

**Human Resources Development for
Disaster Reduction**
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Human resources development for disaster reduction

Human Resources Development is the most important aspect of disaster reduction. Skilled manpower contributes a lot to pre-disaster awareness building, post disaster evacuation and relief operations. Trained manpower can instruct and advise the vulnerable community members through mass media, mock demonstrations, seminars, workshops etc. to take appropriate steps during any disaster to reduce loss of lives and properties. Similarly, expert disaster managers and workers successfully help evacuation and relief distribution to the affected people after any disaster.

Government, local bodies, NGOs, members of the society and International community need to have their professionally skilled human resources to combat any disaster to reduce loss of lives and property. Personnel in the Police, Fire services, Para-military forces, Civil defence etc. need to get themselves specially trained to develop as an expert group of evacuators and relief operators. Special evacuation equipments should also be made available to Government and other disaster management bodies for efficient disaster management. So, expert technical and working groups and should be formed by repeated training, mock exercises and demonstrations to manage disasters properly.

Role of different service groups

Special groups or units in the police, fire services, personnel in the military and public works departments, meteorological services, medical services, ambulance services, telecommunications, social workers, volunteers etc. need to be developed as highly professionally and technically skilled and especially trained to combat disasters. In schools and colleges the students must be taught the need and procedure of disaster management. The youths and community members may be made alert by awareness building through mass media, booklets, seminars, training etc. so that in any disaster the affected people may be given immediate medical care and affected property be recovered and saved at the earliest.

Scenario in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh being situated in the most disaster prone region has the worst record of cyclones and storm surges in the world. From 1891 to 2001 A.D. a total of 1058 cyclones originated in the Bay of Bengal out of which 155 intensified into severe cyclonic storms. On 12 November 1970 the worst cyclonic storm hit the coastal belt of the country with a speed of 223 Km per hour with a water surge six to nine meters high killing more than 300000 peoples and damaging huge amount of property and livestock. Millions were rendered homeless and destitute.

Again on 29 April, 1991 a devastating cyclone hit the coastal belt of the country causing a death toll of 138000 peoples and making thousands homeless. Large number of houses, trees, roads, bridges, schools, livestock etc. were washed away. These two cyclones and water surges were possibly the worst in the history of mankind. Important is that, loss of lives and properties in the

1991 cyclone would be more. But as there were sufficient announcement in radio and T.V from the very onset of the imminent cyclone, people were aware and they took shelter in possible safer places and took other protective measures. But still there were loss of lives and property in 1991 cyclone as the magnitude and area of the cyclone was actually quite large.

So, Bangladesh is highly concerned about cyclone, storm surge, flood and all other disasters. Each year Bangladesh suffers a lot from these disasters in different parts of the country and thus it pays tremendous amount of cost of lives and properties.

HRD activities in Bangladesh

To combat with such a disastrous situation Govt. of Bangladesh has taken adequate measure to impart training to its officials, workers, volunteers, community members etc. under the following organizations as part of its HRD programme for disaster reduction.

HRD by awareness through media

As a part of HRD activity aware building among people is quite important. For awareness building against disasters among the people leaflets, booklets, calendars, posters etc. are regularly published and distributed to the people in Bangladesh depicting harmful effects of

Sl. No.	Name of Organization	Number of peoples / officials trained so far	Mode of awareness building or training.
1.	Disaster Management Bureau	39192 +	Through more than 696 courses, workshops, seminars etc.
		Actual number not known.	Training of students.
2.	Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation	460	Through courses, workshops etc.
3.	Cyclone Preparedness Programme	33220 + volunteers	Through field demonstrations, Seminars etc.
		2000 +	Training for fishermen.
		1000 +	Religious leaders of the community.
		6000 +	Training of students
4.	Red Crescent Society	Actual number not known	Undertaking their own programmes on HRD. (Capacity building by manpower training and by supply of resources.)
5.	NGOs like CARE, CARITAS, BDPC, ADMD, PROSHIKA, Action Aid, DUS etc.	-do-	Many NGOs are imparting training to their manpower for disaster reduction

disasters. Reports and publications in the newspapers and programmes in the electronic media are regular activities in Bangladesh as part of public awareness against disasters.

HRD by co-ordination through committees.

The Disaster Management Committees from national level to the rural grass root level play most important roles during any disaster. Through meetings, personal contacts, work plans and coordination the different Disaster Management Committee members develop their effective co-operation making themselves most efficient disaster management players.

Different disaster management committees in Bangladesh are as under:

1. National Disaster Management Council - Headed by the Prime Minister.
2. Inter-Ministerial Disaster Management Co-ordination Committee - Headed by the Minister of the M/O. Disaster Management and Relief.
3. District/Upazila/Union Disaster Management Committees - Headed by each office head.

These committees are responsible for overall disaster management in the respective areas.

