

LOCALIZED HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION MODEL

Based on learning from Mirpur
Earthquake Response 2019

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NHN
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LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

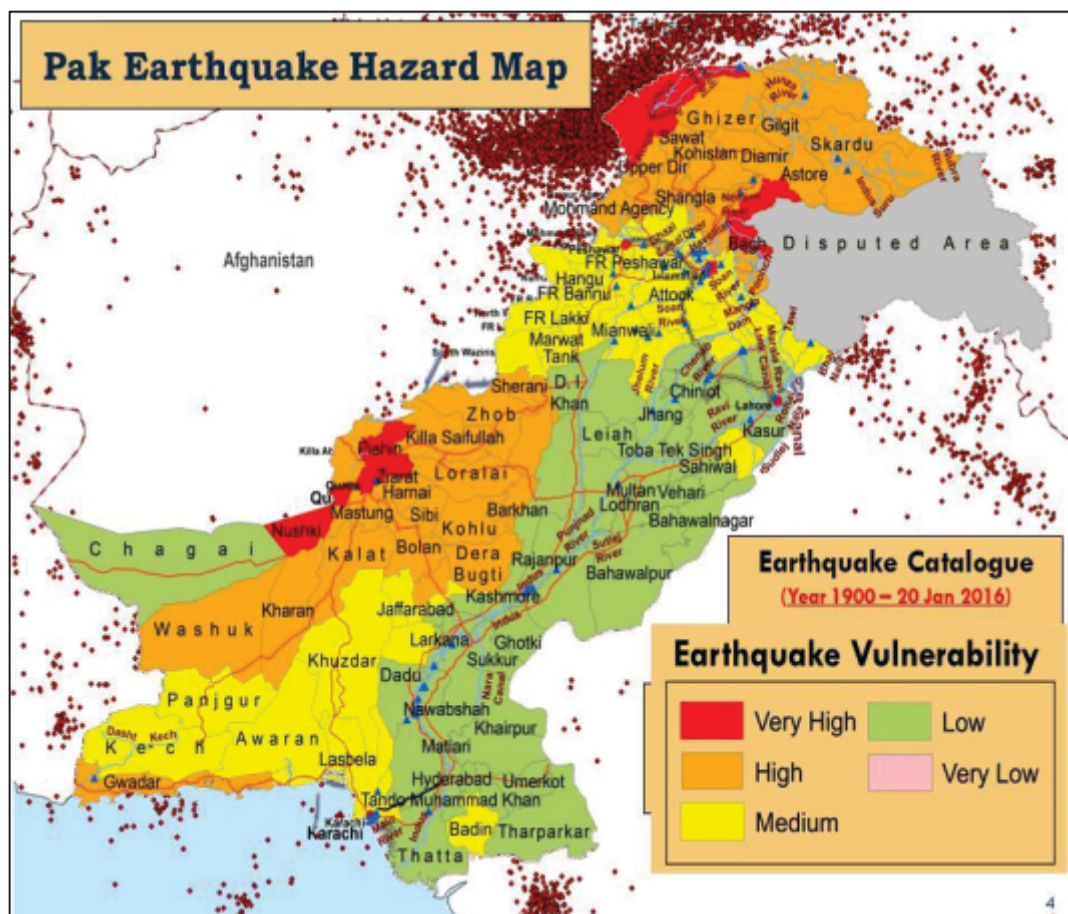
<i>AJK</i>	Azad Jammu & Kashmir
<i>AC</i>	Assistant Commissioner
<i>COVID-19</i>	Corona Virus Disease 2019
<i>CHS</i>	Core Humanitarian Standards
<i>CBO</i>	Community-based Organization
<i>CEO</i>	Chief Executive Officer
<i>DC</i>	Deputy Commissioner
<i>DCO</i>	District Coordination Officer
<i>DDMA</i>	District Disaster Management Authority
<i>DRR</i>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<i>EAD</i>	Economic Affairs Divisions
<i>EDO</i>	Executive District Officer
<i>GIS</i>	Geographic Information System
<i>INGO</i>	International Non-government Organization
<i>KII</i>	Key Informant Interview
<i>MOU</i>	Memorandum of Understanding
<i>NDMA</i>	National Disaster Management Authority
<i>NDRMF</i>	National Disaster Risk Management Fund
<i>NGO</i>	Non-government Organization
<i>NHN</i>	National Humanitarian Network
<i>NOC</i>	No Objection Certificate
<i>PMD</i>	Pakistan Meteorological Department
<i>SDMA</i>	State Disaster Management Authority
<i>SDMC</i>	State Disaster Management Commission

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Pakistan lies on the boundary of the Eurasian, Arabian and Indian tectonic plates. The sudden releases of stored strain energy during the slow collision of these plates makes the region one of the world's hotspots for earthquakes. Mercalli Intensity (intensity of shaking on surface) along this hotspot has been as high as level IX (violent) or XI (extreme) during major events. From 1900-2015, the region has had 3 earthquakes of seismic magnitude 8.0 and 28 earthquakes of mag. 7.0-7.9 and 150 events of magnitude 6.0-6.9. Around 9% of earthquakes in the region are mag. 5.0-5.9, 64% are mag. 4.0-4.9 and 25% are mag. 3.0-3.9.

Due to the combination of Pakistan's vulnerability to earthquakes and its unpreparedness, the region has had many devastating Earthquakes. The most devastating Earthquake on record was the 2005 Kashmir Earthquake, which had a mag. of 7.8 and a Mercalli intensity of VII (severe) while occurring near population centers, causing 87,000 deaths and a further 3.5 million people to become homeless.¹ Other major seismic events with a high Mercalli intensity that occurred near populated areas include the Quetta earthquake in 1935 (which killed up to 60,000 with unknown number injured), 1974 Hunza Earthquake (killed 5300 and injured 17,000), 1945 Makran earthquake (up to 4000 killed), and 2013 Awaran earthquake in 2013 (825 deaths). Such events are often accompanied by major economic losses and homelessness among the poor population, though data on economic assessment of damages is not always available.

Figure below shows the epicenters of earthquakes with a magnitude larger than 4, between 1905 and 2016, as compiled by Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) and United States Geological Survey (USGS). It is notable that seismicity is especially high in the northern and western parts of the country. Historical records show that earthquakes as small as magnitude 4 have caused some deaths in Pakistan.



