
AN OVERVIEW OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF NEMA

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Abstract

Emergencies and Disasters are either natural or man-made. Floods, earth quakes, tornados; etc are classified as natural disasters since humans have little or no control over their occurrence. On the other hand, flood, explosions, epidemics, chemical /biological weapons, wars, land degradation, deforestation, desertification, wild land fires, loss of biodiversity, land, water and air pollution, climate change, sea level rise and ozone depletion are man – made occurrences since they are direct consequences of mans actions and inactions. Natural or man-made disasters have devastating impacts on victims and environment because victims are often times ill prepared for it. This paper tries to review the level of emergency preparedness, response and disaster management in Nigeria, as well as ascertaining the effectiveness of various policies guiding the operations of National Emergency Management Agency and other stakeholders in emergency and disaster management; by determining the sources of funding for the agencies and measuring the achievements and failures of NEMA. The researchers relied extensively on historic data (secondary sources), analysing and making inferences. Findings showed that though successes have been recorded in different areas, state and

local governments are faced with funding problems, clumsy operational policies and a partial lack of acceptance of responsibility. The researchers therefore recommend that responders at any tier should see the comfort and safety of victims as paramount, a cost sharing mechanism between the various tiers should be adopted, and explicit policies that will enhance effective and purposeful training of stakeholders should be put in place by the coordinating agency (NEMA).

Keywords: Emergency Preparedness, Response, Disaster Management.

Mother Nature can be so clement on the environment nourishing it, tending it and providing enabling atmosphere to attain sustainability and growth. On the other hand Mother Nature can of its own volition act in a manner that is detrimental and hazardous to both humans and non-humans by way of floods, earth quakes, tornados, etc. Humans in a struggle for space and resources which are scarce, have wittingly or unwittingly engaged in activities that alter the natural sequence or order designed by nature. These chaotic alterations have over the years caused an imbalance or better still obstruction of the natural environmental settings leading to emergencies and disasters like flood, explosions, epidemics, chemical /biological attacks, wars, land degradation, deforestation, desertification, wild land fires, loss of biodiversity, land, water and air pollution, climate change, sea level rise and ozone depletion, which victims are often ill prepared for. However, certain steps taken to ensure that we are safe before, during, and after emergencies or natural disasters are indicators of our preparedness. How available resources are deplored in an organized and coordinated manner to bring the situation under control tells much about “emergency response”, while the level of organization and management of available resources and responsibilities in dealing with humanitarian issues of emergencies and disasters to lessen the impact on victims is termed “Disaster Management”.

This paper focuses on the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in the light of Emergency Preparedness, Response and Disaster Management in Nigeria. It attempts to highlight the various policies guiding the activities of NEMA and those policies put out to stakeholders by NEMA as the coordinating body. It further examines the issues of funding NEMA and the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) as well as reviews the achievements and failures of NEMA so far, especially in recent times.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Definition of Concepts

Emergency Preparedness

The New York State Department of Health defines the term emergency preparedness as “the steps taken to ensure safety before, during and after an emergency or natural disaster. These steps are important for safety during natural and man-made disasters. Examples of natural disasters are floods, blizzards, tornadoes and earthquakes. Man-made disasters include explosions, fires, chemical and biological attacks”.

Closely related, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) sees emergency preparedness as “the leadership, training, readiness and exercise support, and technical and financial assistance to strengthen citizens, communities, state, local, and tribal governments, and professional emergency workers as they prepare for disasters, mitigate the effects of disasters, respond to community needs after a disaster, and launch effective recovery efforts”.

In the view of U.S. Defense Head Quarter (2006) emergency preparedness is the range of deliberate, critical tasks and activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the operational capability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents.

Emergency Preparedness can be activities, tasks, programs, and systems developed and implemented prior to an emergency that are used to support the prevention of, mitigation of, response to, and recovery from emergencies. (National Fire Protection Association, 2007)

Emergency Response

In 2013, HM Government Emergency Response and Recovery defined Emergency Response as encompassing the decisions and actions taken to deal with the immediate effects of an emergency. It is the decisions and actions taken in accordance with the strategic, tactical and operational objectives defined by emergency responders. At a high level these will be to protect life, contain and mitigate the impacts of the emergency and create the conditions for a return to normality. In many scenarios it is likely to be relatively short and to last for a matter of hours or days – rapid implementation of arrangements for collaboration, co-ordination and communication are, therefore, vital. Response encompasses the efforts to deal not only with the direct effects of the emergency itself such as fighting fires, rescuing individuals but also the indirect effects e.g. disruption, media interest.

