

Afghanistan

National Disaster Management Plan

DEPARTMENT FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan

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Disasters cause widespread damage and disruption in Afghanistan with a high frequency of natural calamities such as earthquakes, landslides, avalanches, sandstorms and floods. Secondary or social impacts of the creeping disaster of drought take a sustained toll in large parts of the country. Extreme winter is another phenomenon having a large scale impact due to very low coping capacities. Besides these, disastrous events also result from adverse human actions. The prolonged war has not only left the nation with direct casualties, but it has also destroyed the coping capacity of the government as well as the communities. Immediate focus in the post war scenario was on emergency relief to ameliorate the impact of the war itself.

At present, Afghanistan is moving ahead from the post-conflict emergency relief phase as multi-lateral and bilateral donors are gradually reducing humanitarian aid and increasing post emergency development assistance. It is in a transition from relief to development. For a smooth and sustainable transition, the capacity of the government to implement and manage development programmes needs to be strengthened at the national and sub-national levels and across all sectors.

The Department for Disaster Preparedness (DDP) has the mandate to coordinate and manage all aspects related to emergency response to disasters, with the post-disaster recovery and development phase being the responsibility of government line ministries. DDP has the responsibilities for national disaster management policy and plan, and also some implementation roles. In all of these, DDP and the line ministries require considerable capacity strengthening if they are to carry out their tasks effectively and in a sustainable manner.

The role of UNAMA in disaster management is to assist the Government of Afghanistan in improving the management and coordination of disasters through establishment and facilitation of multi-sector and multi-disciplinary programmes and activities for enhancing capacity at all levels. UNAMA also has the responsibility within the UN and international community to assist and facilitate inter-agency coordination and management when disasters occur. It collaborates with other partners to identify, formulate and implement disaster related programmes and activities. Currently, UNAMA has assisted DDP in national disaster management capacity building through the preparation of this National Disaster Management Plan.

SEEDS is an India based organisation working in the area of disaster management, with a focus on making communities disaster resilient. It carries out work directly with communities threatened or affected by disasters and conducts research, awareness and advocacy missions. SEEDS has prepared this National Disaster Management Plan for the DDP as part of UNAMA's Quick Impact Projects.

As a Quick Impact Project, the Plan takes into account the current status of infrastructure availability, institutional capacities and constitutional clarity in Afghanistan. In accordance, it provides procedures that may be implemented with immediate effect and subsequently upgraded as more resources become available and capacities of stakeholders get built. Its immediate purpose is to bring about greater role-clarity and coordination amongst national level disaster response agencies. It covers the operational context, preparedness and response procedures, and an outline of future directions.

This Quick Impact Plan will need to be followed up with elaborate and long-term interventions as the country's capacity grows. Detailed risk analysis needs to be carried out for this, since the present plan is based on very aggregate information, which is the best available as of now. It strives to be a starting point of a long term exercise that will ensure efficiency in disaster management in all sectors and at all levels in the country. Such an exercise will need to go down to the grassroots and work with communities. The people of Afghanistan, unarguably one of the most disaster resilient communities in the world, are the greatest asset of the nation, and will be the single most important reason behind the success of the national programme on disaster management.

Scope

The NDMP (National Disaster Management Plan) focuses on streamlining disaster management systems at the national level through reorganization of the DDP and laying down of operating procedures of major stakeholders. It operates within the framework laid down under the Law on disaster response, management and preparedness in the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Its concepts apply to a major disaster, including a natural catastrophe, or any other occasion or instance for which the National Commission on Disaster Management determines that assistance of the national government is needed to supplement province and local level efforts and capabilities. It does not cover conflict related issues such as mine action or civil strife.

The NDMP covers the range of changing requirements in four stages of the disaster cycle as described in the plan: non-disaster stage, before disaster, during disaster and after disaster stages. It thus lays out principles, structures and procedures for mitigation, preparedness, impact assessment, rescue and relief, and recovery activities.

The plan primarily focuses at national level management systems, and briefly outlines the province level organizational systems required to operationalise a national plan. It does not cover district and local plans and recommends that work on these plans be taken up in the near future under the National Disaster Management Programme. Such work should be preceded by capacity building efforts at these levels so that the plans may effectively be implemented.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions relate to the various terms used in the Plan.

Law:

This is the Law on Disaster Response, Management and Preparedness in the Islamic State of Afghanistan. (Based on the tentative translation of the existing Law from Dari to English)

Emergency Situation:

As per the Law, this is a sudden on-set crisis or life threatening situation beyond the capacity of people to cope, such as floods, earthquakes, land slides, fires, cholera or other epidemics etc., in which situation the National Commission on Disaster Management shall declare a national emergency situation in the country.

Anticipation:

As per the Law, this is the study of the causes of potential or likely occurrence of a disaster before its happening.

Prevention:

As per the Law, this is to undertake preventive measures to avert disasters before they occur.

Operations Plan:

As per the Law, this is a plan or road map that includes measures to be implemented for all disaster related activities, such as planning, preparedness and management, in accordance with pragmatic standards or practices.

Rehabilitation/Reconstruction:

As per the Law, this is to rehabilitate or reconstruct the damaged and destroyed buildings, agricultural lands, basic public infrastructure, such as water supply networks and others damaged or destroyed due to natural and human-generated disasters.

Natural Disasters:

As per the Law, natural disasters are types of disasters that cause material and physical damages and human losses. These include: drought, water rise, earthquake, hail, flood, landslide, land/earth settlement, storms, avalanche, forest fire, epidemics and others.

Unnatural Disasters

As per the Law, unnatural disasters cause material and physical damage and destruction and human losses. These include: explosions, plane crash, big accidents and other human generated disasters.

Abbreviations

AERU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
AIMS	Afghanistan Information Management Service
ARCS	Afghanistan Red Crescent Society
CBO	Community Based Organization
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
DDP	Department for Disaster Preparedness
EOC	Emergency Operation Center
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FIR	First Information Report
GIS	Geographic Information System
GSHAP	Global Seismic Hazard Assessment Programme
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NCDM	National Commission for Disaster Management
NDMP	National Disaster Management Plan
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NSP	National Solidarity Programme
PGA	Peak Ground Acceleration
SEEDS	Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UN-OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
VDC	Village Development Committee
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Introduction

Disasters cause widespread damage and disruption in Afghanistan with a high frequency of natural calamities such as earthquakes, landslides, avalanches, sandstorms and floods. Secondary or social impacts of the creeping disaster of drought take a sustained toll in large parts of the country. Extreme winter is another phenomenon having a large scale impact due to very low coping capacities. Besides these, disastrous events also result from adverse human actions. The prolonged war has not only left the nation with direct casualties, but it has also destroyed the coping capacity of the government as well as the communities.

As a Quick Impact Project, the National Disaster Management Plan takes into account the current status of infrastructure availability, institutional capacities and constitutional clarity in Afghanistan. In accordance, it provides procedures that may be implemented with immediate effect and subsequently upgraded as more resources become available and capacities of stakeholders get built. Its immediate purpose is to bring about greater role-clarity and coordination amongst national level disaster response agencies. It covers the operational context, preparedness and response procedures, and an outline of future directions.

Hazard and Vulnerability

Afghanistan is recurrently hit by natural disasters causing losses to lives, livelihoods and property. In recent decades, this has led to massive problems of food insecurity and population exodus from the worst hit areas. From 1970 to 1998, the country has experienced 57 large-scale disasters, with a total number of persons killed estimated at 19,630 and affected persons estimated at 3,361,178 (UNDP 2001). With more than two decades of conflict, the vulnerability of the people has been heightened.