¹ Pakistan Weather Portal

MIRPUR EARTHQUAKE 2019

On 24th of Sep 2019, an earthquake, with a magnitude of 5.8² and Mercalli Intensity of VII (Very Strong) hit the Mirpur District in Azad Jammu & Kashmir. The epicenter of the shallow earthquake was near New Mirpur City. The earthquake caused severe damage to several hundred houses with 40 killed and 850 injured. Two bridges were reported damaged and parts of several roads were affected, particularly 14 km of the Main Jatlun Road. First response and damage assessments were coordinated between NDMA, PDMA Punjab and AJ&K State Disaster Management Authorities Emergency Operations, all of whom deployed 110 rescuers, medical teams, 20 rescue vehicles, heavy vehicles (to clear rubble and repair roads) and offices to deal with the needs of the affected and help local authorities. Other hospitals such as PIMS in Islamabad also sent doctors and remained on standby to receive injured.



Photo: People gather next to a damaged road in an earthquake-hit area on the outskirts of Mirpur on September 25, 2019. – AFP

Many residents had to sleep outdoors overnight, and rescue efforts and reconnecting the area with roads went smoothly, albeit hampered by the rain.

According to the Pakistan 2017 Census data, the total population of Mirpur district was approximately 456,000 people at the time. After the disaster, Reuters reported, citing architects, that the poor construction standards and methods made the population vulnerable.³

The following table⁴ gives an overview of risk of natural disasters over the years in various districts of AJ&K, based on historical patterns. From the table, we can see that the highest risks to districts in AJK come from Earthquakes, landslides, avalanches, seasonal flooding and flash flooding.

Legend:

		Extreme	High	Moderate	Low	Nil						
Sr. #	Districts	Earthquake	Landslide	Avalanche	Flash Floods	Seasonal Flood	Cloud Burst	Wind Storm	Lightening	Drought	Epidemics	Forest Fire
1	Muzafarabad	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
2	Neelum	Moderate	High	High	Moderate	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	High
3	Jhelum Valley	High	High	Moderate	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
4	Bagh	High	High	Moderate	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
5	Haveli	Moderate	High	Moderate	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
6	Poonch	High	Moderate	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
7	Sudhnoti	High	High	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
8	Kotli	High	Low	Low	Moderate	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
9	Mirpur	Moderate	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
10	Bhimber	Moderate	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

² Pakistan Metrological Department Report

³ "Shoddy homes worsen Pakistan earthquake damage". Reuters (Sept 2019)

⁴ http://sdma.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/State-DRM-Plan_AJK_Revised.pdf

OBJECTIVES & SCOPE OF STUDY

START Fund's emergency response has created significant outcomes since there were limited funds available initially for Mirpur Earthquake Response. START Fund has made this medium level response possible in a situation where humanitarian operation in Pakistan is challenging and communication and cooperation between governments, international and local NGO actors are often due to establishment of the locally led coordination mechanism. START consortium partners engaged with the National Humanitarian Network (NHN).

Due to START Fund, earthquake response activities were better targeted to reach beneficiaries. START Fund also contributed to increasing capacity of government and local NGO stakeholders for future coordination and planning. START Fund alert 371 provided immediate assistance to earthquake-affected communities in Mirpur and Bhimber districts in Azad, Jammu and Kashmir.

This paper studying the localized coordination model of the Mirpur Response has been commissioned to explore lessons learnt, contextual and institutional set-ups, best practices and gaps. Based on the experiences and learning drawn, this paper will feed into the creation of a model for localized coordination mechanisms for other medium-scale disasters in Pakistan as well as strengthen coordination of actors in Mirpur/AJK and other districts in Pakistan.

METHODOLOGY

In consideration of the scope of the paper, the presentation of this model comprises of a literature review, primary data collection through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and a consultation meeting to cross-validate the findings & draft humanitarian coordination model.

Based on literature review, the data collection tools for KIIs were designed. A purposive sample⁵ for KIIs was taken for the study in the month of May 2020 while during the study a few more key informants were added on snowballing⁶ approach. In consultation with NHN and ACTED, a diversified list of relevant target individuals from government and NGOs were finalized however additional individuals were interviewed as per information needs. The list of key informants interviewed is annexed as Annexure A.

The key informants interviewed were the representatives from different government authorities, departments and NGOs who were engaged in Mirpur Earthquake Response. The key representatives attended the cross-validation consultation meeting from government and NGOs at national level. Majority of these participants were humanitarian specialists in their respective organizations and senior officials such as Directors, Executive or Operating Officers from government authorities.

During data collection, team continued the review of key findings on daily basis.

One challenge faced during the conducting of this study is the global outbreak of covid19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown imposed in Pakistan. Because of the lockdown, various team members were unable to travel and were stuck at different locations. To resolve this, the staff coordinated every evening through Skype and created an online planner schedule on which each day's progress was reported by team members.

⁵ [“Purposive sampling”, Research-methodology.net](https://www.research-methodology.net/purposive-sampling/)

⁶ [“Snowball Sample”, Research-Methodology.net](https://www.research-methodology.net/snowball-sample/)

LIMITATIONS & CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES

- Due to the covid19 crisis (and travel restrictions amid lockdown), some of the data collection could not be conducted except using mobile phones or Skype. As such, the initial timeline was changed. Accordingly, analysis and reporting has been a race against time.
- The respondents were comfortable in sharing qualitative information during an interview or discussion but couldn't furnish the quantitative data such as scale of their response or other response related programmatic information.
- The current strict policy regime of the government towards NGOs including recent actions has made a few respondents hesitant to share information.
- Due to restrictions on travel and public gatherings amid COVID 19, the cross-validation consultation could not be organized inviting all at one place and had to be organized using online platform. The internet connectivity kept on disturbing the participation and communication during the consultation; and remained a challenge.

LIMITATIONS

- Representatives of NGOs indicated that they wish to remain cautious in light of the current strict policy regime of the government towards NGOs. As such, respondents may not have spoken candidly when giving responses, with an intention to remain politically correct and avoid trouble with the government.
- Personal bias of the respondents was observed during various interviews; thus, only cross-validated findings could be added.
- Many respondents are not well-aware of humanitarian architecture in Pakistan and globally; thus, could not formulate their responses in comparative quality parameters that are generally considered for effective coordination.
- It wasn't possible to visit the field due to current lockdown situation amid COVID-19 and respondents in general used to feel fatigued because of a long duration telephonic call.

