

Annex 7a

**Disaster Management Policy
Final Draft**

Submitted to

**Government of Nepal, Ministry of Home Affairs
and
National Planning Commission**

Jointly by



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POLICY ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT

1. Background

Nepal is a disaster prone country and it has been facing different disasters every year. Due to the geologic, geographic and climatic conditions of the country majority of the people are exposed to one or the other kind of disaster risks at any time. Available data from the last three decades demonstrates that a significant number of human lives are lost and physical infrastructure damaged every year due to disasters. Nepal suffers annually to monsoon floods, landslides, and epidemics. In addition, it remains highly vulnerable to disasters like earthquakes, fire, draught, famine, glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF), windstorms, hailstorms, thunderstorms, hot and cold waves etc. Several natural and human factors are responsible for the occurrence and high impact of disasters in the country. Encroachments along the riverbanks and floodplains and unplanned land use patterns in the watersheds of hills and mountains exacerbate the impacts of disaster and accelerate soil erosion problems. The nation's development efforts and poverty alleviation programmes are being negated by frequent disasters. Hence, increased focus on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in development plans is needed to protect lives and property, as well as to sustain development benefits.

The factors such as (i) Very little public awareness; (ii) insufficient preparedness work; (iii) lack of coordination among related agencies; (iv) inadequate financial resources; and (v) limited use of available indigenous knowledge, skills and coping capacity have inhibited mitigation of disaster impacts in the country. The community based disaster management programmes, which have been implemented in some parts of the country are found to be effective and therefore needs replication in other areas. Underprivileged groups of people are found to be more prone to disasters as majority of them reside in vulnerable areas. Only rescue and relief operations have received priority in the field of disaster management so far. Therefore, the activities concerned with preparedness, reconstruction and rehabilitation also need to be sufficiently addressed in the future.

2. Vision

Transformation of Nepal into a country safe from disasters.

3. Objectives

1. To manage hazards and reduce the vulnerability and risk of disaster to protect and minimize the loss of life and property thereby alleviating human suffering through effective responses at all levels of disaster management.
2. To contribute in poverty alleviation through effective disaster management.
3. Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction as priority action to attain sustainability of development activities of the nation and recognizing disaster management consideration as a precondition variable before undertaking development projects.

4. To minimize the impact of disaster on the environment and also to prevent and mitigate the impacts of earthquakes and other recurring disasters including water induced disasters, draught, landslides, fire, epidemics, thunderbolts, cold and hot waves and others.
5. To strengthen the coping capacity of communities to mitigate the impacts of disasters through knowledge based preparedness programmes.
6. To improve disaster governance in the country.

4. Strategy

The following strategies shall be adopted to accomplish the above mentioned objectives.

1. Emphasize disaster preparedness and mitigation activities,
2. Ensure, reliable and effective rescue and relief operations,
3. Restore livelihoods of the affected communities and facilitate timely completion of reconstruction and rehabilitation activities,
4. Adopt right based approach to the affected people in disaster response activities,
5. Apply advanced technologies to protect communities from disasters,
6. Provide special attention for protecting poor, marginalized and special need population from disasters and help them to restore livelihoods by extending income generating opportunities,
7. Incorporate disaster management components as an integral part of national development, policies, plans and programmes,
8. Formulate and update National and sectoral Disaster Management Plans,
9. Introduce disaster impact assessment in development projects,
10. Prepare hazard and risk maps of vulnerable areas for different kinds of disasters,
11. Build physical infrastructure that are resistant to disasters,
12. Utilize water to ensure conservation of natural resources and protection of the environment,
13. Develop sector specific strategies to address disaster related issues in agriculture and food security, livelihoods, health services, physical infrastructure, water supply and sanitation, information and communication, logistics, gender and social inclusion, human resource development and other crosscutting sectors,
14. Adopt environment-friendly approaches in infrastructure and other development activities to reduce the occurrence and impact of disasters,
15. Enhance public awareness on disaster management,
16. Provide education and training down to the grass roots level on disaster management to strengthen the coping capacity of the people ,

17. Give priority to community engaged disaster management programmes,
18. Make the disaster management activity financially sustainable,
19. Develop effective legal instruments for disaster management,
20. Develop appropriate institutional framework for effective implementation of disaster management activities,
21. Strengthen participatory processes and encourage networking among stakeholders.