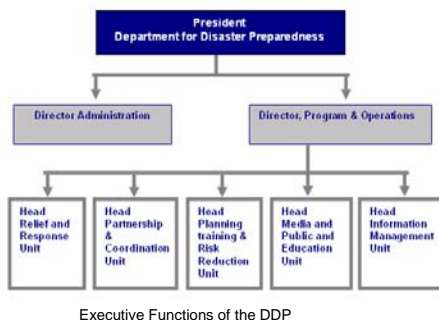
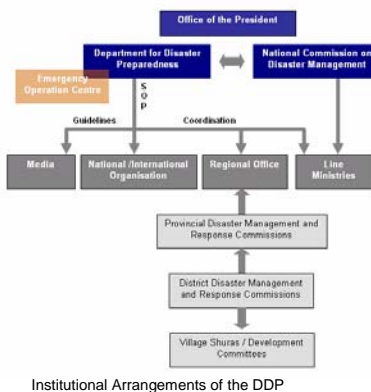
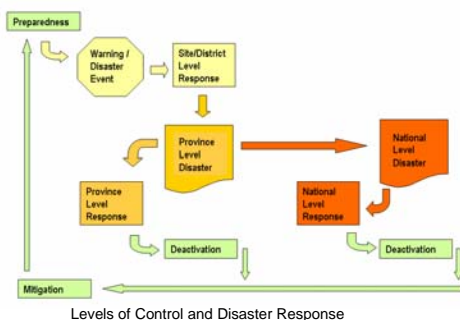
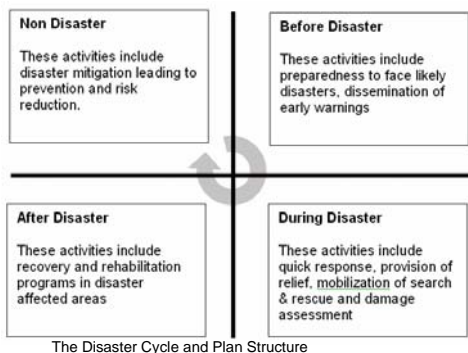
In 2002-2003 itself, the country experienced a series of disasters – the Baghlan Earthquake, the avalanches in the north Badakshan region, sandstorms in Farah, floods and landslides in central provinces and a prolonged drought. Hazards in Afghanistan may be categorized in four broad categories – Geological, Hydro-meteorological, Technological and Biological Hazards.

With extremes of climate and tough geo-physical conditions, the inherent vulnerability of the communities is high. In recent decades this has been further aggravated due to conflict and limited development activities. With severe drought conditions, as witnessed since the year 2000, even the traditional coping mechanisms of the communities have been stretched to a verge of collapse.

Drought combined with conflict has created a large internally displaced population that is living in extremely poor conditions, often with very limited opportunities for livelihood and nearly absent infrastructure. Many communities still depend on meager incomes derived by migrating outside their farmlands.



Earthquake, Flood, Drought and Landslide Risk Maps



National Disaster Management Approach

As per Article 5 of the Law on Disaster Response, Management and Preparedness, the following activities need to be carried out for any emergency situation or disaster:

1. Prevention of disasters
2. Assessment and Mitigation of the causes of disasters
3. Rescue of people during a disaster
4. Reconstruction and people's return to normal life
5. Conduction community awareness programmes and training personnel to be prepared to cope with disasters

For efficient execution of the National Disaster Management Plan, the five activities have been allocated to four stages of the Disaster Cycle. The Plan has been organised as per these four stages of the Disaster Cycle. It also lays down procedures of progressive response from site and district levels to province and finally national level.

Role of the Department for Disaster Preparedness

The Department for Disaster Preparedness (DDP) has the mandate to coordinate and manage all aspects related to emergency response to disasters, with the post-disaster recovery and development phase being the responsibility of government line ministries. DDP has the responsibilities for national disaster management policy and plan, and also some implementation roles. In all of these, DDP and the line ministries require considerable capacity strengthening if they are to carry out their tasks effectively and in a sustainable manner.

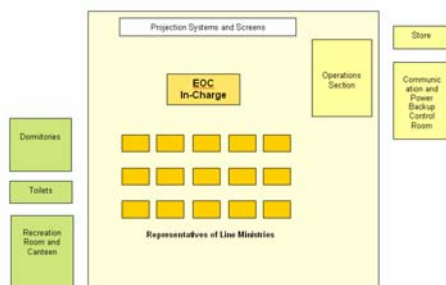
The Plan outlines systems for the DDP and its regional offices to be prepared for disasters, and once a disaster occurs, it guides the DDP on decisions to be made, directions to be issued, and appropriate coordination mechanisms. At present the focal authorities for province and sub-province level disaster management will be the province governors and the province commissions for disaster management. The DDP will, through its regional offices, interface with the province authorities to monitor conditions and coordinate support depending on situations. With time the capacities of district and local authorities will be built, making the role of province authorities focussed more on coordination rather than direct response in case of sub-province level disasters. The accordingly enlarged coordination role of the DDP will require strengthening of its regional offices or establishment of additional offices where appropriate at such future times. As per the disaster cycle, activities to be carried out by the DDP have been organised in four stages:

- During Non-Disaster Situation (Mitigation and Preparedness)
- Before a likely Disaster (Preparedness & Warning Dissemination)
- During Disaster (Declaration, Immediate Response, Search & Rescue)
- After Disaster (Recovery & Rehabilitation)

Implementation Mechanisms

The plan details the major implementation mechanisms that need to be established or strengthened to ensure efficient implementation of the management actions prescribed.

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) will be hub of all the activities related with disaster response in the country. Protocols for the establishment and operation of the EOC are detailed under the following heads:



Concept Layout of Emergency Operations Centre

- Aim of the EOC
- Location of EOC
- Back-up EOC
- Organisational Setup of EOC
- EOC Layout
- Equipment Requirements
- Resource Inventories
- Field Coordination System
- Non-Disaster Time Activities of the EOC
- EOC Activation Procedure
- Rapid Assessment and Quick Response Teams
- Reporting Systems

Standard Operating Procedures have been prepared with the objective of making the concerned persons understand their duties and responsibilities regarding disaster management at all levels. All ministries, divisions, departments and agencies will prepare their own action plans in respect of their responsibilities under the standing orders for efficient implementation. The Department of the Disaster Preparedness and the National Commission on Disaster Management will ensure coordination of the disaster related activities at national level.

The ministries, departments and agencies will organise proper training of officers and staff so that they can help in rescue, evacuation and relief work at different stage of disaster. Emergency response teams will be kept ready by each department so that they can move to disaster site/affected area on short notice. The Standard operating procedure shall be followed during all times, and describe specific activities for the following stages:

- Non-disaster time
- Warning stage
- During disaster
- After disaster

Province Disaster Management Plans

Province level preparedness activities will be planned and decided upon by Province Disaster Management Commissions. The plan lays down protocols for functions at this level under the section on Administrative Structure and the Standard Operating Procedure for Province Governors. The province governors and commissions will be the focal authorities for disaster management functions at province and sub-province levels at present. They will be supported by the district commissions and the administrators till such times as the capacities and resource base of the district authorities are built to a level that they may develop and implement district and local level disaster management plans. This will eventually lead to a national system of community based disaster management.

International Organisations and National NGOs

The role of UN Agencies and international organisations will continue to be critical for the immediate and mid-term future of the country. The plan aims to make respective roles of individual agencies clear to all stakeholders for improved coordination. The DDP, in its national coordination role, will ensure close interaction and cooperation between all support agencies.

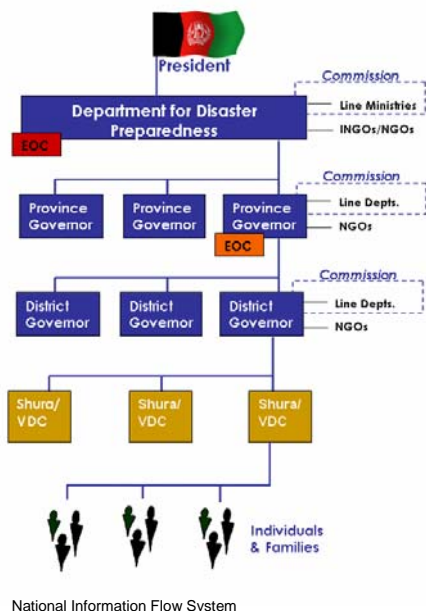
NGOs play a vital role in risk reduction and emergency relief in disasters situations in the country. The DDP will identify and enlist NGOs and their networks with their available capacity to be able to mobilize them when needed. The DDP will convene meetings of the NGOs whenever a disaster situation develops. NGOs will be requested to extend their cooperation in effective relief and rehabilitation of the affected communities.