EXPERIENCE AMID COVID-19

This study was conducted amid COVID-19. Working on this study while respecting measures put in place to contain the spread of the virus (such as travel restrictions and lockdown) has been a learning journey. It's important to take note of these lessons to devise future modalities and reshape programming and implementation in the face of the long-term impact of covid19 and any future epidemics:

- During lockdowns, data collection has been conducted through phone and internet communication. This has been cost efficient but more time consuming.
- Not all respondents have adequate internet facilities. Calling over mobile is therefore more viable.
- Larger set of questions are challenging to complete, as multiple calls need to be scheduled.
- Therefore, it is advisable to keep the number of questions limited.
- Respondents tend to lose their interest generally after 20-25 minutes of discussions over the phone - thus the call should not exceed more than 25 minutes.
- It's advisable to distinguish between questions to be asked and those to be emailed. A few straight questions may better be emailed or shared in writing while only those may need to be asked in an interview, which require discussion. However, it also depends upon the type of respondents, as many may not be prompt to respond to emails due to their prior engagements. Some may not be able to type in Urdu or use electronic means of communication.
- The Humane and Social Factors cannot be ignored. Technological solutions to coordinate and work are good alternatives in current situation however, they do limit the innovation, creative thinking and analytical skills due to absence of in-person meetings.

SECTION 2: OPERATIVE FRAMEWORK OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN AZAD JAMMU & KASHMIR (AJK)

The promulgation of the National Disaster Management Ordinance, 2006 and the approval of National Disaster Risk Management Framework led to the establishment of National Disaster Management Authority as a Focal Point at the federal level, while State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) was established for Azad Jammu & Kashmir. SDMA is the statutory body mandated to act as leading agency in disaster management, its mitigation and preparedness in AJK. Its core functions include:

- Monitor, integrate, reinforce Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Measures
- Prepare strategies
- Streamline institutions, pool resources and build capacity
- Integrate monitoring standards
- Enable/establish rapid response schemes/force to reduce AJK's exposure/vulnerability
- Advocate integration of DRR measures into future socio-economic development policies

The SDMA has its operative arms in districts i.e. District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA). The DDMA is the focal organization and authority to conduct and implement the activities and actions on disaster management in District Mirpur. In pre, during and post disaster stages the DDMA holds primary importance. The DDMA is responsible for three main objectives:

- Pre disaster preparedness
- During the disaster immediate response
- Post disaster rehabilitation activities

The DDMA is a coordinating mechanism for all government agencies and non- governmental organizations operating in a district and have functions, which are important for disaster risk reduction as well as disaster response.

As per section 13 of AJK DM Act 2008, the Deputy Commissioner of Mirpur is to serve as the chairman-ex officio member of District Disaster Management Authority, Mirpur. While the additional members of the authority for effective disaster risk management, planning and implementation include⁷:

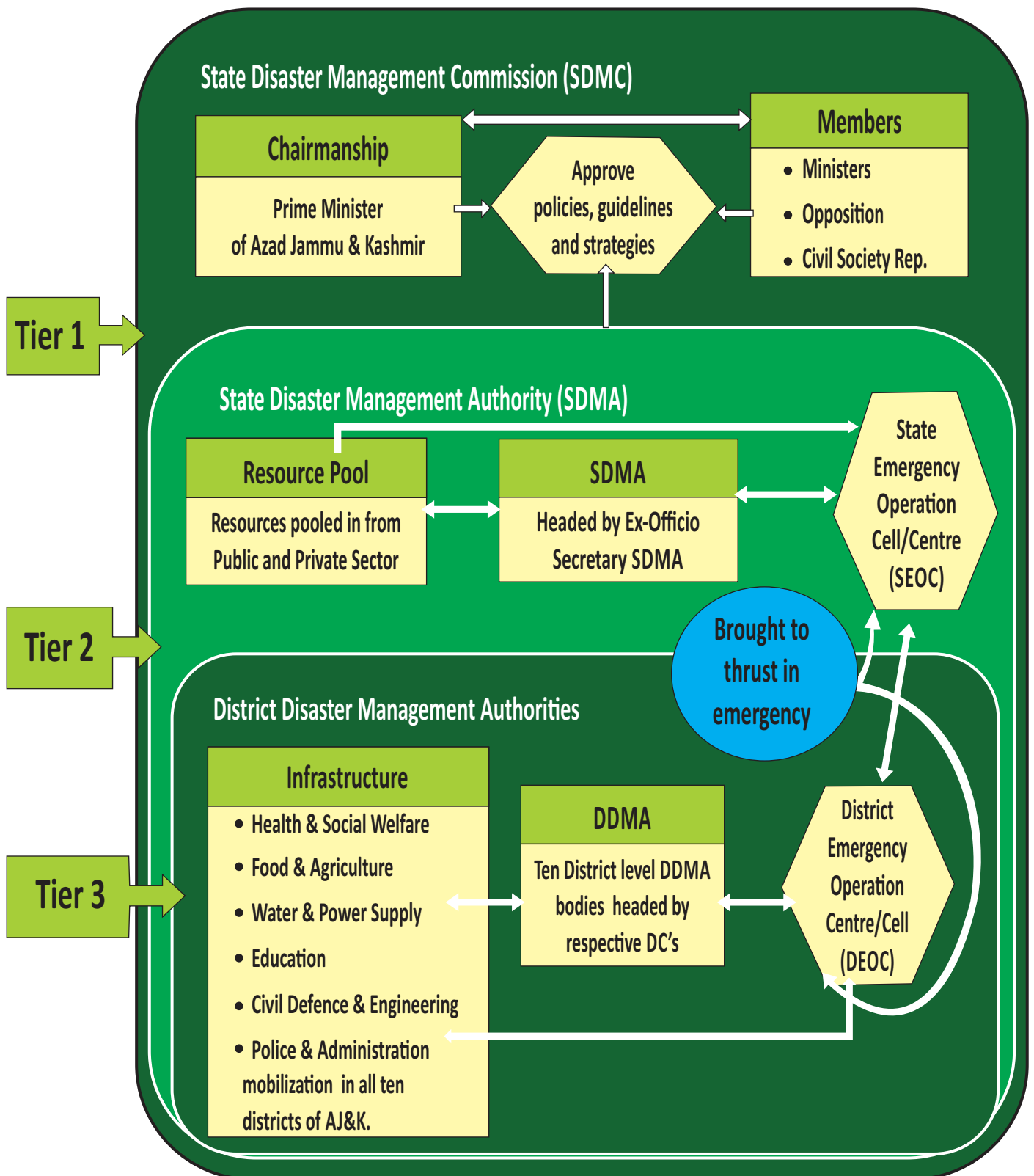
- Member of the legislative assembly from the respective district/region, ex officio - advisors
- Senior/Superintendent of police of the district, member ex officio
- District Health Officer, member, ex officio
- Assistant Director Civil Defense, member, ex officio
- Other district level officers, appointed by the government

The below illustrations⁸ explain the operative framework of disaster management authorities in AJK as noted in State Disaster Risk Management Plan of AJK. AJK State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) operates under Disaster Management Commission. The SDMA then oversees the District Disaster Management Authorities. There is an Emergency Operations Cell/Center at state and district levels, which are activated as soon as any emergency strikes. The illustration also clarifies the memberships, core structure and supporting departments across all three tiers.