Emergency Response is action taken in response to unexpected and dangerous occurrences in an attempt to mitigate its impact on people or the environment. Emergency situations can range from natural disasters to hazardous materials problems

and transportation incidents. It may refer to services provided by emergency and rescue services agencies, as well as the plans made and actions taken within an organization to respond to emergencies. Emergency response plans are an important component of workplace safety (Safeopedia 2017).

Disaster

The United Nations (2014) defines a disaster “as a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society”. Disasters involve widespread human, material, economic or environmental impacts, which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

Disaster Management

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2014), sees disaster management “as the organisation and management of resources and responsibilities for dealing with all humanitarian aspects of emergencies, in particular preparedness, response and recovery in order to lessen the impact of disasters” .

More scientifically put, the term “Disaster Management” can be defined as “an applied science which seeks, by the systematic observation and analysis of disasters, to improve measures relating to prevention, mitigation, preparedness, emergency response and recovery” (Carter 2008).

Some common denominators to most definitions of Disaster Management are it involves organisation of resources and responsibilities, it is aimed at prevention of disaster occurrence and mitigation, while being prepared for emergency responses and quick recovery from disruption of normal functioning of communities affected.

Difference between Emergency and Disaster

Disaster and Emergency are two different things often confused in use and context although a victim of emergency may feel like a disaster had happened.

Disaster

Cuny (1994), sees disaster as, "a situation resulting from an environmental phenomenon or armed conflict that produced stress, personal injury, physical damage, and economic disruption of great magnitude".

The definition adopted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and featured in Business Dictionary of environment terms a disaster as "the result of a vast ecological breakdown in the relations between man and his environment, a serious and sudden (or slow, as in drought) disruption on such a scale that the stricken community needs extraordinary efforts to cope with it, often with outside help or international aid".

The United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) describes it as "an occurrence of a natural catastrophe, technological accident, or human caused event that has resulted in severe property damage, deaths, and/or multiple injuries".

Kathleen (Director, Disaster Research Centre, University of Delaware) puts the matter in a different perspective: "Many people trying to do quickly what they do not ordinarily do, in an environment with which they are not familiar".

While

Emergency

Though used differently in different fields of endeavour, the Business Dictionary (2016) defines the term as sudden, unexpected, or impending situation that may cause injury, loss of life, damage to the property, and or interference with the normal activities of a person or firm and which, therefore, requires immediate attention and remedial action.

Simply put, an emergency is a situation that requires immediate attention, and could lead to disaster if left unattended. A disaster must not occur after every emergency rather disaster may come on quickly and without warning.

Brief History of Emergency Preparedness, Response and Disaster Management Framework in Nigeria

Successive Nigerian Governments have had policies to establish organizations that will touch the lives of the citizens. Such organizations research works focus on Agencies established to alleviate the sufferings of distressed people as a result of disasters like windstorm, communal clash, fire disaster etc. The aim of government in establishing these agencies are reflected in their broad objectives in relation to economic development which ultimately leads to the maximization of the welfare of the people.

Organized disaster management in Nigeria dates back to 1906, when the Fire Brigade was established with a mandate that includes fire fighting and other ancillary services during emergencies. This approach was however replaced with adhoc arrangements domiciled in the offices of the then Head of State and State Governors, as disaster response was considered a security issue. This arrangement continued until 1972/1973, when the country experienced a devastating drought. The drought had negative socio-economic consequences and cost the nation the loss of many lives and properties, a development that led to the establishment of the National Emergency Relief Agency (NERA) in 1976. NERA was charged with the responsibility of collecting and distributing relief materials to disaster victims. Considering the limited scope of the Agency, the government in 1993 decided to expand its scope to include all areas of disasters. This was backed up with decree 199 of 1993, which raised the status

of the Agency to an independent body under the Presidency as unit in the Secretary to the Government of the Federation's Office.