The Afghanistan Red Crescent Society is a recognized member of the National Commission and would perform its listed duties within the ambit of its own rules and regulations and organisational structure, and in association with various governmental organisations.

Community Based Disaster Management

As Afghanistan is currently going through a large scale exercise of nation rebuilding, it needs to address its management capacities and gear up as a disaster resilient society for a safer future. Community based disaster management is the most viable means for this. One major problem faced at present by community level stakeholders is that they do not know whom to contact for assistance or guidance when they need to respond to a disaster or to prepare for one. The NDMP provides for such venues of communication and information flow from grassroots level stakeholders to the highest of authorities and vice versa.

Though province, district and local level plans may take time to come about alongwith capacities of these levels to implement the plans, channels of information flow should be made clear now, so that this basic function of community participation may be addressed by the NDMP. A structure rising from individuals and families, and getting consolidated at Village Shuras or Village Development Councils (currently being established in villages as part of the National Solidarity Programme) before it enters the governance domain through the district, province and national administration, can successfully establish such a link between the individual and the President of the country.



National Disaster Management Programme

The present Disaster Management Plan is a beginning towards organising the national resources and capabilities for a coordinated and efficient disaster preparedness and response. However, this quick impact plan will need to be followed up with elaborate and long-term interventions in keeping with the country's growing capacity. Prime areas requiring long term planning are discussed under the following heads.

A National Policy on Disaster Management is required to lay down the long term approach beyond the present quick impact national plan. Disaster management being a matter of National concern in a setting where governance is still taking shape with emerging situations requires a broad yet comprehensive vision. With particular reference to the massive relief operations now ongoing in the country, the disaster management policy will need to take a comprehensive and clear approach of linking relief and rehabilitation with development. The policy needs to be appropriate to the current dynamics in the country with respect to its physical, social, economic and political environment. The National Policy on Disaster Management will, therefore, need to be cross-sectoral in nature and based on the premise that all other relevant sectoral policies will take note of it and will have appropriate linkages with disaster management systems.

	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
Policy	Preparedness and Quick Response	Mitigation and Extended Response	Comprehensive Disaster Management, Safe Development
Plans	Quick Impact National Plan	Detailed National Plan, Province Plans	District Plans Village Plans
Projects	Human Resource Development, Information Base	Infrastructure and Technological Upgrading, Community Base	Financial, Cultural

National Disaster Management Programme

Disaster Management Plans will need to be prepared for various levels. The National Disaster Management Plan focuses on procedures for various role-players and their inter-coordination. The plan lays down the general guiding principles to be followed by the disaster management system in the country. However, in order to have an efficient ground based preparedness and response mechanism, it is essential to progressively detail this plan as national capacities get built, and to prepare Province and District Disaster Management Plans covering the entire country in detail and with locally appropriate specifications. Preparation of these plans needs to be taken up with immediate effect and the exercise may go in parallel with that of constant revision and upgrading of the National Plan. In addition, local plans for villages and urban centres need to be prepared. These should primarily have a people based approach.

Projects of National Importance need to be formulated and undertaken on an urgent basis to strengthen the national capacity for disaster management. It is on the basis of the successful impact of these projects that the plan will be able to have its desired impact and create conditions suitable for its upgrading. Some of the major areas requiring national projects are:

- Human Resource Development
- Capacity Building of NGOs and CBOs

- National Disaster Response Network
- Public Awareness for Community Participation
- Risk Atlas
- Technical Upgrading of Response Agencies
- National Disaster Management Fund
- Special Plans for Urban Centers
- Development Regulations and Building Codes
- Livelihood Security
- Needs of Special Vulnerable Groups

Part I. Vulnerability Profile of Afghanistan

1. Introduction

Afghanistan lies on the border between the Middle East and South West Asia. The country with a total area of 647,500 square kilometers is landlocked and largely dominated by mountains. The country has few rivers fed by snow melt. Nearly half of the country is covered with pasturelands. The climate is arid to semi-arid with hot summers and cold winters.

The country is recurrently hit by natural disasters causing losses to lives, livelihoods and property. In recent decades, this has led to massive problems of food insecurity and population exodus from the worst hit areas. Between 1970-1998, the country has experienced 57 large-scale disasters, with a total number of persons killed estimated at 19,630 and affected persons estimated at 3,361,178 (UNDP 2001). With more than two decades of conflict, the vulnerability of the people has been heightened.

In 2002-2003 itself, the country experienced a series of disasters – the Baghlan Earthquake (March, 2002); the avalanches in the north Badakshan region, floods and landslides in central provinces and a prolonged drought.

2. Hazard Profile

Hazards in Afghanistan may be categorized in four broad categories – Geological, Hydro-meteorological, Technological and Biological Hazards. The sub-types of hazards in these four categories are:

Geological Hazards	Hydro-meteorological Hazards	Technological Hazards	Biological Hazards
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Earthquakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Floods▪ Flood induced Landslides and Mudflows▪ Sandstorms▪ Extreme Heat and Cold▪ Avalanches▪ Droughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Chemical and Industrial Accidents▪ Fires▪ Major Building Collapse▪ Air, Road Accidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Epidemics▪ Pest Attacks

Data availability regarding hazards is disorganised at present in the country. Information is available primarily on Geological and Hydro-meteorological hazards and that too is scattered and scanty. Research needs to be taken up to gather information for preparation of a detailed hazard profile. Information that could be accessed is summarized below.

2.1 Geological

Afghanistan is home to the Hindukush Range of mountains that are prone to earthquakes. These mountains and their extensions dominate central and eastern part of Afghanistan. These are high, young mountains characterized by narrow valleys and rugged peaks. The highest elevation in the northern range is the Shah Fulahti peak (16870 ft/5158 meters) in the Koh-i Baba. The Hindukush Mountains, one of the world's largest mountainous range system, crosses Afghanistan from the Northeast to the Southwest, extending about 1200 km and having a width of 50 to 400 km. The eastern part of this massif system is practically hard to reach. The altitude of its summit reaches to 7,500 meters. The Sulaiman Mountain system is located in the eastern and southeastern regions of Afghanistan. The summit of this system reaches to 3,700 meters. The Ghazni-Kandahar Plateau (width-40 km, length-200 km.) is located between the spur of Hindukush and

Sulaiman massifs. Afghanistan has a complicated geological formation of mountains and rocks. Most of the mountain systems include the rocks from the Polyzouk era and various types of geological layers. Almost 1/6 of Afghanistan is covered by the Quaternary condensations. The formation of different types of massifs and geological structure have created different seismic zones within the country.

Most earthquakes are located in the Hindukush mountains in the northeastern part of the country. Earthquakes of magnitude 4 occur nearly every week or two. Most are very deep seated, i.e. having a hypocentral/focal depth of more than 33 kilometres. Depending on their magnitude some quakes have been felt as far away as parts of northern India and north-central Pakistan. These shocks rarely cause any damage in the region. The largest instrumented earthquake in the region took place on 15th November 1921 (36.50 N, 70.50 E) - Badakhshan Province, Afghanistan measuring Ms 8.1 (NOAA).

More recently, a devastating earthquake in the Baghlan Province (March, 2002) claimed over 1200 lives. The earthquake damaged houses and caused landslides which blocked many roads in the epicentral area.

Just 150 km northeast of the same region, in Rostaq, a magnitude 5.9 earthquake struck in February, 1998. The earthquake killed at least 2,323 people, injured 818 and destroyed 8,094 houses in the Rostaq area.