⁷ <http://sdma.pk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Mirpur-V4.pdf>

⁸ [State Disaster Risk Management Plan - 2017](#)

Operative Framework



SECTION 3: LEARNING - KEY CONTRIBUTING FACTORS & ACTORS

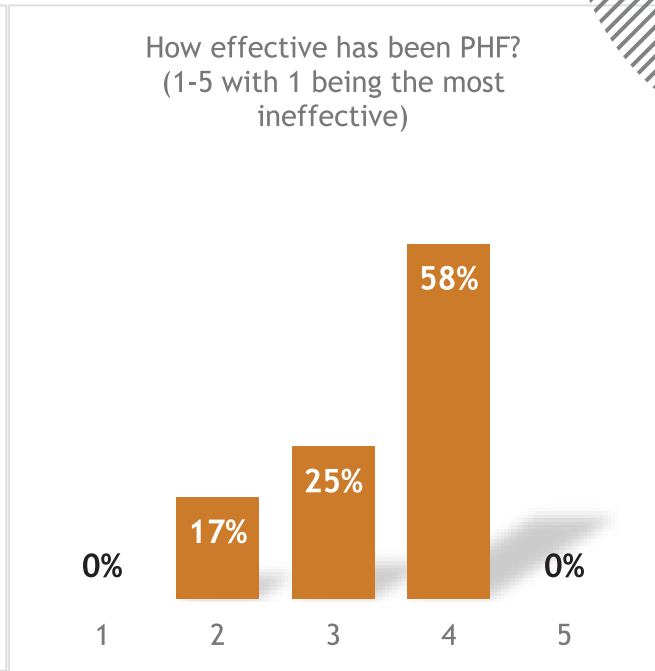
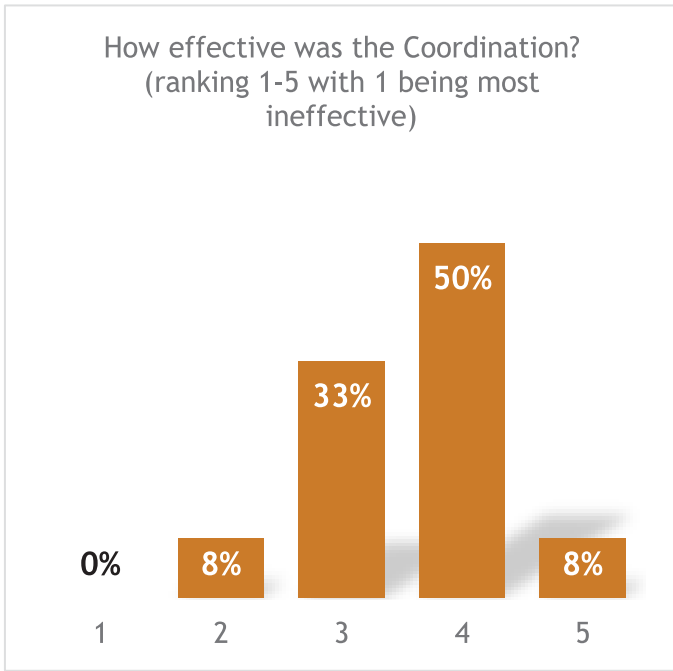
During the study, secondary literature was reviewed and key stakeholders were interviewed to learn what went well with respect to coordination and what turned out to be the obstacles or challenges. The Responses were analyzed and cross-validated; based on which the key success (good practices) and challenges (obstacles) have been identified which are presented in this section

During Mirpur Earthquake Response, the Deputy Commissioner led the coordination with civil society organizations. Emergency response was launched in accordance with pre-defined SOPs/Protocols of Government Administrative Structures (including setting up of a Control Center at Deputy Commissioner's Office) and other key line departments with local and international NGOs. Key government authorities included SDMA, Commissioner's Office, DCOs, AC, Health, Education and Social Welfare departments.

District Government was collecting the ground level data, defining the areas and was facilitating the humanitarian response organizations with the provision of timely updates, coordinating the response and in securing NOCs from relevant authorities for humanitarian assistance. Divisional Relief Commissioner was overseeing the relief operations. During the response, the humanitarian clusters with UNOCHA leadership were not activated. The key informants shared that State and District Disaster Management Authorities prefer to coordinate and lead the small to medium scale emergencies with their own capacities and without bothering the UN agencies much. NGOs were mainly engaged in coordinating with donors, was providing technical support to the government (e.g. by deploying some staff with district government for better coordination) and extending the humanitarian assistance. Additionally, the NGOs were also updating the government authorities with field data and progress reports. There were joint meetings called for updating on the progress instead of any sectoral groups.

During the study, key informants were asked if they consider the Humanitarian Coordination effective during Mirpur response and as shown in below chart, over 50% of the key informants ranked it above average (ranks 4 and 5) while 33% ranked it average and a small percentage i.e. 8% considered it less effective (ranked to 2). Similarly, the key informants were also asked if the overall role of Pakistan Humanitarian Forum remained effective during Mirpur Response. Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF)⁹ is an independent forum that represents, facilitates and supports philanthropic endeavors of 43 international non-governmental organization (INGOs) across Pakistan. It was established in 2003. 58% of the key informants ranked PHF to be effective with 25% considered it to be average and 17% ranked it less effective.