5. Policy

Disaster management shall be recognized as a national and local level priority and also taken as a continued and sustainable activity. The emphasis shall be on promotion of a culture of safety, strengthening and optimum utilization of local skills, resources, capacities and technologies to lessen the impact of disasters. The community shall be an entry point of all disaster management related activities.

During all the three phases of disaster management such as preparedness, response and recovery, special priority shall be given but not limited to the special need population such as children, women, senior citizens, differently abled and underprivileged groups.

The Government shall seek partnership with national stakeholders, friendly countries and international organizations to supplement its efforts in management of disasters. The commitments made by the Government in several international forums shall also be honoured accordingly.

5.1 Preparedness and Mitigation

Public awareness programmes shall be carried out through the effective and maximum use of media; interaction and consultations; education; and other informal means to sensitize the people about disasters. The nongovernmental sector, civil society and community based organizations; and local social groups shall be encouraged to undertake such activities.

The media networks shall be effectively utilized in disaster preparedness works to disseminate information on weather, and probability of occurrence of disasters to help prevent people from possible consequences. All forms of communication shall be kept in running condition during the potential disaster seasons.

The Government shall strengthen the information and communication network through the establishment of resource centres.

Emphasis shall be given to educate people and the community to properly act during disasters through rehearsals, mock-up drills, and simulation exercises.

Strengthening of the local coping capacity, extension of indigenous knowledge and skills, and the implementation of community based programmes shall be taken up on a priority basis to mitigate the impacts of disaster. It shall also be supplemented by the application of suitable advanced technologies in the field of disaster risk reduction.

Special programmes shall be initiated for protecting poor and underprivileged people who are incapable of coping with the disasters.

Establishment of regional response centres to monitor the disaster incidences in the country and prompt mobilization of critical facilities such as fire brigade, ambulance and other machinery and equipment shall be ensured. Similarly, adequate stocks of rescue and relief materials shall also be stored at appropriate locations.

A national land use plan of the country shall be formulated and implemented.

Hazard and risk maps of disaster prone areas; and vulnerability and capacity assessment, especially at the local level, shall be prepared and implemented accordingly.

Strengthen and extend facilities for research and development in the fields of seismology, hydrology and meteorology and remote sensing for disaster preparedness and mitigation including early warning system.

Water disaster management system shall be made fully functional, effective and responsive to people's needs by undertaking programmes related with mapping; zoning; networking of information system; community level preparedness; relief and rehabilitation; and mitigation of water related hazards.

Health sector preparedness plans shall be formulated at both public and private levels to ensure adequate health care facilities during disaster and also preventing epidemics at all levels.

Settlements, which are located in disaster prone areas such as riverbanks and floodplains or on steep, landslide prone terrain, shall be relocated to safer areas.

5.2 Search, Rescue, Relief and Immediate Response

Response Action Plans shall be immediately formulated in consultation with stakeholders for the central and field level activities and shall be implemented and continuously followed up. The preliminary loss and damage assessment shall also be made accordingly.

Search and rescue teams shall be promptly mobilized by involving security personnel, groups of skilled people, and local representatives of political parties, local bodies, national and international NGOs, community organizations, volunteer groups, etc.

The personal security and access to essential services shall be made for all affected people with priority to children, women, senior citizens and differently abled people by creating sufficient shelter and sanitation facilities.

Health support activities shall be activated realising the importance of 'golden hours', to minimize morbidity, mortality and disability of affected people by providing timely on-site health care facilities or transporting them to better equipped hospitals. Establishment of temporary field level hospitals or health camps shall be undertaken as required. Public and private medical institutions shall also be mobilized for the purpose.

Government shall prepare its own standard norms of relief packages taking into consideration international practices such as Sphere standards. These packages shall be distributed to the affected people irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, community or sex. Every affected citizen shall have the right to receive relief packages and materials.

Reliable and effective communication systems shall be established. Media shall be encouraged to disseminate correct information in the event of disasters.

Regular assessment of relief distribution shall be carried out and adjusted accordingly.

5.3 Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

Rehabilitation and reconstruction plans shall be drawn on the basis of the detailed damage assessment of the disaster. The timely completion of the rehabilitation and reconstruction works shall also be ensured. The rehabilitation and reconstruction works shall ensure proper use of disaster resistant technologies. Settlements may also have to be relocated as required.

