as the availability of tools of the trade was concerned.

After the stocktaking, they wrote to the District Collector to supply them with the equipment for responding to natural and man-made disasters in the future. The lessons learned by the police in coastal town flood and landslide incidents point towards the fact that the police, as the first responders, still are under-equipped. The police need to acquire basic equipment for responding to torrential rains and floods.

Besides, learning from the experience gained during the response to the said disasters, the Superintendent of Police planned to overhaul its communication system by creating redundancy and he also planned to upgrade the system by acquiring satellite phones.

As the rains and floods are the most frequently occurring phenomena in some areas, the pre-monsoon meetings conducted by the concerned agencies for preparation for the rainy season or for reviewing the preparations for the same, do not pay adequate attention to the capacity and operational requirements for responding to the anticipated disasters during the monsoon period. Such review meetings should also focus on the availability of equipments available with the first responders and with the Incident Response Teams (IRTs) in advance.

4.10 It is also true that the anticipated disasters may or may not happen any time soon or they may never happen at all as in the case of earthquakes in some areas, and the investment made for creating capacity may be perceived as a wastage of scarce economic resources, but such expenditure is necessary to address all contingencies.

4.11 Road accidents, being major disasters, the traffic mobiles which respond to the accidents or other situations on the highways, should ideally have the required equipment. For capacity building of police forces in terms of equipping them to respond effectively has to be seen at two ends. Firstly, at training centers for the training of personnel, and secondly at the response level.



At the response level, the availability of equipment needs to be thought of at a minimum of 2 police stations and districts. Clearly, there are different requirements at both levels. The police station has to be equipped with the equipment that may be needed to respond within the golden hour. While districts may be equipped with some heavier ones with trained teams.

4.12 While doing so it must borne in mind that many states are today working with their own SDRF formed out of police or fire personnel or similar trained uniform people working for disaster management. In addition, some states also have the presence of NDRF. Many states have procured equipment at district levels. Fire services and civil defense, especially fire services too have a strong presence up to the police station level in many states. In fact, fire services are, in some states, trained for other disasters too apart from firefighting. Civil defense has a strong presence in urban areas. Urban bodies in many states are also equipped to handle many disasters. All these elements need to work together. Therefore pooling of resources will maximize our response.

The issue of perceived wastage can easily be addressed by having mutual aid agreements through the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) headed by the District Magistrate/ Collector responsible for disaster management as per the National Disaster management Act 2005. Therefore even if policemen are trained, they can very well use such equipment owned by sister organizations.

4.13 The committee reviews that the equipment would be as per requirement which again depends on the nature of the disaster and the role that is required to be played e.g. a wall collapse and road accident would require different types of equipment. Moreover, the equipment should be restricted to the containment of the incident as the first responder and support to SDRF/NDRF, etc. if and when they come. They should be at the district level and police station level. The heavy equipment should be kept at the district level while those of instant use, like, live-saving equipment, medical kits etc. should be provided at the police station level. Equally important is the provision of equipment for training as well.



It has to be borne in mind that such equipment also require maintenance and storage, therefore infrastructure development should cover these aspects too.

4.14 Recommendations

- Standardized module for training of policemen in police training institutions is needed both for induction and in-service courses. This would require the development of the material and trainers.
- State Govt. to take up the task of developing training modules with the help of NDRF/SDRF and enhance the capacity building of police.
- After reviewing the ground situation based on limited data it is recommended that the first responders such as the police, Home Guards, and Civil Defence volunteers should be provided with basic equipment for responding to disaster situations, as a bare-handed policeman or Home Guard volunteer cannot inspire confidence among the victims of the disasters.
- Risk Assessment: It is further recommended that each district should identify the types of disasters which occur or are likely to occur in their areas and then decide to equip the first responders with the equipment appropriate for such disasters. Every disaster may produce unique types of situations and problems which may require disaster-specific equipment to respond to the situation. In case of an earthquake, earth and debris moving equipment may be required whereas, in a fire incident, responders may require hydraulic platforms for raising the first responders above the surface for rescuing the people. In flood situations, boats and statures are more appropriate equipment. Similarly, in a situation of earthquake and road accident, volunteers or paramedics having training in handling mechanical injuries may be the appropriate resources whereas in fire incidents they have no role at all or may be a limited role at the most.
- It has to be borne in mind that such equipment also require maintenance and storage, therefore infrastructure development should cover these aspects too.
- Equipment should also be planned for capacity-building functions in training centers.
- As mentioned above, there have to be different sets of equipment at the district and police station level. (Not that the suggested list is only suggestive as the committee had a limited mandate). It is recommended to constitute a committee to determine the equipment in consultation with all partner agencies including fire and civil defense and disaster management departments.