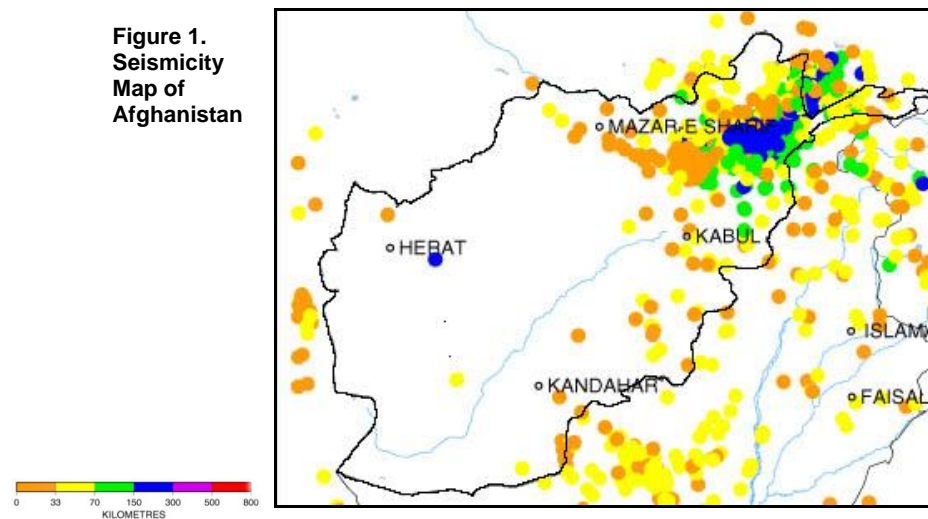
More than 4000 lives were lost and many homes destroyed in the May 1998 earthquake (Magnitude 6.6) in Badakhshan and Takhar province.

Earthquake Hazard Zonation

Afghanistan is divided into four seismic zones in terms of likelihood of damages: main, medium, minor and safe zones (non-seismic). Mainly the northeast and southeast parts of the country are located in a high seismic zone with high probability of damage during an earthquake. The west and southwest parts of the country are located in a non-seismic zone, which include the Province of Farah, Hilmand and some parts of Kandahar province. The territories along the Hari Rod River including Herat City are located in the medium probability of damages under earthquake strikes. The northeast parts of Afghanistan, region of Faizabad (Badakhshan province) is characterized by strong seismic probability with more than 7.3 point magnitude on the Richter scale (M). The central parts of the country bounded by the Koh-e Hindukush and Koh-e Baba massifs have the highest seismic magnitude with more than 7.5 M. The Southeast parts have seismic magnitude between 5.8 and 6.5 M. The region of Kabul is located within a territory with high probability of damages under earthquake strikes. Based on seismology studies, a 6-point earthquake takes place in every 100 years and a 9 point event every 1000 years in this area (Province of Takhar, North Afghanistan). This generalization is true for most territories in Afghanistan.

According to the Global Seismic Hazard Assessment Programme (GSHAP), the northeastern parts of Afghanistan have the highest hazard in the country. This includes the provinces of Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, Balkh, Jowzjan, Samangan, Sar-e-Pol, Bamian, Baghlan, Parvan, Kabul, Kapisa, Konar, Laghman, Nangarhar and Lowgar. Here a maximum peak ground acceleration (PGA) ranging from 0.24g to in excess of 0.48g in eastern most regions. In the provinces of Kandahar, Zabol and Paktika, the areas bordering Pakistan have a maximum PGA ranging between 0.24g to 0.32g. Similar levels of expected PGA are seen in parts of Herat and Farah provinces lying along the Iranian border. Nimruz, Helmand, Ghazni, Vardak and the remaining parts of Kandahar, Zabol and Paktika provinces could expect a maximum PGA ranging between 0.16g to 0.24g. The provinces of Ghowr, Oruzgan, Faryab, Badghis, and parts of Herat, Farah, Nimruz and Helmand provinces could expect a maximum PGA below 0.16g. The lowest PGA in the country is in Ghowr and Oruzgan Provinces and along the Turkmenistan border in Faryab and Badghis provinces. It lies below 0.8g.

**Figure 1.
Seismicity
Map of
Afghanistan**



2.2 Hydro metrological

Floods & Landslides

The principal river of Afghanistan is the Amu Darya. It divides the Turkistan (ancient name of 5 northern provinces of Afghanistan) districts on the north (the ancient Bactria) from the provinces of Kabul, Herat and Kandahar (the ancient Ariana and Arachosia) on the south. The sources of most rivers lie in the mountains and are fed by snow melt. The flow is thus highest in spring and early summer. During other seasons the rivers may become scarce or disappear entirely. This seasonal nature of rivers and streams make the areas through which they flow highly vulnerable to floods, mostly flash floods and landslides.

*The village of Gardi Gouse, Jalalabad Province has 700 year old history with a current population of 3500. The village is hit by floods every 2-3 years. Fifty five years ago, in a severe flood, the entire village was washed away. The villagers now depend only on daily work namely petty trading and loading assistance to travelers moving across the Afghan-Pakistan border. With limited resources and access to infrastructure, the village perennially remains caught in the vicious cycle of poverty and disasters.
(UNAMA field visit)*

Drought

Erratic rainfall characterizes Afghanistan's biophysical environment. According to an analysis of climate and drought records by the Asian Development Bank, localized droughts in parts of the country have a return period of three to five years, while drought covering large areas of zones recurs every 9 – 11 years. Drought with national scope has a return period of about 20 – 30 years. The recent drought, however, is unusual and perhaps the worst in country's history.

Extreme Winters

Many parts of the country face bitterly cold winters with high snowfalls. The highlands, though sparsely populated experience high snowfalls for the better part of the year, and short summers with mild temperate conditions.

In January, 2001, a cold wave hit the western provincial capital city of Herat, with temperatures falling to as low as -25 C, resulting in some 150 deaths in the IDP (Internally Displaced People) camps outside the city (UN-OCHA).

2.3 Other Hazards

Locust Attacks

Locust attacks have been a problem in Central and Northern provinces of the country. In recent past, Baglan and Samangan provinces have suffered damage to agricultural crops due to locust attacks. In Samangan province, transportation problems caused temporary pesticide shortages further compounding the problem.

3. Vulnerability

With extremes of climate and tough geo-physical conditions, the inherent vulnerability of the communities is high. In recent decades this has been further aggravated due to conflict and limited development activities. With severe drought conditions, as witnessed since the year 2000, even the traditional coping mechanisms of the communities have been stretched to a verge of collapse.

Drought combined with conflict has created a large IDP that is living in extremely poor conditions, often with very limited opportunities for livelihood and nearly absent infrastructure. In spite of such conditions, many communities still depend on meager incomes derived by migrating outside their farmlands.

3.1 Depletion of Natural Resources

Natural resources in Afghanistan have been severely degraded over recent years. With the population mostly depending on natural resources for their livelihoods, their vulnerability to disasters has increased dramatically.

Water

In Afghanistan, canals, springs, and *kariz* are the main sources of water for irrigation of farmlands; high altitude areas rely on springs for water. Farmers reported that limited rains and snowfalls over the last few winters, coupled with the early melting of the snows, has not allowed for the replenishment of the underground aquifers. Thus, water from the *kariz*'s and springs, on which irrigated farming depends, has either been greatly reduced or dried up completely. This has led to failure or poor yields of crops. Prolonged absence of rain has led to fruit trees in orchards withering away or dying.

Forest cover

The forest cover in Afghanistan is feared to have lowered further from its original figure of 3%. This has exacerbated drought conditions in the country. Vast areas of forest in various parts of the country have been destroyed by overgrazing and cutting in recent past. During the period of conflict, the cutting of forests for fuel wood accelerated. Denudation of forest cover has adversely affected short-term flood protection, watershed management and soil stability.

Pasture Lands

A combination of water shortage, denudation of forests and overgrazing has led to severe decline in carrying capacity of country's pasture lands. Nearly half of the country's territory is under pastures and the population's dependence on animal husbandry is critical.