Suitable grant and/or soft loan packages shall be extended to rehabilitate the affected communities to repair and reconstruct their private houses and damaged properties. Livelihood improvement programmes shall be launched for all affected people by introducing income generating activities, including few special programmes to help poor, marginalized and special need population.

Psychosocial debriefing process shall be carried out for the affected people. Alternate health care facilities shall also be provided till the impacted people are fully recovered.

The Government shall provide necessary agriculture inputs and extension services and facilitate the affected people to restore their agricultural activities.

5.4 Planning, Programming and Monitoring

Disaster risk reduction component shall be embodied in the national as well as local level development policies, plans and programmes and updated regularly.

A comprehensive Disaster Management Plan for the country shall be formulated. The development sectors of the government shall be directed to have their

individual sector specific disaster management plans also covering cross cutting areas of their concerns. Besides, the nongovernmental sectors shall be encouraged to have their own plans. The contingency plans shall also be developed as necessary.

All new physical infrastructures shall have to be environment-friendly and earthquake resistant, and have to pass disaster impact assessment. The elements of disaster risk reduction shall be made mandatory in all development projects. Similarly, retrofitting residential houses, other physical infrastructures and public buildings including schools, hospitals, and offices shall be given special priority.

A reliable mechanism shall be developed in collection, compilation and dissemination of disaster related data and information.

5.5 Human Resource Development

The activities of agencies working in disaster management shall be coordinated to produce a synergetic effect.

Trainings shall be conducted, especially at the local level, in the areas of preparedness, rescue, relief, medical services, risk and capacity assessment, and other relevant fields. Nongovernmental sector shall be encouraged to establish new institutions to conduct training and research in the field of disaster management.

Educational institutes shall be encouraged to include disaster related curriculum in formal education.

Attempts shall be continually made towards enhancement of disaster related knowledge. In this regard constant follow-up of world events, technologies, climate change, and other relevant information shall be made and accordingly updated.

6. Financial Arrangement

Adequate funds shall be ensured for carrying out disaster management activities at all times.

A modality shall be developed for sharing of expenses between the Government and beneficiaries in disaster management. New options for generating additional financial resources shall also be explored which may include micro finance and loans, bonds and tax saving schemes.

Implementation of insurance schemes on disaster shall be encouraged.

The financial contributions made by institutions and individuals for the affected people or other disaster management activities shall be exempted from tax.

7. Governance

7.1 Legal Instruments

A new and comprehensive Act on disaster management shall be promulgated, and subsequent Regulations shall also be enforced. Similarly, ambiguities on disaster related issues provisioned in different Acts and Regulations shall also be rectified.

Drafting and updating of the policies, plans, laws, codes (e.g. fire, building codes etc.), implementing procedures, and manuals shall receive preference.

7.2 Institutional arrangement

An autonomous central and nodal institution, Disaster Management Council (DMC), shall be established with full responsibility to carryout all facets of disaster management inter-alia formulation, implementation, supervision and monitoring of the policies, plans and other procedural matters. The Council shall be headed by the Prime Minister and the Executive Director serves as the member secretary in the DMC. The Secretariat of the DMC shall be in Kathmandu and establish its contact with the government through the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers. The composition of the DMC is stated in Annex 1.

Three Committees, namely (i) Preparedness; (ii) Rescue and Relief; and (iii) Reconstruction and Rehabilitation shall be formed under the convenorship of the Ministers of Local Development, Home Affairs, and Physical Planning and Works respectively. These Committees shall perform their works independently. The Executive Director of the DMC serves as the member secretary in all of these Committees. The composition of the Committees is stated in Annex 2.

At the field level, District Disaster Management Committees (DDMCs) shall be established in all districts under the Chairmanship of the Chief District Officer. These committees shall be responsible to carryout all activities concerned with disaster management in the district. The DDMC shall have the authority to form subcommittees as necessary. The DDMC shall also have the representation of the President of the District Development Committee (DDC) or his/her nominee and the Local Development Officer serves as its member secretary. The composition of the DDMC is stated in Annex 3.

In order to implement, coordinate and supervise all disaster management activities at the field level, the disaster management related units shall be constituted in the District Administration Offices, DDCs, and Village Development Committees (VDCs).