NERA later became National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) established through Act 12 (as amended) by Act 50 of 1999 as an agency directly supervised by the Presidency and is responsible for managing disasters in Nigeria in addition to a new vision to build a culture of preparedness, prevention, response and community resilience to disaster in Nigeria, previously lacking with NERA (Madugu 2012). NEMA's mission is basically to co-ordinate resources towards efficient and effective disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation and responses in the country. The occurrence of disaster often calls for the support of both national and international organizations especially, as far as the provision of relief materials is concerned. Consequently, disaster relief remains extremely important in disaster management. However, this approach alone does not proactively address the need to reduce the human and environmental impact of future disaster. Recent approaches in the area of disaster management are indicative of the need for a new paradigm that focuses on reducing the risk of disasters, with the involvement and participation of communities in the management of disaster effects. This emerging paradigm opines that countries objective and the results or outcomes, that is, when the desired result on the target beneficiaries are not achieved, lack adequate resources funding and other infrastructures such as working equipments and good communication system. They have issues of getting approval for relief interventions by the presidency as well as lack of political will by the ruling party during each civilian era. These are some of the problems militating against the implementation of disaster management by the National Emergency Management Agency (Gambo2006).

Mission and Vision of NEMA

Mission: To coordinate resources towards efficient and effective disaster prevention, preparation, mitigation and response in Nigeria.

Vision: To build a culture of preparedness, prevention, and response and community resilience to disaster in Nigeria (NEMA bulletin).

Functions of NEMA

- Collate data from relevant agencies so as to enhance forecasting, planning and field operation of disaster management;
- Educate and inform the public on disaster prevention and control measures;
- Co-ordinates and facilitate the provision of necessary resources for search and rescue and other types of disaster curtailment activities in response to distress call;

- Co-ordinate the activities of all voluntary organizations engaged in emergency relief operations in any part of the Federation;
- Receive financial and technical aid from international organizations and non-governmental agencies for the purpose of disaster management in Nigeria;
- Collect emergency relief supply from local, foreign sources, including international and non-governmental agencies;
- Distribute emergency relief materials to victims of natural or other disasters and to assist in the rehabilitation of the victims where necessary;
- Liaise with State Emergency Management committees established under section 8 of this Act to assess and monitor where necessary, the distribution of relief materials to disaster victims;
- Process relief assistance to such countries as may be determined from time to time;
- Liaise with the United Nations Disaster Reduction Organization or such other international bodies for the reduction of natural and other disasters;
- Prepare the annual budget for disaster management in Nigeria; and;
- Perform such other functions which in the opinion of the Agency are required for the purpose of achieving its objectives under this Act (NEMA Bulletin).

National Disaster Management Framework

The National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) is a document developed to serve as a regulatory guideline for effective and efficient disaster management in Nigeria (NEMA Bulletin).

- The framework defines measurable, flexible and adaptable coordinating structures, and aligns key roles and responsibilities of disaster management stakeholders across the nation.
- It describes specific authorities and best practices for managing disasters.
- It explains a paradigm shift from response and recovery in disaster management to disaster risk reduction.
- It offers a holistic approach to disaster management and serves as a legal instrument to address the need for consistency among multiple stakeholders.
- It is a coherent, transparent and inclusive policy for disaster management in Nigeria.
- All Relevant Disaster management stakeholders can use this document as justification for organisational preparedness using the roles that have been assigned to them in it.
- The plan ensures that all sectors in humanitarian responses such as Camp Management, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Basic Education, Food and Nutrition, Logistics, Telecommunication and Security are addressed.

- It also serves as a link between National, Regional and International humanitarian actors.

The National Disaster Management Framework is a foundation upon which all plans, policies, programmes and procedures for disaster management is created, developed or sustained. The framework was developed to look at the following: Institutional Capacity, Coordination mechanisms, Disaster Risk Assessment, Disaster Risk Reduction, Disaster Prevention, Preparedness/Mitigation, Disaster Rehabilitation, and Facilitators (Gambo 2006).