3.2 Infrastructure

A well distributed physical infrastructure is vital for effective and timely response during disasters. In Afghanistan however, vulnerability of the population has increased several fold due to inadequate infrastructure.

Public Health

In Afghanistan, the ratio of basic health centres ranges from approximately one per 40,000 in the central and eastern regions to approximately one per 200,000 in

the south. Nineteen districts have no health facilities at all. Floods, avalanches, landslides, and other natural disasters are a yearly cause of mortality, morbidity, disability and population movements in the country. With limited public health infrastructure, timely medical assistance during disasters and preventive medicine during other times is not available to the people.

Transportation

Of Afghanistan's total road network of 20,720 kilometers, only 3,120 kilometers are paved and of this over 45 percent is in poor condition. In mountain areas, where earthquakes are frequent, commutation mainly takes place through foot or donkey trails. Many villages are remote and completely isolated from the rest of the country.

Communication

Afghanistan's average tele-density of only two telephones per 1,000 people is among the lowest in the world. Moreover, the subscribers of the telecommunication network in the country are based mainly in large cities. Rural populations have virtually no access to any telecommunication services. While there is a post office in every district, the majority are dilapidated and lack even such basic equipment as scales.

Communication is vital for reporting emergency situations. In the recent past, delay or absence of information from the disaster affected areas have prevented timely assistance in many disaster situations.

4. Capacities

In a risky environment and under uncertain climatic conditions people develop diverse and flexible strategies to face crisis. People's coping mechanisms and capacities have long been overlooked by assisting agencies and governments. In a scenario where infrastructure is limited, people's coping mechanisms can vastly ameliorate the vulnerabilities of the people. However, due to current conditions, even these have failed.

In the Sange Atash districts of Baghis Province, drinking water is salty and unpalatable, forcing people to spend meager incomes on purchasing drinking water. Some people in this area dig holes to depths of as much as twenty meters called cha in which they store snow collected throughout the winter. During the spring and summer, the water in these cha is sold to other villagers (WFP, 2003).

Traditional farming in Afghanistan has been practiced since historical times and provides the most efficient use of the limited water supply from glacial streams, springs, and *kariz* systems, which are prevalent in the arid parts of the country. In recent years, the functioning of these *kariz* systems has been severely affected.

In July, 2003 an unprecedented sandstorm in Farah province clogged canals and Kareezes rendering them derelict.

The Northern part of the country has traditionally been considered the granary for the country. The crop production in the region has been surplus feeding other parts of the country. The recent drought has, however, reversed the trend. Unprepared, people have resorted to immediate coping strategies that were severe, desperate, and irreversible. Land was sold or mortgaged, mass sale of livestock and traction animals resulted in a collapse of the market prices, loans were taken to buy food and to send men in search of work in Iran and Pakistan, fruit trees and orchards were felled and sold as firewood in the bazaars, household assets and tools were sold, pre-pubescent daughters were married off, and young sons were indentured as laborers as families could not afford their upkeep.

5. Risks

The high incidence of hazards coupled with extremely high vulnerability of the population has had a huge impact on Afghanistan's population. As the figures below reveal, thousands of lives have been lost due to earthquakes and many more due to prolonged drought and recurrent floods.

Table 1: Major Disasters and Deaths in Afghanistan

Sr. No.	Disaster	Date	Killed
1	Earthquake	30-May-1998	4,700
2	Epidemic	10-Apr-2002	2,500
3	Earthquake	4-Feb-1998	2,323
4	Earthquake	10-Jun-1954	2,000
5	Earthquake	25-Mar-2002	1,000
6	Earthquake	1-Feb-1991	545
7	Epidemic	Jan-2000	507
8	Earthquake	16-Dec-1982	500
9	Flood	2-Feb-1991	415
10	Land Slide	27-Mar-1995	354

Table 2: Population Affected by Disaster

Sr. No.	Disaster	Date	Affected
1	Drought	May-2001	3,800,000
2	Drought	Apr-2000	2,580,000
3	Drought	1973	600,000
4	Flood	Jul-1978	271,684
5	Flood	Jan-1972	250,000
6	Drought	1972	235,000
7	Epidemic	Jan-2002	200,000
8	Flood	Jun-1988	161,455
9	Earthquake	11-Feb-1999	124,867
10	Drought	1971	120,000

Source: EM-DAT; The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database

As stated earlier, disasters have led to large scale displacement of population and high levels of food insecurity in the country.

Of the estimated national population of 23.5 million, of which 20.8 million live outside major cities, an estimated 6 million people (25% of the national population) are critically poor. The measurement criteria used for insecurity was food (cereal) and to a less extent livestock. More data on household poverty is needed for a more relevant measurement of critically poor and livelihood situation (Vulnerability Analysis Review, MRRD, 2002).

During winter seasons, it is estimated that 2.0 million or more people are considered as at risk due to isolation (accessibility problems for rural areas), as IDPs and returnees, and vulnerable urban population.

In 2003, Avalanches in Sheva (Badakshan) caused damage to the settlements. However, due to the region's inaccessibility no assistance could be rendered. Similarly, mudslides took place in Bamiyan yet no heavy equipment could reach the site as required information, communication and logistics could not be established.

As indicated in the figure below, nearly all provinces in the country have been affected by drought. The provinces of Badakshan, Baghlan, Kunduz, Takhar, Balkh, Samangan are multi-hazard affected areas. These are provinces with high population exposed to risks.

Table 3: Natural Hazards by Provinces (estimated)

No	Province	Population	Earthquake	Drought	Flood	Landslide	Avalanche
1	Kabul	2,974,808	M	L	L	L	M
2	Kapisa	360,292	M	M	L	L	H
3	Parwan	762,839	M	M	L	L	H
4	Logar	291,880	M	M	L	M	M
5	Wardak	413,596	L	M	M	L	H
6	Bamian	340,005	M	H	M	L	H
7	Ghazni	1,865,762	L	M	H	L	H
8	Ghor	486,108	L	H	H	L	L
9	Paktika	352,629	L	M	M	L	L
10	Khost	70,246	L	H	M	L	L
11	Nuristan	111,898	L	L	L	L	M
12	Laghman	308,260	M	M	M	L	M
13	Ningarhar	1,086,593	M	M	M	L	L
14	Kunar	321,662	M	M	M	L	M
15	Badakhshan	593,148	H	M	H	H	H
16	Baghlan	758,242	H	M	M	H	H
17	Kunduz	815,107	M	M	H	M	M
18	Takhar	697,601	H	M	M	H	M
19	Balkh	935,742	M	H	H	M	M
20	Faryab	699,897	M	H	H	L	M
21	Jawzjan	508,660	M	H	H	L	M
22	Samangan	304,073	H	M	H	H	M
23	Sar-I-Pul	467,763	M	H	M	L	L
24	Helmand	745,616	M	H	M	L	M
25	Kandahar	826,870	L	H	M	L	L
26	Nimroz	149,339	L	H	M	L	L
27	Uruzgan	639,115	L	H	H	L	H
28	Zabul	282,170	L	H	M	L	H
29	Badghis	758,242	L	H	M	L	M
30	Farah	338,276	M	H	M	L	M