⁹ <https://pakhumanitarianforum.org/>

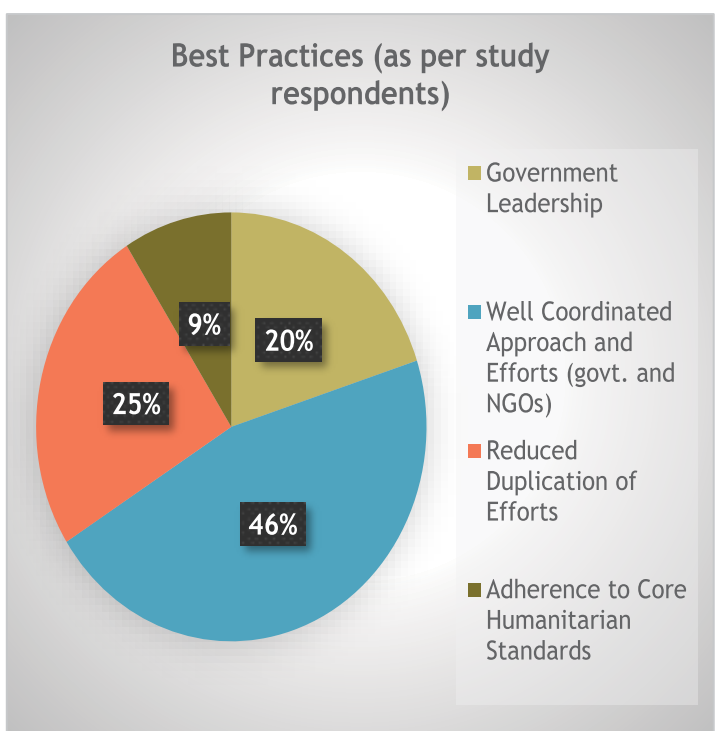


GOOD PRACTICES/SUCCESSSES

During the study, when key informants from government and NGOs were interviewed, they shared multiple factors that according to them can be considered as good practices and key successes with respect to humanitarian coordination in Mirpur Earthquake Response 2019. Among many, the majority respondents are under highlighted a few that:

WELL-COORDINATED APPROACH AND EFFORTS

46% of the total respondents highlighted an effective coordination among government agencies and NGOs as one the key success factors for this emergency response. According to the respondents, the assistance areas were well divided by the government for NGOs to work in, information and data was timely shared back after overall compilation and they were assisted with removing any obstacles in the way of their work. According to them, an unprecedented mutual support and coordination was seen during the overall response excluding the initial days. Similarly, according the key informants, the information flow was good and they were updated about all key events and plans by the government or any other agencies at coordination meetings. They recognized that there were problems and other challenges however, the level of joint efforts made a difference.



REDUCED DUPLICATIONS OF EFFORTS

25% of the respondents ranked reduced duplication of efforts as 2nd best practice in this coordination. They believed that an overall effective coordination resulted in saving the wastage of resources and reducing duplication of efforts.

GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

Government's leadership to coordinate and respond the overall response was taken up by 20% of the respondents as one of the best practices and success factor. They ranked this as an effective and strong action for better coordination and response.

ADHERENCE TO CORE HUMANITARIAN STANDARDS

It was interesting and encouraging to learn that core humanitarian standards were considered as one of the best practices by the 9% of the participants. While, this is ranked as 4th among other factors but still a major change as compared to previous emergencies; in which the international humanitarian agencies had to make extra efforts for CHS adherence; let aside that it gets highlighted or prioritized by the local humanitarian actors themselves.

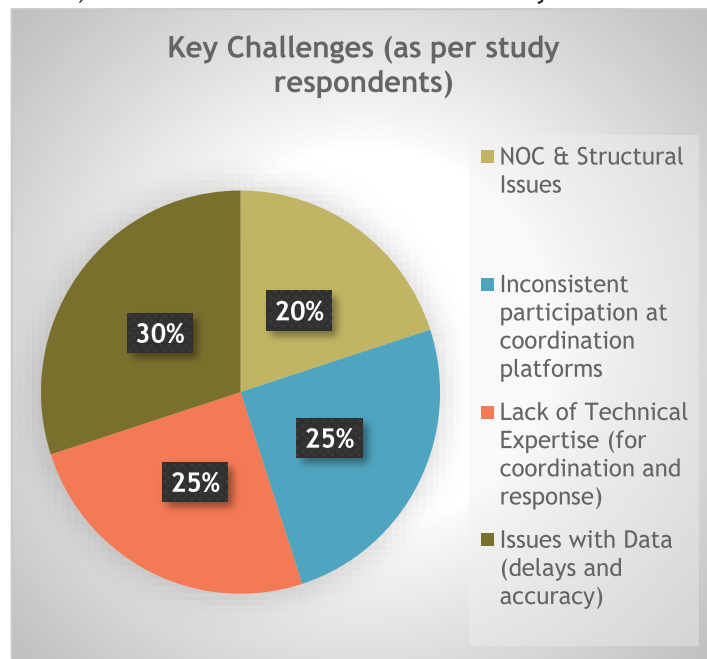
CHALLENGES & OBSTACLES

When asked about the key challenges and obstacles that hindered effective and efficient coordination, study respondents shared the below key factors:

ISSUES WITH DATA (DELAYS AND ACCURACY)

30% of the key informants shared various factors that ultimately led to the issues with the data from the field. These issues ranged from delays in data sharing to the data's reliability and accuracy. This included field reports on key needs, updates on response activities, any major incidents or developments, new funds or projects etc. Although there were dedicated persons seconded by the NGOs in Emergency Control Center for the compilation of data and data entry. However, the data from various NGOs was delayed and became a serious challenge; because as a result timely collation and compilation of information to share with broader stakeholders was not possible. Similarly, the accuracy of data also remained another major challenge because the data with obvious doubts could not be included in final reports and information packages. The data management team with district government had to spend extra time cross-validating the received data and information to share the accurate picture with higher authorities and broader stakeholders.

This wasn't limited to the field only, but also was observed when compiling and sharing the data with national level authorities. In order to address this, the data management staff in



Emergency Control Center improved their coordination with data management staff at relevant national authorities. This helped overcome the issues of misreporting/erroneous information compilation.

INCONSISTENT PARTICIPATION AT COORDINATION PLATFORMS

As observed in almost all previous emergency responses, 25% of the respondents shared the inconsistent participation of multiple individuals from same agencies in the coordination meetings. Having a changed person in every meeting not only affected the respective agency's information flow but wasn't helpful to the overall humanitarian community. Different persons attending meetings led to not being updated of the situation or previous discussions/decisions resultantly, their contribution wasn't that effective either in such cases.

LACK OF TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Lack of technical expertise was seen again as one of the key challenges. As per respondents, this was across all levels i.e. government, INGOs and local NGOs during coordination and overall response; and was highlighted by 25% of the study respondents. This included the required expertise in all areas i.e. data management, needs assessments, sectoral expertise such as health, protection, education etc.

NOC AND STRUCTURAL ISSUES

20% of the study respondents shared the issuance of NOCs to respond to emergencies and fulfilling the government's administrative and structural requirements to work as another major challenge. This of course has strong links with the NGO Policy 2013 while on the other hand is also linked with engagement of multiple agencies and authorities for issuance of an NOC.