HRD through Emergency Operation Center (EOC)

Emergency Operation Center, popularly known as Control Room in the M/o. Disaster Management and Relief has developed an expert group of technicians and officials engaged in disaster warning system. The center receives information through wireless sets, telephone, fax etc. from coastal and other regions and from islands on any imminent disaster, specially depression, cyclone etc. on the Bay of Bengal. Then the EOC disseminates this information to the Minister, Secretary of the Ministry, mass media and to other district officials of the country and to other stakeholders making them alert to take precautionary measures against cyclone, storm surge etc. In case of higher danger signals Inter Ministerial Disaster Management Co-ordination Committee meeting is convened. In such a meeting representatives from all concerned Ministries and Organizations attend to examine the possible evacuation capability and to strengthen the mobilization of relief teams, medical teams, relief boats, evacuation equipments etc. EOC receives information and data on water level in the rivers during the monsoon from Flood Forecasting and Warning Center. It collects data on latest weather situation from Meteorological Department and Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization (SPARRSO) and disseminates those to the concerned authority and to the district administration for precaution against disasters. It collects damage and situation report as well.

HRD by standing orders

The Publication in 1999 from the Disaster Management Bureau (DMB) "Standing Orders on Disaster" provides for all rules, regulations, procedures, different Disaster Management Committee constitutions etc. making guidelines to all Disaster Management operators. It helps a lot to understand everyone's defined responsibility in Disaster Management. It helps as a guidebook of authoritative manifestation of Government's commitment to mitigation of loss of lives and properties by disasters. This publication enables each Ministry/ Organization / Agency to understand its duty during disasters.

Overseas co-operation in HRD in Bangladesh.

International Federation of RC and RC Societies, UNDP, ADRC Japan, ADPC Bangkok, UNOCHA and other organizations are doing a lot helping improve HRD in disaster management in Bangladesh as well as in other countries. During 19-24 December 2002 a seminar in Bangladesh Public Administration Training Complex, Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh was held on "Improvement of Early Warning System and Responses in Bangladesh toward TDRM Approach" jointly organized in collaboration with ADRC and UNOCHA, Japan. I was a participant in that Seminar. Important recommendations came out from that seminar in favour of DM and HRD as well towards TDRM approach. Seminars, workshops and training courses like that in Dhaka and this in Kobe helps a lot through exchange of information and data towards TDRM approach. Knowing each other's preparedness and thus extending co-operation academically, materially and manually through these courses and seminars it will be useful in time of disaster among the countries in Asia to share activities of mitigation and reduction of losses of lives and properties. And we think, in this way ADRC, UNOCHA, ADRU are contributing a lot towards TDRM approach..

HRD in other organizations working towards disaster reduction

FFWC : Flood Forecasting and Warning Center (FFWC) under the M/o. Water Development plays another important role in Disaster Management. The center is established in the office of the Water Development Board in Dhaka. It collects data of water levels in all major rivers in Bangladesh. If danger level is exceeded in any case the center alerts all concerned. It sends data to EOC in MDMR, to Radio and TV. EOC then sends warning messages to the concerned district administration to alert them against flood. The workers, technicians and other officials in FFWC has developed their expertise which contributes towards reduction of loss of life and property by flood.

Bangladesh Meteorological Department : Bangladesh Meteorological Department with all its skilled technologists, trained workers and officials is engaged in receiving reports from weather satellites through radars, antenna etc. and sending those to radio and TV regularly. Their expertise contributes much towards awareness building and helping disaster reduction.

SPARRSO : Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization (SPARRSO) in Bangladesh is a specialized organization dealing among other aspects with receiving meteorological data from satellites. In case of any cyclone formation on the Bay of Bengal SPARRSO receives data and transmits those to Meteorological Department, EOC in MDMR and to other centers. There are experts and academicians of higher technical level who analyses and forecasts about any imminent cyclone, storm surge etc. and thus contributing much in disaster reduction by helping aware the peoples.

Law making

There is no enacted law so far on disaster management in Bangladesh, though Standing Orders, rules, regulations etc. are there to manage disasters. To bridge up this gap MDMR has taken initiative to formulate and enact in the Parliament a law on disaster management. So, a draft law has been formulated and it is now under examination in MDMR and it is expected that the law will be enacted in the Parliament very soon.

Conclusion

Taking resort to all these activities through the Organizations / Agencies as mentioned so far,

Bangladesh has been making commendable progress in disaster management towards TDRM approach. Extended co-operation among ADRC, UNOCHA and other organizations Bangladesh and other Asian countries will certainly achieve remarkable progress in disaster reduction by developing human resources. We hope, this sort of training, seminar, workshop etc. must bring about expected success by providing scope of knowing each other and exchange of views and ideas for Disaster Management towards TDRM approach.