- As there are several agencies involved in disaster response as mentioned earlier, the requirement must be evaluated in that perspective. In any case, in disaster situations or VIP movements, the districts borrow men and materials from the neighboring districts or even from the state-level agencies. Therefore pooling of resources will maximize response. Moreover, there can be mutual aid agreements with them. This will ensure equipment is best used.
- The project team is of the view that when the district authorities carry out the hazard, vulnerability, and risk analysis of their disaster-prone areas to identify the likely hazards which could harm the population in specific areas, they should also identify the equipment that will be appropriate and useful for responding to such disasters. However, a list of equipment for common use during the disaster response has been compiled and listed in the **Annexure- I**.



Chapter-5

FUNDING WINDOW

5.1 The requirements of capacity building and the creation of infrastructure would naturally involve expenditure. This is being seen as a constraint by many. Therefore, the project team has looked at various sources of finance that can be made available for the police forces.

5.2 The Finance Commission has recommended funds for disaster management both for response and mitigation including capacity building and mitigation. These funds are the National Disaster Response Fund and State Disaster Mitigation Fund. Based on these recommendations/provisions, the Ministry of Home, GoI, the nodal ministry has earmarked/allotted funds to states. The table below will provide details of allocation for disaster management in the country.

Funds (percentage distribution)	Amount (in Cr)
SDMF (20)	32,031
SDRF (80)	1,28,122
<i>i) Response and Relief (40)</i>	64,061
<i>ii) Recovery and Reconstruction (30)</i>	48,046
<i>iii) Preparedness and Capacity Building (10)</i>	16,015
Total (SDMF + SDRF) (100)	1,60,153
Source: XV FC Report 2020, Chapter-8	

As is evident, the allocation for the period is indeed huge. In a new development, the Finance Commission has earmarked 20% of the total for mitigation work exclusively which again can be used for preparation and other disaster risk reduction work. In addition, 10% of the allocation of SDRF has been allocated for capacity building. All of this totals to several thousands of crores.



Unfortunately, the police are generally not aware of these provisions and therefore not able to take advantage. The police should utilize these funds. A large chunk of this fund is meant for capacity building of responders. GOI has also made separate provisions for the modernization of fire services in states. The Finance Commission has also earmarked 1800 crore rupees for capacity building of fire services. These provisions are managed by departments of disaster management/home as the case may be.

5.3 Funds are also available from the police modernization plan and state plans of the Department of Home/ Disaster Management, urban development, etc. The home department provides funds for training each year. This component can always be built into the annual budget. State disaster management authorities too are engaged in capacity-building activities. So are administrative training institutes of states. Response agencies must get acquainted with these provisions.

5.4 Recommendations

The creation of infrastructure for the management of disasters at the state and district levels involves expenditure. The training institutions of police, home guards, fire services, and SDRF need to either create infrastructure or strengthen it if already available. The capacity building of the personnel, which includes the development of training content, would again require funds. In this regard, the Government of India had allocated earmarked funds for such activities. There are quite a few sources which can be utilized for the above purpose.

- The 15th Finance Commission (2021-26) has recommended (Chapter-8) funds for the management of disasters both for response and mitigation. These funds are the State Disaster Response Fund & State Disaster Mitigation Fund.
- There is a separate component for capacity building and preparedness. 10% of the total allocation of Rs.1,60,153 crore is for preparation and capacity building.
- The departments of state government, looking after the subject of disaster management, (Home, Revenue, or Disaster Management) also provide funds for such activities.
- Separate funds are earmarked for the modernization of Fire Services.
- Police modernization funds.
- State plan of the Department of Home etc.
- The training budget of the state police.