H: High

M: Medium

L: Low

Source: UNAMA

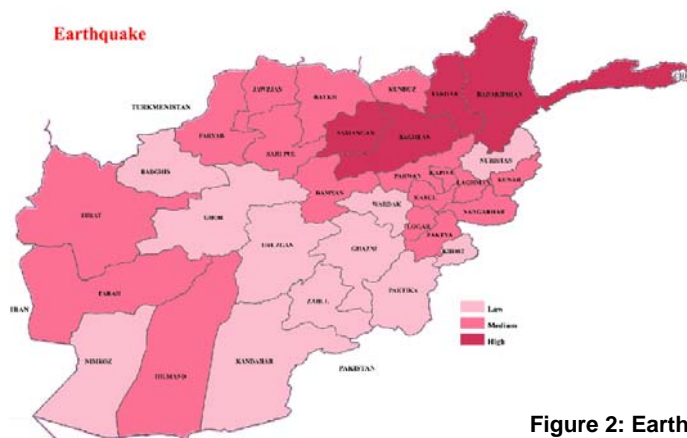
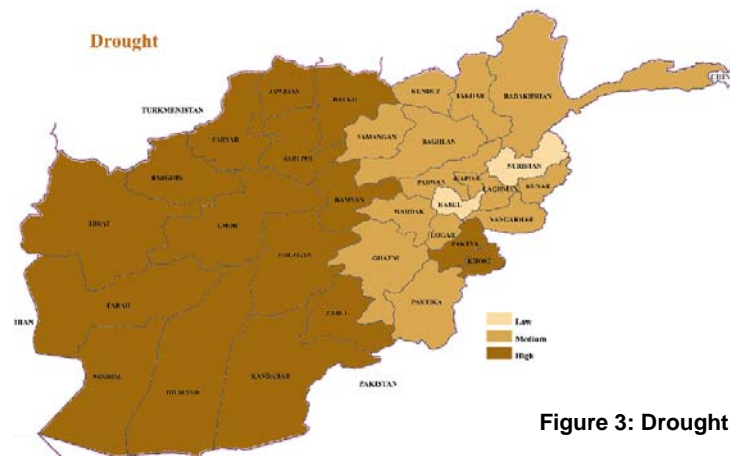


Figure 2: Earthquake Risk Map



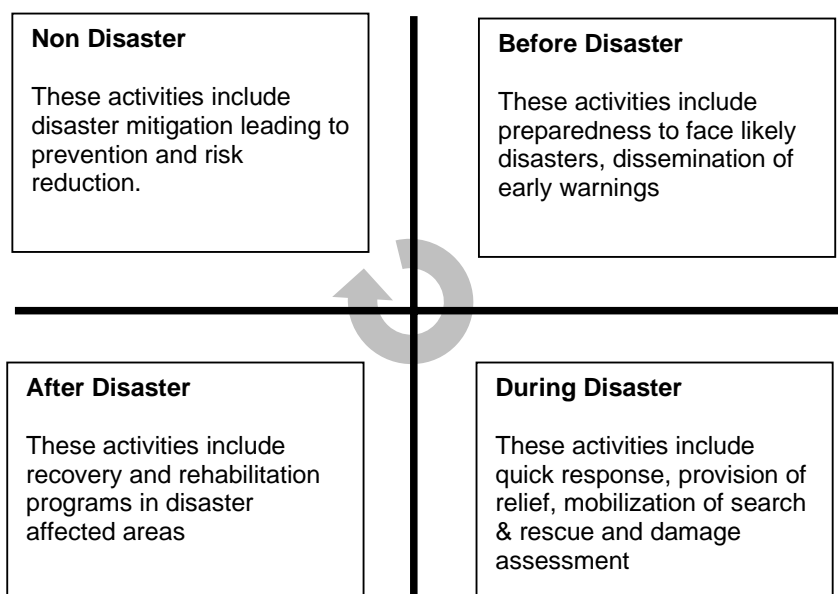
Part II. The National Disaster Management Plan

1. The Disaster Cycle and the Plan Structure

As per Article 5 of the Law, the following activities would be carried out for any emergency situation or disaster:

6. Prevention of disasters;
7. Assessment and Mitigation of the causes of disasters;
8. Rescue of people during a disaster;
9. Reconstruction and people's return to normal life;
10. Conduction community awareness programmes and training personnel to be prepared to cope with disasters;

For efficient execution of the National Disaster Management Plan, the five activities have been allocated to four stages of the Disaster Cycle. The Plan has been organised as per these four stages of the Disaster Cycle.



The Plan outlines systems for the DDP (Department for Disaster Preparedness) and its regional offices to be prepared for disasters, and once a disaster occurs, it guides the DDP on decisions to be made, directions to be issued, and appropriate coordination mechanisms. The following figure schematically shows how the levels of control and response will function depending on severity of the disaster.

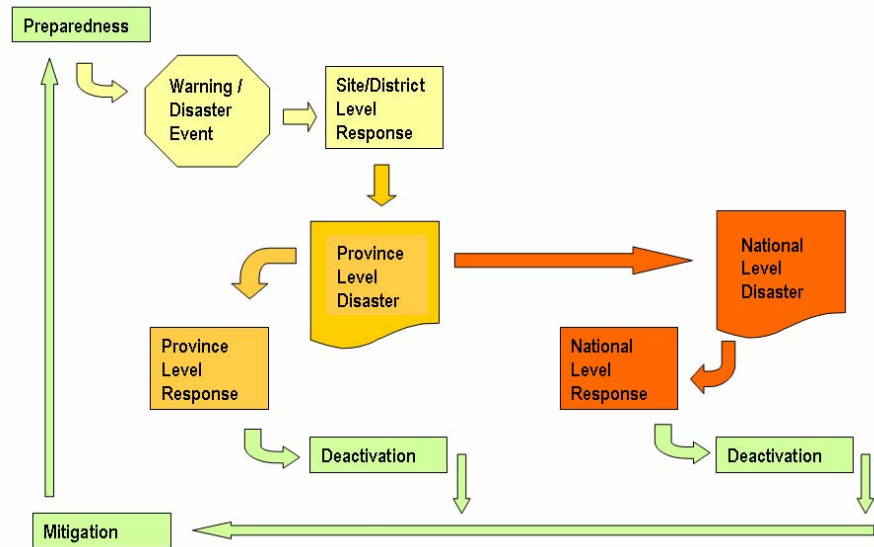


Figure 6: Levels of Control and Response during a Disaster

Note:

Province Level Disaster: A disaster within the capabilities of the Province Government to deal with
National Level Disaster: A disaster requiring major direct intervention of the National Government

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Department for Disaster Preparedness is the mandated body to coordinate the Disaster Management activities with the National Commission, Member Ministries of the Commission and International Organisations.

The roles of agencies at National level will be as follows:

Agency	Role
DDP	Coordinate disaster management activities at National level
National Commission	Declare emergency situation in case of devastating disaster and the end of it. Provide policy directions and integration of Disaster Management programmes in the national development framework. Adopt Disaster Management Plans prepared by the DDP and Line Ministries
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation & Development	Be the primary agency responsible for "Earthquakes", "Drought", "Earthquake induced Landslides" Identifying places for evacuation, need assessment, relief, implement vulnerability reduction projects, poverty reduction
Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock	Be the primary agency responsible for "Pest Attacks", "Cattle Epidemics" Assessment of agriculture crops, livestock damage and food needs, provide seeds for early recovery.
Ministry of Interior	Be the primary agency responsible for "Fire", "Air & Road Accidents" Security, evacuation, emergency assistance, search and rescue, first aid, law and order, communication, shifting of people to relief camps, traffic management. Burial work of dead bodies, Fire management.
Ministry of Irrigation & Environment	Be the primary agency responsible for "Floods", "Dam Failures", "Flash floods, Landslides & Mud flows" Drought and flood management, watershed management, enforcement of land-use plan, evacuation from low-lying areas, identification of safer places, construct embankments, arrangement of boats and pump sets, swimmers and divers, communication
Ministry of Health	Be the primary agency responsible for "Biological Disasters and Epidemics" First aid, health and medical care, ambulance arrangements, preventive steps for other diseases, record of dead persons
Ministry of Defense	Be the primary agency responsible for "Explosions" & "Unexploded Ordinance" Security, search and rescue logistics, distribution of relief, equipment for emergency response, equipment for Rapid Assessment and Quick Response Team
Ministry of Refugee & Repatriation	Be the primary agency responsible for "Extreme Winter situations" Emergency food aid and shelter
Ministry of Information and Communication	Communicate warnings to the public, relay announcements issued by DDP, telecast special programmes for information and actions, education and awareness messages for preparedness actions and coordinated response. Promote disaster related