Primary and Secondary Emergency Response Institutions in Nigeria

- Nigeria Police Force (NPF)
- Federal Fire Service (FFS)
- Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC)
- Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC)
- Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRSC)
- National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
- Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA)
- Nigeria Maritime and safety administration (NIMASA)
- Nigerian Inland Water Ways (NIWA)
- Directorate of Road Transport Services (DRTS/VIOs)
- Private Construction Companies
- International Development Partners (NGOs)
- Federal/ State Ministry of Health (FMOH)
- Federal/ State Ministry of Environment (F/SMEnv)
- Federal/ State Ministry of Works (F/SMOW)
- Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA)
- Federal Ministry of Transport (FMOT)
- Federal Ministry of Aviation (FMOAvi)
- Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN)
- Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS)
- Nigerian Customs Service (NCS)
- Nigerian Prison Service (NPS)
- Accident Investigation Bureau (AIB)
- Military (Army, Navy, Air Force) – Disaster Response Units (DRUs) (Gambo 2006).

Although these are agencies/ institutions that could respond in cases of emergencies, NEMA is at the centre point of coordinating emergencies response disaster management in Nigeria.

Facilities and Infrastructures NEMA Adopts for Coordinating Disaster Management

Mission Control Centre (MCC)

The Mission Control Centre located in the Headquarters of NEMA is a computer based satellite technology that uses the COSPAS-SARSAT hi-tech system/facility. The system is designed to pick distress alerts and location data to assist in Search and Rescue Operation, using spacecraft and ground facilities to detect and locate the signals of distress beacons operating on 406 MHz. When there is a distress alert from the beacon located on a ship or aircraft, the satellite system transmits the signal to the ground segment facilities from where the data is processed and transmitted to the appropriate Mission Control Centre (MCC). The MCC now alerts the nearest Rescue Coordinating Centres (RCC) or Disaster Reaction Units (DRU) of the Army, Air Force, and the Navy for appropriate and immediate action (NEMA press release).

Geographic Information System (GIS)

The agency has established a functional GIS laboratory for early warning and precision in response to the management. The lab collects spatial data, analyses and prepares useful information that helps to aid responses to disaster. It is one of the significant facilities of the agency for its disaster risk reduction programme.

Mobile Clinics

Time is a crucial element in disaster management. In recognition of this, the agency obtained approval and procured facilities for mobile clinics that have been strategically stationed in Abuja, Kaduna, Lagos and Port Harcourt to be deployed in the event of any major disaster. While arrangements are on to acquire more of the clinics, the agency has also procured a good number of ambulances stationed in Abuja and the six zonal offices (Gambo 2006).

Helicopter for Search and Rescue

The agency has in place a helicopter for search and rescue. The helicopter is station in Abuja and manned by Officers of the Nigerian Air force. Necessary arrangements are being concluded to acquire additional helicopters which we hope that with time there would be one for each of the six geo-political zones.

Policies and Strategies

i. Contingency stockpiling

To ensure prompt and efficient response to disasters, the agency established warehouses in its six zonal offices and Abuja, and stocked them with relief and rehabilitation items. This is to ensure timely intervention in response .

ii. Search and Rescue (SAR)/Epidemic Evacuation Plan

The plan which was approved in 2008, allows for a system where all stakeholders can draw on collective strength of one another and build a formidable group of highly mobile, motivated, dedicated and trained workforce of disaster managers .

iii. Collaboration with Security Agencies

Security agencies constitute the major stakeholders of the agency. Over the years, NEMA has ensured successful collaboration with security agencies through regular meetings, workshops, simulation exercises and training, utilising every opportunity to advance the cause of disaster management in the country.

iv. National Disaster Response Plan

The plan is a document approved by the Federal Executive Council which states the roles of stakeholders and the call out plan in response to disasters. The document is presently undergoing a review to update and to make it more functional.

v. Training and capacity building

NEMA believes in the preparation of human resources for optimal performance. Therefore, with appropriate approval, the department of training was established to develop the curriculum and to coordinate the human resources development of the agency in addition to catering for the training needs of stakeholders. Today, NEMA staff are continuously trained locally and abroad on modern skills which qualify them to be good disaster managers as obtained in other parts of the world.

vi. Advocacy/stakeholder meeting

NEMA engages in advocacy to ensure the preparedness of the stakeholders. Through this, it assesses available equipment and facilities at the disposal of the stakeholders. In the absence of such or where equipment and facilities are seriously inadequate in supply, it encourages provision. The agency also ensures a close tab on the stakeholders through regular meeting and activities.