SECTION 4: PROPOSED COORDINATION MODEL

While analyzing the coordination mechanism in Mirpur Earthquake Response, it was learnt that disaster management in Pakistan has not been taken up as an academic and institutionalized expertise. Current coordination and response mechanism put the responsibilities at district level authorities and line departments, which mostly have no previous experience and expertise in emergency response.

This is critically important to understand and recognize that humanitarian coordination, response is a specialized field, and thus, dedicated staff for longer period need to be trained and retained in districts and at provincial and national levels. Government's transfer mechanism and protocols equally affect this.

Moreover, disaster management authorities do not have their own resources specifically dedicated to build and retain certain capacities including any logistics, warehousing, pre-stocking of emergency aid etc. Amidst these factors, current mechanisms with respect to coordination is not a failure, which is obvious from recent emergency responses; Mirpur Earthquake Response being one of them. However, majority of the stakeholders responsible to lead and ensure successful coordination are not aware of their roles and key procedures to apply during emergency response beforehand; as shared by the key informants.

Key Informant speaks ...

Nursing & Paramedic staff institutes and programs are good learning examples of institutional building - no matter how qualified the doctors are; they cannot replace nursing staff.

Similarly, an EDO Education or District Commissioner may be a strong educationist or district administrator respectively but not necessarily strong emergency response experts.

With this context and based on learning acquired through this study, a coordination model has been proposed based on government's current structure. However, it takes into account the learning with an aim to address the identified challenges and those that can be expected in any similar scale emergency. The model and other important considerations in this connection are explained further in below sections.

CONTEXT-SPECIFIC APPLICABILITY OF THE MODEL

This is important that current model should be taken in reference with the context in which the disaster may strike in future. As this model is based on learning from Mirpur Earthquake Response (a medium-scale response) thus the following considerations need to be taken into account while implementing this model.

- The proposed model may be more applicable only on localized emergency responses with respect to affected communities and geographical outreach. In practical terms, this means any natural disaster affecting one to five districts may opt this proposed coordination model while any emergency affecting the areas bigger than this may need traditional humanitarian architecture. Although this proposed model may still be effective at the implementation level.
- There are a number of factors to analyze and taken into account as it comes to dealing with any internal conflicts or human-induced emergencies thus this proposed model may not be that effective in such situations.
- The proposed coordination model may not be suitable for longer-term chronic situations such as drought, famine etc.
- The proposed coordination model may not be suitable for a refugees' crisis.
- The proposed coordination model is because there are local humanitarian NGOs or CBOs operating in the country thus in a specific area where such organizations are no more available; this model may not be that effective.

PROPOSED LOCALIZED COORDINATION MODEL & INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

Mirpur response had 3-tier coordination model as per the protocols (please refer to the Section 2: Operative Framework of Disaster Management above for further details on the existing protocols). However, government did not share the leadership for coordination with NGOs, which remains an area to address. Similarly, pre-disaster preparedness specifically with respect to humanitarian coordination was an obvious gap. With these points considered, the Proposed Coordination Model consists of existing 3 levels of coordination:

1. Union Council Level (a union council is an administrative sub-division consists of multiple villages/community settlements),
2. *Tehsil* Level (a *Tehsil* is an administrative sub-division consists of multiple union councils)
3. District Level

This is not a new multilevel coordination mechanism but in fact is already an established and recognized mechanism by the government. However, these need to be strengthened further for an effective humanitarian coordination.

DISTRICT LEVEL

District level coordination requires an effective departmental coordination with all key line departments such as education, health, livestock, agriculture, police, rescue 1122 (Emergency Ambulance Service), civil defense, police, social welfare, public health, local NGOs, CBOs, community level structures etc. An effective collaboration among these key departments will ensure:

- pre-disaster planning and preparedness;
- coordination and response during the emergency;
- post-emergency recovery efforts.

An emergency steering committee needs to be established with the representatives from all these departments and civil society; to be chaired by the Commissioner (or designated/equivalent official) and co-chaired by a humanitarian local NGO. Frequency of their meetings should be twice a year in normal circumstances.

TEHSIL LEVEL

Not all of the line departments may have Tehsil level representation but a few do have such as health, education, police etc. It is important to constitute the disaster management and response committees at Tehsil level comprising of representatives from available Tehsil level line departments' structures and local NGOs/CBOs. These shall be chaired by the designated government official from any key line department and co-chaired by a local NGO. Frequency of their meetings is proposed to be quarterly.

UC LEVEL

At the UC level, it's important to map the community-based structures, networks and organizations that have been established by either NGOs or emerged organically as communities' self-initiatives. A few line departments have their presence at the UC level too particularly the health and police; where the responsibilities may be assigned to either of them for coordinating and establishing community level coordination structures in case of any emergency response. These structures shall be chaired by designated staff from line departments while co-chaired preferably by a Community-based Organization (CBO) or a community-level NGO in the absence of any CBO. Frequency of their meetings is proposed to be quarterly.

The above-mentioned multilevel coordination structure is not entirely new and is actually already part of government's coordination structures; however, we have proposed above an increased role of local NGOs and CBOs. We also propose a few more changes in following section. Moreover, a District Emergency Operations Center is also to be setup. This center in many districts in Pakistan already exist however not fully operationalized and functions as it should have been.

KEY MEASURES/STRUCTURES OF PROPOSED COORDINATION MODEL

With above mentioned structures setting the base and laying the foundation stone, we propose the below to be added in the localized coordination model:

STRENGTHEN DISTRICT EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

In Mirpur Earthquake Response, the District Emergency Operations Center was made functional. However, the study revealed that the district government made urgent requests to NGOs for the technical human resource deployments for data management and coordination. The requests were based on needs, not as part of already established preparedness plans. On the other hand, lack of technical expertise was a significant challenge at the Operation Centre in particular.

The District Emergency Operations Center is not a newly proposed setup but actually exist within government's coordination structures under DDMA however, it needs serious attention. This center needs to be strengthened by deploying the following positions as soon as any disaster strikes. These positions may not necessarily be filled by fresh recruitment but can be the deployments either from other government departments or by NGOs. However, DDMA needs to ensure and recognize the importance of these positions and should have the plans in place to have them onboard in case of any emergency; which actually means that exact person/individual should be identified during normal circumstances and be oriented on the expected roles. In case, any of such identified person is transferred or not available anymore to take the role in case of any emergency, replacement should be sought immediately. The positions/roles are listed as under who would work under the supervision of District Government, (the overall designated in-charge of the response will also supervise the Operations Center):

GIS Specialist

In any disaster response, data-driven maps can be a critical for saving lives. The GIS (Geographic Information System) Specialist was not deployed in the district during Mirpur response although GIS Specialist available in NDMA extended some support. With modern day technologies emerging and the need of geographic information system already realized at national level (and therefore they have a GIS Specialist at national level), we proposed to have these expertise at the field level too. The GIS (Geographic Information System) Specialist will compile area and population specific data to respond to the emergency crisis more effectively. More specifically, the GIS Specialist will be responsible for the hazards mapping, identifying potential damages and further destructions, measure and assess initial damages, identify and assess water supply chain, create interactive and digital maps for pipelines, power supplies, telecommunications etc., establish records and databases to map key population groups and services, develop advisories for establishing response hubs that could reach to bigger number of people and those who are most-affected, assist in conducting rapid needs and damage assessments, identifying the evacuation routes in case of any further crisis etc.