	polices, provide emergency communication systems, enable critical communication links with disaster sites
Ministry of Transport	Logistics, transfer of relief material and relocation of affected people, road repairing, alternate routes
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Coordination/Liaison with International Aid Agencies, Foreign Governments
Ministry of Finance	Arrange necessary funds and ensure equitable distribution, manage accounts
Ministry of Planning	Allocation of funds on priority basis for disaster mitigation and rehabilitation projects
Ministry of Education	Training on Disaster Preparedness, Awareness Campaigns, Volunteer Teams
Ministry of Mines and Industries	Provide appropriate equipments for search and rescue, Relief Aid
Ministry of Housing and Building Reconstruction	Retrofitting and reconstruction, assessment of physical damage, Byelaws etc.
Ministry of Public Works	Maintenance of public infrastructure, search and rescue, identify safer places, assess physical damage, identify safer routes, provide necessary equipments for search and rescue, reconstruction and rehabilitation
Ministry of Commerce	Import of necessary items, protection of manpower and stored goods, maintenance of market prices
Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	Provide volunteer teams, vocational training programs, socio-economic rehabilitation of disabled, widows, children etc.
Ministry of Women Affairs	Protection of women and girl child, impart vocational training and awareness programs.
Afghanistan Red Crescent Society	Overall disaster preparedness and response programs at community level
Province Governors	Coordinate among province level officers of different departments, other agencies and local administration. Liaise with DDP and national EOC.
Municipality Mayors	All activities related to disaster preparedness, response and rehabilitation at the city level
International Agencies/NGOs	Provide relief, coordinate with Government, conduct awareness and capacity building programmes, preparedness activities at community level, assist in reconstruction and rehabilitation

Details of the activities of the DDP are provided in section 2.2 and Standard Operating Procedures for the Line Ministries are provided in Section 3.2.

The roles of agencies at Regional/Province level will be as follows :

Agency	Role
Regional Office of the DDP	The Regional Offices of the DDP will coordinate with the assigned Province Governments for management of Disasters.
Line Ministries	The Line Ministries will be represented at the Provincial Commissions on Disaster Management Regional/Province Offices of the Line Ministry will provide necessary assistance to the Province Authorities in implementation of disaster management activities in affected or vulnerable areas.

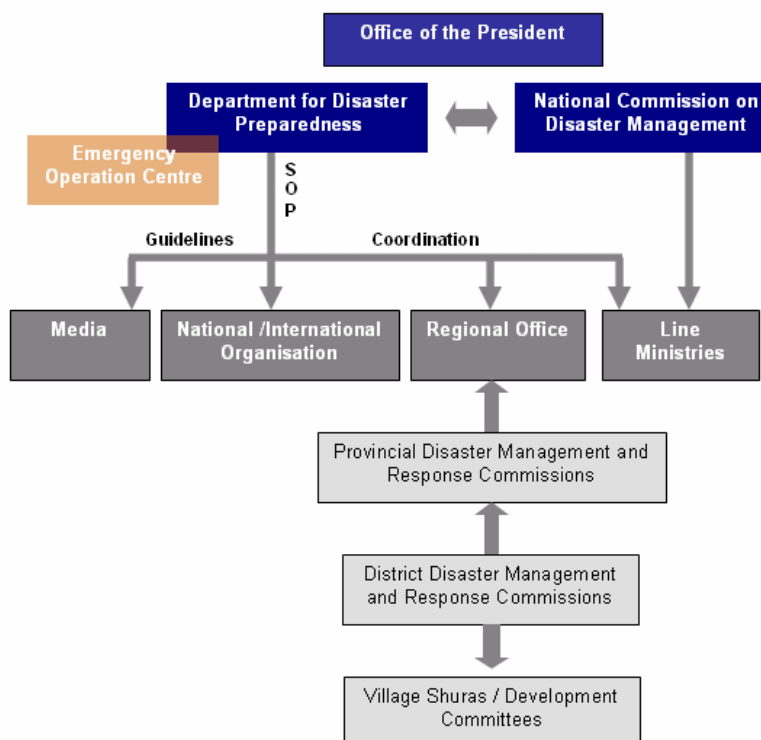


Figure 7: Institutional Arrangements of the DDP

DDP, Emergency Operations Centre & DDP Regional Offices: The DDP is the nodal agency for coordinating disaster management activities in Afghanistan. For purpose of effective and efficient functioning, it needs to establish and maintain a clear institutional relationship with the major disaster management roleplayers at national level. These include the institutions named in the Figure 7, with their roles described below. The DDP itself will function through its main office in Kabul, its EOC and its regional offices. The structure and functions of DDP's main office and the EOC are detailed in following sections of this plan. The existing regional offices will provide the interface between DDP's national office and the offices of province governors. Responsibilities at province and sub-province levels will be handled by the institutions existing at these levels, whose capacities may be strengthened for this purpose. Once this institutional arrangement stabilizes and appropriate capacities are built, DDP may expand its regional presence through addition of regional offices on a needs basis.

The Office of the President: The President of Afghanistan has the full authority to provide necessary assistance to the affected people during natural and man-made disasters directly or on the request of the DDP.

The National Commission on Disaster Management: The National Commission on Disaster Management will be convened if there is a National level disaster or when requested by the DDP. The Commission will be chaired by the President and the President of DDP will serve as the Member Secretary. The Commission shall provide policy directions; it will approve plans for disaster mitigation, preparedness and response prepared by the DDP and the Line Ministries who are members of the Commission. It will recommend integration of Disaster Management with other National Development programmes. It will adopt measures for Disaster prevention, mitigation and rehabilitation. The Commission may declare an emergency situation due to a devastating disaster and end of the situation as and when it deems fit.

Line Ministries: Line Ministries represented at the National Commission will prepare and implement disaster management plans for disasters for which they are the primary agencies. The Line Ministries will also provide support to other ministries in the form of specialized inputs. The National Commission on Disaster Management will act as a forum for exchange of information and mutual assistance. The Regional/Provincial offices of the Line Ministries will assist in implementation of the Disaster Management Activities at Provincial Level..

National/International Organisations: The National and International Organisations have a critical role to play in disaster management activities in the country, especially in light of the currently limited capacity. These organisations can provide vital resource inputs for supplementing the efforts of the government. These organisations will coordinate directly with the DDP through their representative at the National Commission.

Provincial & District Commissions on Disaster Management : The Provincial & District Commissions will be convened as and when a disaster takes place or there is a likelihood of disaster based on the information available from the DDP or field sources. The Provincial Commission and the District Commission will be chaired by the Governor of the Province and the District Administrator respectively. The role of the commissions will be to coordinate implementation of disaster management activities in the field by the local offices of the line ministries, national agencies and international organisations..The Provincial Commission will provide regular progress reports of their activities to the DDP.

Media: The role of the electronic media has during recent times emerged as a major component of disaster management. Special emphasis needs to be laid on the role of electronic media and information technology and this sector needs to be integrated with not only the disaster response but overall disaster management strategy. At the same time, the role of the print media cannot be taken on a lower level of importance, as this continues to be the medium of mass media in many parts of the Afghan society still unreachable by the electronic media. Besides this fact, print media has a major role to play in the pre-disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness activities through appropriate community awareness generation. An appropriate publicity management plan for disaster management will be developed to impart timely and correct information to the public. Media will lay a responsible role not only in terms of awareness but also in terms of accurate and informed reporting of events. The media could establish dedicated channels during the aftermath of a calamity to provide specific information about the local people and conditions.

2.1 Responsibilities of the Department for Disaster Preparedness

The DDP would follow the following structure for its effective execution of the NDMP (Figure 8).