The state police force is advised to take advantage of the above provisions to prepare themselves for the safety of their workforce and assets as well as the safety of the community whenever deployed for the management of disasters which are happening frequently.

All DGPs are requested to acquaint their Budgeting Verticals regarding all funding provisions so that they can include demands for budget for disaster management, and capacity building among the police units in the States.

State-level police training institutes should also be tasked to design training programs for apprising police units about budgeting for disaster management capacity building along with training policemen for learning disaster mitigation capabilities both in basic and in-service training.



Chapter-6

WAY FORWARD

6.1 State governments and district administrations are facing rising expectations of people for timely and proper response. This is being made stronger by instant coverage by TV channels now working at district/city levels, hyperactive social media and private video channels, and the millions of mobile phones with cameras. Their instant coverage forces accountability, and timely decision making and makes it incumbent upon Police to respond adequately and timely. This naturally requires sound preparedness among the first responders.

6.2 This combined with the changing profile of disasters from floods and earthquakes to heat waves, lightning, and road, and rail accidents requires a **paradigm shift in approach from reactive response to proactive pre-disaster preventive action popularly known as disaster risk management/reduction**. The most important element is: **Police have to adopt disaster management as a primary function.**

6.3 Big disasters occur occasionally, while small disasters like road accidents, train accidents, fire, boat capsizing, drowning, lightning, and collapsed buildings, happen frequently. When we mention big disasters, it is meant to indicate incidents which are beyond the handling capacity of local responders. Here, the administration takes the help of specialized forces, including NDRF and SDRF, and in exceptional cases, defence forces and CAPF units CRPF, CISF, SSB, etc, located nearby. It is the local administration with the help of local police, fire services, health services, community volunteers, and civil defence that handles all disasters. Even in big disasters/emergencies, it is the local police which with the support of sister agencies provide rescue and relief during the golden hour. Naturally so, most disasters are handled by police only. Proximity of the response agency is key in early and speedy response and mitigation. More importantly, most disasters do not give much window for response. Hence, invariably, local responders play a critical role in the golden hour.

6.4 On the other hand, external forces have huge limitations. Therefore, Police need to be free from dependence on SDRF/NDRF. There is an inadequate appreciation of the immense 'Force multiplier' benefits of a trained and equipped police force available closest to the incident site. Another very potent response agency, fire services remains unutilized throughout the monsoon which incidentally is when most disasters are known to happen.



6.5 Given the above background, there is need for entrusting this function to the police through various documents meant for disaster management issued either by the NDMA, the apex body, state-level SDMAs, and departments of the governments responsible for DM, district level DDMAs, Police Acts or SOPs, etc. And therefore, naturally, so there is a visible deficit in building the capacity of the police forces.

The entire issue has been discussed in the previous chapters and effort has been made to provide a framework for integrating the police in the main frame of management of disasters/emergencies.

- The first objective of the study is to **identify the role of police** forces. The project team is of the view that the scope of police as first responders be restricted to saving lives in addition to maintenance of law & order, and security in "Golden Hour". The scope should be specific to disaster and not general. Training and equipment will depend on the role/disaster.
- **Capacity building.** There is need to be trained and equipped the police to handle the disaster situation. The study made efforts to understand the status of training for Disaster Management being imparted in state training institutions both for senior officers and police station-level policemen. Based on the limited information available, it is felt that such institutions either do not have any input or do not have proper training modules for training. Naturally so there is no infrastructure including equipment to support such requirements. The SDRF which is also made up of policemen does have the training input.

6.6 Recommendations

- **Standard module for training of policemen in training institutions:** Both in induction and in service. Ideally, this should begin from the National Police Academy. This would include the development of the material and trainers. States could take up the task of developing training modules as per their requirement. As of now, the Bihar State Disaster Management Authority and police organization of Bihar have developed a training module for Deputy SPs and above which has been used for training of all officers of Bihar Police Service (Dy. SPs. and Addl. SPs.). This module has been adopted in the induction training of Dy. SPs. This has been discussed in a chapter on capacity building earlier. A similar module is ready for inspectors and below, i.e., those working at the police station level.