vii. Disaster Risk Reduction

Hitherto, disaster management in Nigeria was mainly humanitarian relief supplies with huge funds expended annually on perennial emergencies. The paradigm shift in disaster risk management offers a good opportunity to build, develop and sustain policies pertaining to social development, equity, economic growth, environmental quality and sustainable land use. Experiences have revealed that in disaster management attention should be given to prevention and mitigation rather than to wait for the aftermath. In recognition of this, disaster managers the world over have continued to give serious attention to risk reduction strategies. NEMA has developed a special programme in this

regard and with the cooperation of the stakeholders has embarked on series of trainings, sensitization and initiatives to promote the required consciousness on specific and general disasters. The programme emphasizes on the mainstreaming of disaster management into national development policies.

viii. Awareness generation

More than half of the disasters in the country are man made arising from deliberate intent, error or negligence. Disasters of man made origin can be minimised by arousing the consciousness of the people through awareness generation. The Agency utilises awareness generation against disasters as the cornerstone in building a culture of sustainable resilience to disasters.

ix. Six zonal offices

In its desire to decentralise disaster management and ensure active participation of the grassroots, the agency established functional zonal offices located in each of the six geo-political zones of the country as follows: North Central (Jos), North West (Kaduna), North East (Maiduguri), South West (Lagos), South South (Port Harcourt) and South East (Enugu). The zones provide for quicker response to disaster situations before any action from the head office. The zonal offices are the extensions of the agency in their various locations having the responsibilities of implementing policies and carrying out any other assigned functions. Efforts are being made to establish additional zonal offices. Call centres are also to be established across the country for quick reaction to distress alerts. Through the zonal offices, the grassroots now have direct access to the agency as disaster intervention is also decentralised. The intervention period has significantly improved to just about two days for assessment and delivery of relief assistance for urgent situations.

x. Disaster Response Units (DRUs)

These are units in military formations dedicated to emergency/disaster responses. The involvement of the military is necessitated especially for situations that may require physical human strength and some military equipment. The units exist in identified Army, Navy and Air force formations across the country (Gambo 2006 in NEMA's official press release).

The Four Phases of Emergency and Disaster Management.(Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery)

Mitigation

Mitigation activities entail identifying risks and hazards to either substantially reduce or eliminate the impact of an incident usually through structural measures. Mitigation activities often have a long-term or sustained effect and may have an impact

on insurance premiums. In many cases, mitigation activities occur in the recovery stage of a major disaster. Some examples of mitigation include: building codes that address risks such as fires, high winds, or earthquakes, zoning rules that restrict construction in floodplains, rebuilding damaged structures with more resilient materials, flood mapping to identify low lying areas and relocating homes and structures located in floodplains and flood prone areas, dams and levees that help prevent flooding (Lindsay 2012).

Preparedness

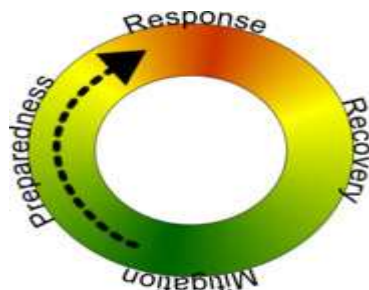
Preparedness is distinct from mitigation because rather than focusing on eliminating or reducing risks, the general focus of preparedness is to enhance the capacity to respond to an incident by taking steps to ensure personnel and entities are capable of responding to a wide range of potential incidents. Preparedness activities may include training, planning, procuring resources, such as food, water, and medication stockpiles, intelligence and surveillance activities to identify potential threats and exercising to assure the adequacy of planning efforts and the use of after-action reports to improve emergency response plans (Lindsay 2012).

Response

Response activities are comprised of the immediate actions to save lives, protect property and the environment, and meet basic human needs. Response involves the execution of emergency plans and related actions, and may include: evacuating victims, deployment of response teams, medical stockpiles, other assets and establishment of incident command operations (Lindsay 2012).

Recovery

Recovery activities are intended to restore essential services and repair damages caused by the event. Recovery activities may include: the reconstitution of government operations and services (e.g., emergency services, public safety, and schools), housing and services for displaced families and individuals and replenishment of stockpiles (Lindsay 2012).