Local Disaster Management Committees (LDMCs) shall be constituted at the municipality or village level. The LDMC shall be headed by the Mayor or the Chairman of the VDC. The LDMC can constitute the ward level sub committees as required. Preference shall be given to women or disadvantaged groups to head and or participate in such committees and sub committees. The composition of the LDMC is stated in Annex 4.

Teams for disaster management, search and rescue, damage assessment, medical response and similar other volunteer groups shall be formed at all levels and promptly deployed as necessary during disasters.

The Government shall ensure the support and participation of the local bodies; Nepal Red Cross Society, community-based organizations, communities, national and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); private sector; civil society, academia and professional experts in all aspects of disaster management. Their roles shall also be clearly defined through the legal provisions. The participatory process shall be further strengthened by establishing effective networks like the existing Disaster Preparedness Network in the areas of preparedness.

An effective coordination shall be ensured among related government organizations on disaster management such as Ministry of Home Affairs; Departments of Water Induced Disaster Prevention, Hydrology and Meteorology, Mines and Geology, Irrigation, Health, Agriculture, Roads, Urban Housing Development etc.

7.3 *Operating Procedure*

Decentralization, devolution of authorities and active participation of stakeholders shall be the operating model of disaster management.

Standard Operating Procedures and respective guidelines shall be developed and implemented to facilitate effective implementation programmes at all phases of disaster management.

The operating procedures shall be simplified for emergency situations. Customs clearance procedures shall also be simplified and duty free provisions shall be granted for the import of relief materials from donors.

Government shall adopt one stop policy in all matters related with disaster management.

Each ministry of the Government shall have a focal unit responsible for disaster related matters, which shall closely liaise with the DMC secretariat.

The graphic representation of the operating procedure is stated in Annex 4

Annex 1
Disaster Management Council

1.	Prime Minister	Chairman
2.	Minister for Home Affairs	Vice Chairman
3.	Minister for Defense	Member
4.	Minister for Local Development	Member
5.	Minister for Physical Planning and Works	Member
6.	Vice-Chairman, National Planning Commission	Member
7.	Chief of Army Staff, Nepalese Army	Member
8.	Chief Secretary	Member
9.	Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs	Member
10.	Secretary, Ministry of Finance	Member
11.	Secretary, Ministry of Health and Population	Member
12.	Secretary, Ministry of Women, Children & Social Welfare	Member
13.	Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources	Member
14.	Secretary, Ministry of Forest & Soil Conservation	Member
15.	Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology	Member
16.	Secretary, Information and Communication	Member
17.	Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Commerce & Supplies	Member
18.	Inspector General, Nepal Police	Member
19.	Inspector General, Armed Police Force	Member
20.	President, Nepal Red Cross Society	Member
21.	President, Association of District Development Committee of Nepal (ADDCN)	Member
22.	President, Municipalities Association of Nepal (MUAN)	Member
23.	President, National Association of Village Development Committees (NAVDC)	Member
24.	Chairperson, Federation of Nepal Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI)	Member
25.	Member secretary, Social Welfare Council (SWC)	Member
26.	Chief Commissioner, Nepal Scout	Member
27.	Three members nominated by the Government from among the Non Government Organizations working in the field of disaster management	Member
28.	Two disaster management experts nominated by the Government	Member
29.	Executive Director	Member Secretary

Annex 2

Disaster Management Committees

(A) Preparedness Committee

1.	Minister for Local Development	Convener
2.	Member in charge of disasters, National Planning Commission	Deputy Convener
3.	Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs	Member
4.	Secretary, Ministry of Physical Planning and Works	Member
5.	Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	Member
6.	Secretary, Ministry of Finance	Member
7.	Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communication	Member
8.	Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports	Member
9.	Secretary, Ministry of Local Development	Member
10.	Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology	Member
11.	Major General, Nepalese Army	Member
12.	Additional Inspector General, Nepal Police	Member
13.	Additional Inspector General, Armed Police Force	Member
14.	Director General, Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management	Member
15.	Director General, Department of Mines and Geology	Member
16.	Director General, Department of Hydrology and Metrology	Member
17.	Director General, Department of Water Induced Disaster Prevention	Member
18.	Director General, Department of Forests	Member
19.	Director General, Department of Urban Development and Building Construction	Member
20.	Director General, Department of Health Services	Member
21.	President, Nepal Red Cross Society	Member
22.	President, ADDCN	Member
23.	President, MUAN	Member
24.	President, NAVDC	Member
25.	Member secretary, SWC	Member
26.	Three members nominated by the Government from among the Non Government Organizations working in the field of disaster management	Member
27.	Two disaster management experts nominated by the Government	Member
28.	Executive Director	Member Secretary