Gender & Inclusion Specialist

Similar to GIS Specialist, an important expertise for gender and inclusion remained unavailable with the district government who were leading the response in Mirpur. There were supports extended by various NGOs but randomly and unplanned. We thus propose that this role need to be included and in a planned manner. The role of gender and inclusion specialist will be to ensure that emergency response covers the specific needs of the most vulnerable groups of affected communities including but not limited to different genders, disabilities, minorities etc. This position will be responsible to conduct gender analysis and incorporate findings into response, deliver focused trainings to the agencies and staff, develop and design

tools to ensure inclusiveness across the response actions, provide technical assistance in developing strategies and plans, maintain coordination across all key stakeholders from the inclusion perspectives etc.

Communications Specialist

Communication role remained divided among many stakeholders resulting in waste of time and increased confusions. At the field level, district administration took up the role while at federal level it was managed by NDMA. However, even then the district administration and NDMA remained limited to dealing with mainstream media and developing some guidelines for managing the response. It is important to have a dedicated and qualified Communication Specialist to take up this role. It is a specialized role and becomes further critical as any disaster strikes. The communication specialist will manage field level communications requirements, develop required material for mainstream media, social media, key messages for awareness, focused advocacy messages and contents, and develop communication packages for the public/external engagements. The communication specialist will also serve as a spokesperson in any emergency response thus maintaining consistent and professional response to various stakeholders and avoid any chaos.

Logistics Specialist

The logistics specialist in the District Emergency Operations Center will be the backbone of overall response and coordination. The logistics specialist will be responsible to identify requirements and maintain all logistical infrastructures for administration and operations, identify and manage transport requirements, identifying and managing warehouse requirements and coordinate with relevant authorities for stocks maintenance and supply chain, coordinate with security agencies to ensure safety and security of all key actors from government and non-government agencies and coordinate with all humanitarian logistics staff for a well-coordinated response.

Coordination Specialist

The coordination specialist may already have information management capacities or request for further positions underneath him/her for data entry and management depending upon the scale of disaster. The coordination specialist will assist the DDMA and district administration in setting up the coordination structures, meetings, sectoral working groups, acquiring updates, provide data to communication specialist for developing updates and reports etc.

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

During Mirpur Response, government led the coordination at the front with some support from NGOs. However, major support from NGOs remained limited only to the humanitarian assistance. NGOs support was not extended to humanitarian coordination by taking an equal role with government (excluding some data management support). This resulted in complementing each other's (i.e. government and NGOs) humanitarian response efforts and lack of collaboration led to sharing of technical expertise. If this was ensured, the response may have been more effective and efficient.

A true public-private partnership has to be ensured in this proposed model. We propose that government should identify the representatives from key NGOs to be the part of various coordination structures which may include but not limited to the below listed structures. This is to worth noting that the role of these NGOs will be to co-chair the coordination platforms with the government and have an equal level of decision-making authority:

- District level Emergency Steering Committee chaired by the Commissioner/DDMA/Designated Official and co-chaired by any NGO

- Tehsil/UC Level Coordination Platform (if exist) chaired by designated government official and co-chaired by local NGO/CBO
- Sectoral Working Groups (chaired by respective EDOs & co-chaired by the specialist NGO):
 - Food
 - Shelter & NFIs
 - Protection
 - Health
 - Education
 - Logistics & Communications

Further working groups can be established according to the needs on the ground.

INDUCTION & ORIENTATIONS

It was learnt during Mirpur response that many government officials responsible for coordination are not well aware of/oriented on disaster preparedness plans, coordination protocols, disaster management structures etc. Pre-disaster planning is a necessary element, which in case of Mirpur Response was missing.

Induction to newly transferred/recruited government staff and continuous orientations is one of the measures, which may need to be made before the disaster and continued during the response. It is important to organize periodical orientations for relevant officials on policies, guidelines and SOPs that has been developed by the National and State level disaster management authorities as a starting point. This should be further enhanced to building their capacities in relevant specific humanitarian response areas. Moreover, as soon as any disaster strikes, it's important to organize a quick and brief induction for key officials to orient them on key procedures and protocols for effective and efficient coordination and response.

COORDINATION PREPAREDNESS AND NATIONAL DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT FUNDS (NDRMF)

Preparedness require resources and efforts from all stakeholders. The issues that DDMA faced which of course had ripple and cascading effects over NGOs and communities; could have been avoided if relevant authorities were well prepared for an effective humanitarian coordination. While, government allocates certain amounts for disaster preparedness and management in their fiscal year budgets; other key stakeholders and institutions can also play a simultaneous supporting role. One of the such institution in this connection is National Disaster Risk Management Funds (NDRMF).

The NDRMF is a government-owned not-for-profit institution registered with the Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan under Section 42¹⁰. United Nation Agencies, International and/or National Non-Governmental Organizations as well as Public Sector Entities establish the Fund as a non-banking financial intermediary with a corporate structure whose aim is to provide funding through matching grants of up to 70% for a range of structural and non-structural interventions to be carried out. The Fund is responsible for awarding, managing, and guiding investments that shall reduce risk and vulnerabilities that are associated with climatic change and natural hazards. Considering NDRMF's mandate, we propose to advocate with NDRMF for including the area of Preparedness for Emergency Coordination as a crosscutting theme to the projects that they fund. This means that any recipient of funds from NDRMF will have to ensure that they contribute in supporting the district level emergency coordination structures in one way or another.

¹⁰ Guide for Obtaining License - An Association Not for Profit under Section 42 of the Companies Ordinance, 1984

However, this remains as a crosscutting theme and doesn't take away the key mandate or purpose of the project entirely.