A Graphic Representation of the Four Phases in Disaster Management

Source: Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction (Schwab 1998).

The Three Cs of Emergency Management

a. Coordination - allows all personnel and agencies to effectively work together even though each entity may have a different way of conducting operations. Collaboration allows all agencies work together for the same objectives - in emergency management, these objectives often follow a three phased goal of saving lives, scene stabilization being second and property protection being third.

b. Cooperation - is simply an act of entities cooperating with one and other while working towards common objectives.

c. Communication - is often seen as a cornerstone of emergency management - entities must be able to properly communicate with one and other and in an effective and critical manner otherwise, an emergency can lead to a disaster in the end.

Methodology

This study relied solely on historic data (secondary data) collected from journals, conferences, news papers, publications of the various stake holders in Emergency and Disaster Management, articles and annual reports of FEMA. Data gathered from the various sources were pieced together to draw inference where necessary and recommendations made based on obvious lapses observed in different publications used.

Emergency Management Funding in Nigeria (NEMA/SEMA)

Funding is critical to attaining success in emergency management in every part of the world. Equipments, facilities, structures, relief materials, communication, logistics, and search and rescue can only function effectively with adequate funding. Nigeria, a developing nation is struggling to meet its obligation to its citizens. Critical projects are either abandoned or done haphazardly due to funding problems. Although NEMA is funded by government and international donor agencies, it has become imperative that a statutory funding must be put in place if NEMA is to meet its obligations of effective emergency management in Nigeria (NEMA Bulletin).

Emergency Management Funding in States

SaniDatti (2017), a Senior Information Officer of NEMA said most SEMAs are either not funded or are inadequately funded in spite of the enormity of disaster management activities in the states.

The statement observed that most SEMAs were not established by law and those established by law were not functional and they lacked proper structure with full complement of departments, units and staff.

The Director General of NEMA, (Muhammad SaniSidi 2017) therefore, called for stronger coordination among critical stakeholders especially between the coordinating agencies at the federal and state levels as effective disaster management and

humanitarian service delivery cannot be achieved by one tier of government alone. He further added that, “Government institutions, the private sector, local and international organizations and individual must work together for a nation like ours to meet its objectives of emergency management, disaster risk reduction and the building of strong national resilience.”

NEMA believes that the establishment of an emergency trust fund has become imperative following the scarcity of defined funding sources and allocation criteria for State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs). According to NEMA, this has led to over-reliance on the National body.

Consequently, at an annual consultative meeting between the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and State Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs) at Asaba, Delta State, there was a consensus reached by participants that the Trust Fund should be funded with 1% of internally generated revenue and 1% of monthly allocation from the Federation Account to the states, through appropriate legislations (Schwab *et al* 1998).

Findings and Discussions of Findings

The review of various documents studied revealed that NEMA over the years has some milestone achievements to its credit. However, there are also various barriers to effective and efficient coordination, cooperation and communication on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Disaster Management even under the coordination of NEMA.

Achievements

It is almost impossible to quantify and qualify the numerous achievements recorded since the establishment of NEMA. However, information put out on NEMA’s press release and retrieved in 2016 highlights some significant landmarks record from the gains of the various structures that have been put in place. These are in line with the given mandates of the agency. They are as follows:

(a) Grassroots Emergency Volunteers

Disaster management was always misconceived to be responsibilities of government alone. But disasters directly affect people and communities. Therefore the grassroots volunteer programme, which was conceived out of the desire to ensure greater participation of the grassroots in the management of disasters in their locations, was established. The implementation involves training of the people in basic principles of disaster management and precautionary measures in curtailing spread of epidemics, natural and man-made emergencies. The target is to train at least 200 volunteers in each of the 774 local government areas. At present, the agency has registered and trained 5,718 volunteers from across 20 states of the federation. It is hoped that the programme

will expand to inclusion of a subject in the curriculum of primary schools to teach the pupils on safety measures.