- **Support for states in capacity building:**

Each state has a number of police training centers as well as state administrative academies catering to the training of all government functionaries. CAPFs have their own training capacities spread all over India. NDRF has its own training center. The National Police Academy is always there for senior officers. In addition, we have the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) which conducts training and other capacity-building programmes for all. There is NISA, a center for excellence in DM managed by CISF. These centers are available for the training of police. In case any state government or police organization requires training outside their state for master trainers or specialized training, these institutes can be approached directly or through MHA, NDMA, or their own state government.

- **Capacity Building Equipment:**

The Project team after reviewing the ground situation based on limited data though is of the opinion that the first responders such as the police, Home Guards, and Civil Defence volunteers should be provided with basic equipments for responding to disaster situations as bare-handed policemen or Home Guard volunteer cannot inspire confidence among the victims of the disasters.



It is further recommended that each district should identify the types of disasters which do occur or are likely to occur in their areas and then decide to equip the first responders with the equipment appropriate for similar types of disasters. Every disaster will require disaster-specific equipment. In case of an earthquake, earth and debris moving equipment may be required whereas in a fire incident, responders may require hydraulic platforms for raising the first responders above the surface for rescuing the people. In case of fire, the fire services are very well equipped. For floods, they may require different things. Here it needs to be mentioned that most states do have boats and similar lifesaving materials and equipment at the district level, in addition to



those owned by SDRF. Similarly, for road accidents, police manning 112 vehicles or even highway patrols need to be properly trained and equipped to provide immediate help.



- It has to be borne in mind that such equipment also requires maintenance storage etc. Therefore, infrastructure development should include such functions too.
- Once the decision is taken to include, the DM component in the training schedule, police would need to create an appropriate infrastructure to support it. Since a major portion of equipment should also be planned for capacity-building functions in training centers.
- As mentioned above, there have to be different set of equipment at the district and police station level. It is recommended to constitute a committee to determine the equipment in consultation with all partner agencies including fire and civil defense and disaster management departments.



As there are several agencies involved in disaster response as mentioned earlier, the requirement must be evaluated from that perspective. Therefore, the pooling of resources will maximize our response. Moreover, we could have mutual aid agreements with them. This will ensure equipment are best used.



References:-

1. The Tenth Five Year Plan: 2002-07, Disaster Management-The Development Perspective.
2. 15th Finance Commission Report, 2020
3. Crisis Management (Third Report Second Administrative Reforms Commission)
4. Disaster Management: The Development Perspective
5. Disaster Management Act 2005
6. Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (GAR), 2022 (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction)
7. High Powered Committee on Disaster Management Report, 2001



Annexure- I

MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR POLICE SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS

Sr. No	Items	Uses
1.	Gemini inflatable rubberized boat	To evacuate the citizens trapped in the flood.
2.	Steel Hand cutter	To cut the iron ore while rescuing the trapped passengers in the vehicle involved in an accident on the Highway.
3.	Wood Hand cutter	For chopping down trees that have fallen on the road or on a vehicle.
4.	Generator 2 Kilowatt	Steel hand cutters, wood hand cutters, and generators are used to light the way in the event of an accident on the Highway.
5.	Foldable Stretcher	For accidental use purposes.
6.	Folding Multi Stretcher	For accidental use purposes.
7.	Dinghy	For flood defences.
8.	OBM Engine	For flood defences.
9.	Search Torch	For search and rescue operations
10.	Safety Helmet with Torch	For search and rescue operations
11.	Rescue Rope	For search and rescue operations
12.	Rescue Kit	For search and rescue operations
13.	Body Cover Bag	For search and rescue operations
14.	Body Cover Bag (Women & Children)	For search and rescue operations
15.	Body Cover Bag (Small Children)	For search and rescue operations
16.	Lifejacket	For search and rescue operations
17.	Scuba Diving Suit	For search and rescue operations
18.	Life Ring Boy	For search and rescue operations
19.	Rain suit	For search and rescue operations
20.	Canvas Suit (Waterproof)	For search and rescue operations