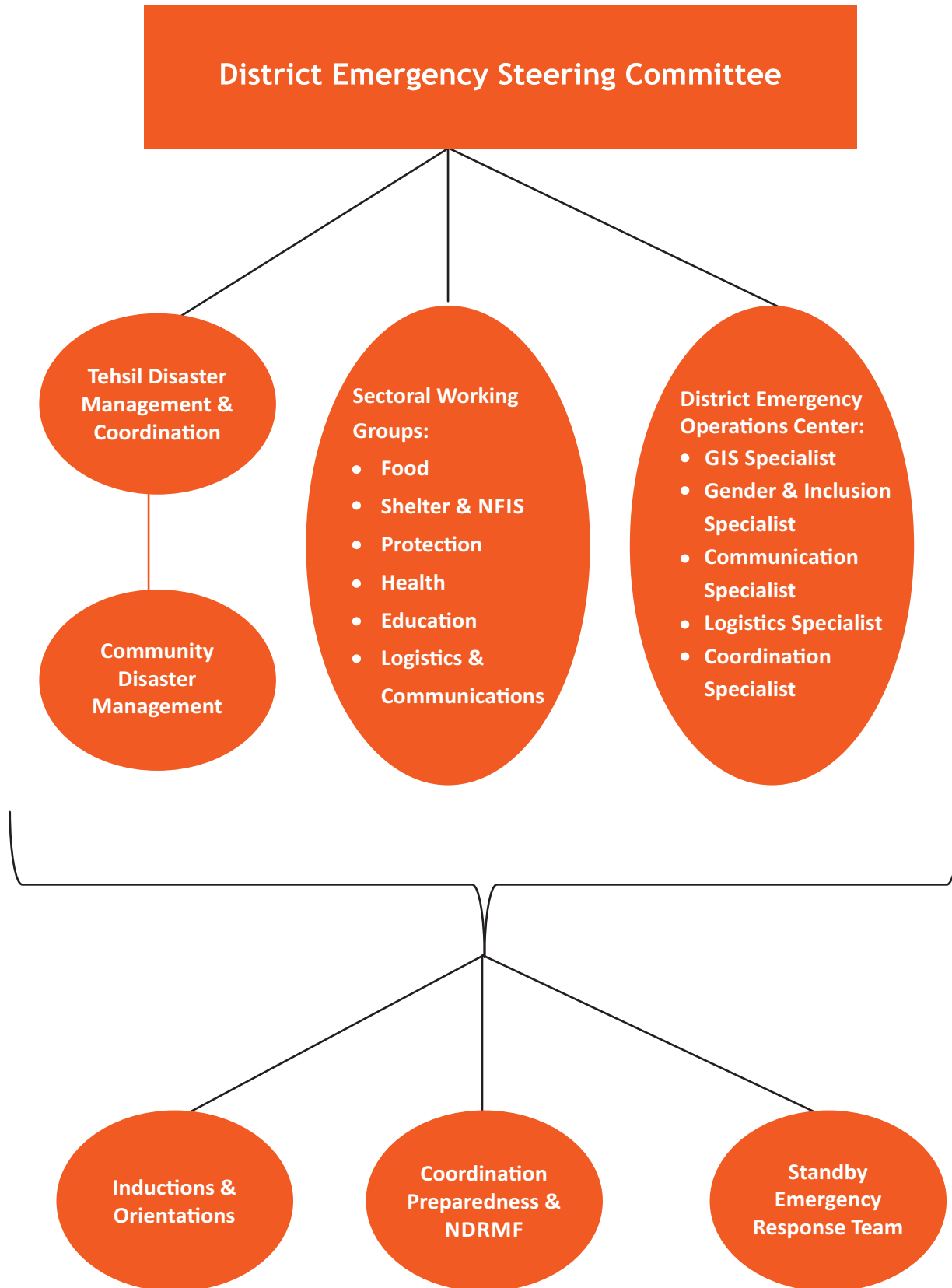
STANDBY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

Lack of technical expertise and trained human resource has been identified as one of the challenges during Mirpur response. This becomes further interesting as Pakistan is well known for its vibrant civil society, charity-based support and volunteerism. This needs to be further capitalized on and we propose that DDMA should establish volunteer standby emergency responders who anyway come forward as and when any emergency strikes. Their pre-identification shall help in building their capacities so that their roles and support during any emergency response could be made more effective. From within the same lot, the government may identify those who could support in effective coordination and may even suit for any roles in the District Emergency Operations Center.

The District Disaster Management Authority with the support from its Tehsil and UC level structures; and local NGOs will identify these volunteers and prepare logistics and capacity building plans to train and deploy them in case of any emergency response. Where the resources allow, DDMA may implement these plans at their own and where resources are not sufficient, the DDMA may request assistance from NGOs, donors and NDRMF for support in doing so. Detailed TORs of this team need to be established particularly with respect to their exact roles however broadly they will be engaged during rescue phase and as volunteers during emergency distributions, providing first aid to those affected by the disaster, and in collecting data for needs and damage assessments in the field.

The above proposed model would have been more effective if were applied during Mirpur Earthquake Response. The proposed provisions and structures are not resource intensive but requires a pre-disaster planning, preparedness and coordination. An enhanced role of local civil society and co-leadership of response with government will help achieve at a scale impact in lesser cost and time. Similarly, enhancement of technical expertise will also be possible through better public and private partnership.

THE DIAGRAM BELOW ILLUSTRATES THE OVERALL PROPOSED LOCALIZED COORDINATION MODEL



WAY FORWARD

With above proposed model comes some responsibilities over NGOs as well. The most important of which include advocacy and technical support. Therefore, three points of recommendation for the NGOs are:

1. The I/NGOs need to work in collaboration with State and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities and with District Administration to operationalize all District Disaster Management Authorities which in many districts is still not established.
2. The Lieutenant General Nadeem Ahmed (Retired) participated in the cross-validation consultation as the CEO of NDRMF. While presenting the proposed model, a request to him was already made for the required support from NDRMF, which he had noted. The NGOs need to continue these discussions with him and other colleagues in NDRMF.
3. During cross-validation consultation, an important point was made about arranging for logistics and admin support for the volunteers despite that NMDA has a Volunteer Management System. The proposed model recommends allocation of resources and preparedness efforts at the government's end in this regard. However, NGOs will have to play a supporting role too; particularly with respect to training and preparing the Standby Emergency Response Teams.

Last but not the least, the model has already been presented to all key decision-making authorities and relevant technical experts. no one disagreed with the recommended provisions in the model. However, a few recommendations were made to further improve the model, which have already been taken into account. Focused advocacy will help operationalize the proposed model sooner. In this connection, one starting steps in this connection can be to launch of the report with key and relevant authorities' presence ensured.

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