(b) NYSC –Emergency Management Vanguard

The creation of the Emergency Management Vanguard (EMV) was borne by the National Emergency Management agency aimed at using NYSC Corps members as vanguards for a standardized proactive Disaster Management nationwide. Disaster response activities are not solely the work of experts and emergency responders from government disaster management organisation alone, local volunteers, organizations, hence, business concerns and citizens have active roles to play. The rationale behind this being that disasters most often happen at local communities and so it becomes most imperative to train young men and women at the grass roots to respond promptly before any national assistance. Reports have shown that the vanguards were very useful in awareness generation, early warnings and information dissemination. Their activities have helped greatly in overcoming a number of disasters. It is desirable to expand and sustain these activities by involving more youth volunteer organizations.

(c) Executive volunteer

This is yet another category of volunteer programme for professional members of the society. It is specifically designed for the professionals to volunteer their skills and knowledge in assisting people in distress or at risk. Positive response from the professionals in regards to availing their voluntary services has been noted.

(d) Collaboration with stakeholders

Since the mandates of the agency are largely coordination by nature, it usually relies on collaboration with stakeholders to ensure that they are properly informed of their roles and given the necessary supports. The agency through collaboration with the stakeholders has organized a number of simulation exercises to enable the stakeholders practically identify the roles expected of them during the management of a specific disaster. Simulation is a standard practice that is usually held worldwide, both by military and civil institutions, in preparation for serious, instantaneous and urgent circumstances. NEMA cannot afford to miss out from its benefits to the nation.

(e) Awareness campaigns on periodic disasters

The functions of the agency cover creating awareness on disasters. NEMA has been very active in mounting campaigns over periodic disasters such as epidemics. Each raining season, NEMA embarks on the creation of awareness on the dangers of flood by sensitizing the people on what they need to know about the hazards, preventive measures and how to cope with the risk when prevention is impossible. In recognition of the roles of the state and local governments in awareness campaigns, the Agency

sensitizes them on the need to embark on campaigns in their respective states and local government areas. NEMA has always been on hand to support with expertise guidance and participation. A point in case is the potential threat from the Lake Nyos in the republic of Cameroun, which results in flooding affecting communities in Taraba, Benue, Cross River and Akwa-Ibom States.

(f) Human resources

In addressing the problem of insufficient human resources, NEMA obtained approval and have recruited more staff to boost the personnel strength of the agency. The new staffs have been distributed across the headquarters and zonal offices to upgrade our services. The agency has also taken the issue of human resources development seriously to provide for qualified manpower. Staff are given continuous training and retraining to engage in any form of disaster management as obtained anywhere in the world. The agency also engages the services of specialized training institutions such as the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) and others from time to time.

(g) Commencement of post graduate programmes in disaster management

The agency has succeeded in facilitating the commencement of postgraduate programmes in disaster management in six universities spread across the country. This would definitely create more interest in academic researches into disasters and enhance management skills.

(h) Rehabilitation of disaster victims

The agency has engaged in the rehabilitation of communities affected and continuously threatened by disasters. This includes collaboration with other relevant institutions to rehabilitate the Agwagune community in Besse LGA of Cross River State. The victims were provided with a total of 400 houses. The agency is actively involved in the repatriation of Nigerians stranded in other countries back home.

(i) Relief distribution

Notably, the agency has distributed relief materials in bringing succour to victims of various disasters in the country. There is virtually no significant disaster that can be said to have overwhelmed states' capability or resources that the Agency has not responded to by providing relief materials to the victims. With the establishment of the zonal offices in 2006, the Agency commenced the process of direct distribution of relief materials to victims with the active collaboration of the states and other stakeholders. NEMA also processed relief materials approved by the federal government to some countries in need based on bilateral relationships.

(j) Facilitated insurance cover

Given the fact that relief assistance could not effectively enable the recovery of disaster victims, NEMA in line with international strategy of risk transfer facilitated insurance policy for market fire victims. Several insurance companies now provide cover for markets and road accidents and with plans to expand to farms and other livelihood centres.

(k) Refocused disaster management

NEMA has refocused disaster management from relief distribution to Disaster Risk Reduction. Unlike the usual waiting for disaster to happen before response, the agency adopted a more proactive approach to disaster management by gathering relevant data and preparing ahead of disasters.

(l) Established Geographical Information System (GIS)

The agency established a GIS laboratory for collection and analysis of data to aid disaster forecast and early warning. The establishment of the laboratories is in compliance with the global best practice in early warning system. Information obtained from the laboratories are disseminated to the relevant users for disaster prediction, planning and response.