(B) Rescue and Relief Committee

1. Minister for Home Affairs	Convener
2. Minister for Health and Population	Deputy Convener
3. Minister for Physical Planning and Works	Member
4. Minister for Local Development	Member
5. Secretary, Ministry of Defense	Member
6. Secretary, Ministry of Home	Member
7. Secretary, Ministry of Finance	Member
8. Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Member
9. Secretary, Industry, Commerce and Supplies	Member
10. Secretary, Ministry of Information and Communication	Member
11. Lt. General, Nepalese Army	Member
12. Director General, Department of Mines and Geology	Member
13. Director General, Department of Water Induced Disaster Prevention	Member
14. Director General, Department of Urban Development and Building Construction	Member
15. Director General, Department of Agriculture	Member
16. Director General, Department of Livestock Services	Member
17. Inspector General, Nepal Police	Member
18. Inspector General, Armed Police Force	Member
19. President, Nepal Red Cross Society	Member
20. President, ADDCN	Member
21. President, MUAN	Member
22. President, NAVDC	Member
23. President, FNCCI	Member
24. Chief Commissioner, Nepal Scout	Member
25. Two members nominated by the Government from among the Non Government Organizations working in the field of disaster management	Member
26. Two disaster management experts nominated by the Government	Member
27. Executive Director	Member Secretary

(C) Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Committee

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| 1. Minister for Physical Planning and Works | Convener |
| 2. Member in charge of disasters, National Planning Commission | Deputy Convener |
| 3. Secretary, Ministry of Local Development | Member |
| 4. Secretary, Ministry of Finance | Member |
| 5. Secretary, Ministry of Defense | Member |
| 6. Secretary, Ministry of Physical Planning and Works | Member |
| 7. Director General, Department of Agriculture | Member |
| 8. Director General, Department of Water Induced Disaster Prevention | Member |
| 9. Director General, Department of Urban Development and Building Construction | Member |
| 10. Director General, Department of Irrigation | Member |
| 11. Director General, Department of Forests | Member |
| 12. President, Nepal Red Cross Society | Member |
| 13. Two members nominated by the Government from among the Non Government Organizations working in the field of disaster management | Member |
| 14. Two disaster management experts nominated by the Government | Member |
| 15. Executive Director | Member Secretary |

Annex 3
District Disaster Management Committee

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| 1. | Chief District Officer (CDO) | Chairperson |
| 2. | President of the DDC or his nominee | Member |
| 3. | Chiefs of the district level Government Offices | Member |
| 4. | Chiefs of the district level Security Offices | Member |
| 5. | Chief of the district level Nepal Red Cross Society | Member |
| 6. | Representative of the district level national political parties | Member |
| 7. | Mayor, Municipality | Member |
| 8. | Three Chairpersons of VDC nominated by the DDC | Member |
| 9. | Three persons nominated by the CDO from among the district level national and international nongovernmental organizations, social institutions and distinguished social workers | Member |
| 10. | Two district level disaster management experts | Member |
| 11. | Local Development Officer | Member Secretary |

Annex 4
Local Disaster Management Committee

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| 1. Mayor, Municipality/ Chairperson of the concerned VDC | Chairperson |
| 2. Three Ward Chairpersons nominated by the Municipality/ Village Councils | Member |
| 3. Ward Chairperson of the disaster affected wards | Member |
| 4. Two Ward members from among the Ward members nominated by the Municipality/ Village Councils | Member |
| 5. Representatives of the municipality/ village level national political parties | Member |
| 6. Three persons nominated by the municipality/ village council from among municipality/ district level national and international nongovernmental organizations, community organizations, social institutions and distinguished social workers | Member |
| 7. Two locally available disaster management experts nominated by Municipality/ Village Council | Member |
| 8. Chief Executive Officer of the Municipality/ Secretary of VDC | Member Secretary |

Annex 5

OPERATING STRUCTURE