(m) Emergency alerts

Nigeria joined the COSPAS-SARSAT programme in 2001 as a user state having realized the importance of satellite based tracking system in SAR operation. Nigeria's status was changed from a user state to a ground segment provider after the successful installation of the COSPAS-SARSAT equipment in 2003. These include the Local User Terminal (LUT), Mission Control Centre (MCC) and the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC). However, the Nigerian Mission Control Centre (NIMCC) was commissioned at the COS-PAS-SARSAT Joint Committee Meeting in June 2007. At this stage, the NEMA COSPAS-SARSAT System is now a fully operational component of the International COSPAS-SARSAT system with Spain MCC serving as the Nodal MCC. NIMCC equipment has been utilized for SAR operations in Nigeria. Some of the recent operations include:

- Rescue of a trainee pilot en-route Abuja to Zaria crashed landed in a village close to Kaduna was rescued with the coordinates provided NAMA from NIMCC equipment in 2004.
- Rescue of a registered Algerian vessel in distress situation at high sea with 23 people on board in 2005.
- Rescue of a vessel hijacked by militants in the coaster area of Port Harcourt in September 2008.
- Rescue of a registered Panama vessel in coastal area of Lagos in July 2009.

- Rescue of a vessel (MV Duddes) attacked by pirates at NLNG Tank farm Bonny, Delta state in August 2009. All these operation were possible through the coordinates provided from the NIMCC.
- Other several alert detections from maritime and aviation industries were investigated and confirmed by respective Agencies (NAMA and NIMASA) to be false alerts. All these show the functionality of the NEMA SAR equipment (COSPAS-SARSAT).

It is on record that since Nigeria's return to civil rule in 1999, 2011 remained the year the country recorded mass casualties resulting from mostly human-induced and natural disasters. For instance, bomb explosions allegedly carried out by members of the Boko Haram, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and other amorphous militia groups have claimed several lives and destroyed properties worth millions of naira (NEMA 2009).

Barriers

The following are some of the barriers to effective and efficient emergency and disaster management identified in the cause of reviews of related literatures: Organizational Pride/ego/personality, Conflicting mandate/goals/agenda and priorities, Hidden agenda, Mistrust or lack of confidence in coordinators, Considered waste of time/time consuming, Probable loss of power/autonomy/identity, Differing focus/mandates/methodologies, Inadequate top-level (leadership) support, Ignorance or lack of defining policy documents and poor or inadequate funding of especially SEMA(Kandi 2012).

Conclusion

In Emenike's article on Co-Ordination, Communication & Cooperation in Humanitarian Action, he posits that disaster management is multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary even as disaster is multifarious and predictable. No single Agency could have all the answers to the challenges posed by disasters. Collaboration with the stakeholders is, therefore imperative. Emergency preparedness, response and disaster management is still at its infant stage in Nigeria. The aftermath of the Boko Haram and Herdsmen menace and the appalling state of IDPs tell the vivid story so far about our emergency management system. Facilities and infrastructures that aide emergency management is almost non existence or in a poor state. Although NEMA is doing its best in this direction poor definition of hazards, vulnerability, preparedness, and response remains a visible set back attributable to poor funding.

The transportation sector also has significant responsibilities in respect of emergency management and should be trained to respond appropriately (NEMA 2009).

In recognition of NEMA's efforts Baird(2010) in words of encouragement asserts that "It is commendable that NEMA and relevant stake holders have advocated for statutory

funding from all tiers of government especially the Federal and State government if it is to rise up to its responsibilities effectively” .

Recommendations

Following the submissions of different articles and publications on NEMA and SEMA, we recommend the following:

1. Every stakeholder that is involved in Emergency and Disaster handling should be trained to see the victims’ comfort as paramount. In other words, there should be an overlapping of responsibility with clear cut operational policies to guide actions. That way the issues of ego or who takes credit becomes a non issue.
2. The various stake holders who play a role or the other in Emergency and Disaster Management should seek to understand their clear mandates spelt out by the NDMF and receive contemporary training on their mandates. That way, effectiveness and efficiency can be attained.
3. It is imperative that a cost sharing mechanism be put in place between International donors, Federal, State and Local governments to lessen the burden on each tier and secure commitment.

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