(The structure, roles and responsibilities incorporate the suggestions made in the document – Proposed National Institutional Arrangements for Emergency & Disaster Management in Afghanistan, prepared by Fainula K. Rodriguez, Consultant/Team Leader ADB TA AFG 36180-01 02 October, 2003)

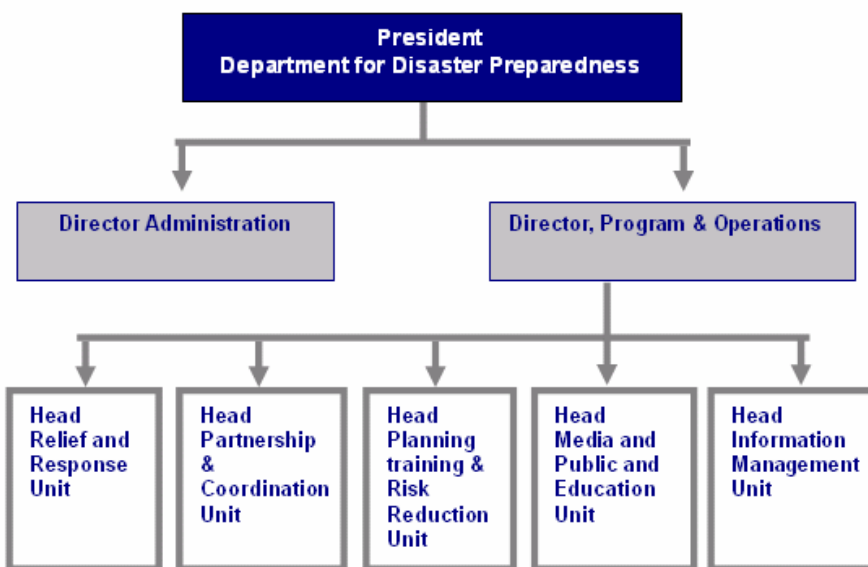


Figure 8: Executive Functions of the DDP

Table 4: Responsibility Distribution in the DDP

<i>Title</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
President of DDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise the President to convene meeting of National Commission Be the spokesperson & member secretary of the Commission Convene meeting of national/international organisations Head the EOC and ensure inter-agency cooperation Declare state of national emergency and end of state Monitor preparedness and response at province and sub-province levels, and engage as appropriate
Director Administration & Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In charge of administration and finance functions Manage allocation of personnel and equipment for preparedness and response situations Manage funds and resource mobilization/allocation for regular operations as well as preparedness and response activities
Director Programme & Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In charge of the executive units Translate plans and strategies into action programmes Manage the operations and coordination of the heads of the five executive units
Head, Relief & Response Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate alerts and dissemination of warnings and de-warnings Organise damage and needs assessments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate search and rescue activities ▪ Coordinate with other ministries for relief supplies to affected areas ▪ Manage donation mobilization, storage, packaging, transportation and distribution
Head, Planning, Training & Risk Reduction Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain and revise the NDMP ▪ Prepare sub-plans and special action plans including compensation packages and rehabilitation schemes ▪ Coordinate multi sectoral training programmes for various role-players ▪ Prepare, maintain and oversee implementation of mitigation strategies and plans
Head, Information Management Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate activities of the EOC ▪ Ensure dissemination of alerts, warnings, de-warnings and other information or bulletins from DDP in appropriate format ▪ Manage reporting systems and disaster documentation
Head, Partnership & Coordination Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate with National & International Organisations ▪ Prepare documents and establish helpdesks for external agencies entering the country for support ▪ Establish protocols and ensure smooth exchange of information and collaborative action between line ministries
Head, Media & Public Education Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare briefings for the media ▪ Establish and manage helplines for public information during disaster situations ▪ Coordinate public education programmes on disaster risk reduction

2.2 Activities of the DDP

As per the disaster cycle, the following activities would be carried out by the DDP.

A. During Non-Disaster Situation (Mitigation and Preparedness)

- Monitor development activities of various ministries with respect to mitigation aspect in development programmes and general preparedness
- Convene periodic meetings of the National Commission to review general state of preparedness and response for season changes including extreme winters and droughts.
- Organise Education, Training and Awareness Activities
- Promote Research & Development

Activities during this phase will focus on surveillance, mitigation and preparedness. Disaster Management Plans of the provinces and various ministries must be monitored and if required, amended.

The DDP will also monitor the development, mitigation and preparedness activities for disaster management compliance. It will ensure timely rehearsals, mock drills and reviews of the Disaster Management Plan. It will make provisions for and ensure conduct of trainings to various role-players at different levels. It will ensure that certain vital information at the EOC, such as the list of contact numbers, always stay updated.

Vigil will be kept on environmental compliance issues, trends of building construction, infrastructure and area development to ensure compliance with local disaster prevention principles.

One of the major activities during the preparedness phase will be to keep a vigil on developing emergency situations in neighboring jurisdictions from the point of view of:

- Preparation for the contingency that the emergency spreads, requiring activation of the response mechanism in the jurisdiction
- Preparation for possible need of extending relief co-operation to the neighboring jurisdiction, for which a contingency action plan may be prepared and kept in readiness.

B. Before a likely Disaster (Preparedness & Warning Dissemination)

Preparedness

At the onset of known hazard seasons, in the month of June for preparing towards floods/landslides and in September for preparing towards extreme winter, the DDP will carry out the following activities:

- Convene the meeting of the concerned Line Ministries and other agencies to review the preparations for onset of likely disasters.
- Ensure that meetings of concerned district, province disaster management committees where disasters are likely to occur are being held.
- Activate Emergency Observations in the EOC.

Warning

For any information received on likelihood of disasters such as floods, landslides or sandstorms, the DDP will carry out the following activities:

- Activate the EOC
- Based on early warning received, prepare initial information report with estimation of likely severity and scale of disaster
- Governors will be asked to conduct a review of the preparedness level of the provinces likely to be affected by the disaster, by calling a meeting of Province DMCs (Disaster Management Committees).
- Prepare a team for deployment to assess damage and need.
- Inform respective ministries to activate respective SOPs
- Inform the President
- Inform the SRSG of the UN and other recognized national and international organisations.
- Provide appropriate warning to general public
- Coordinate with Provincial Governors on dissemination of warning to general public and if necessary, carry out evacuation
- Request Ministry of Defense to be on standby for rescue and relief operations.
- If required, declare de-warning

De warning

In case the disaster does not accrue as predicted, a de-warning has to be issued to the respective provinces and districts. The DDP will issue the de-warning to all concerned Line Ministries and other agencies, and pass it on to the Province and District Authorities concerned.

C. During Disaster (Declaration, Immediate Response, Search & Rescue)

When a disaster strikes, the following functions have to be carried out by the DDP:

Declaration of Disaster

Declaration of Disaster will be done by the head of the Department of Disaster Preparedness after the event has occurred. The scale and intensity of the disaster will determine whether it is a Province level disaster or a National level disaster. This will determine the level of assistance to the provinces by the national government. As per the extent and scale of the disaster, various operations have to be conducted at the different levels of the government. In case of a National Disaster, the DDP would convene a meeting of the National Disaster Management Commission and will coordinate all subsequent actions.

Response

Activation of EOC: Depending on the level of response required, the Emergency Operations Centre(s) of appropriate level will be activated. All concerned agencies will operate within the overall command of the Emergency Operation Centres to ensure coordinated action, efficient coverage and minimisation of overlaps and gaps. Emergency Operations Centres will function at national and province levels to begin with, and will later be made operational at district level also.

The EOC would collect information from identified sources, prepare situation reports, damage and need assessment reports to be disseminated to the donors and other line ministries.

President of the DDP will inform and brief the President on the disaster situation. President on the advice of the President, DDP, would make an official declaration that a state of emergency exists in the country owing to the disaster.

Depending on the scale and severity of disasters, mobilise a Rapid Assessment Team to assess damage and identify needs on the ground, and a Quick Response Team to immediately mount field operations. The activities of the teams would supplement the activities of the Provincial Authorities.

Meeting of the National Disaster Management Commission would be convened to activate contingency plans of each line Ministry. The Commission would take decisions on the following issues: -

- Whether to launch international appeal.
- Determining local aid requirements based on the report of the Province Governors and the Quick Response Team.
- To activate contingency plan within each line ministry.
- Mobilize resources within the country from nearest available source.

The Ministries who are members of the Commission would activate their own Contingency Plans.

The Department for Disaster Preparedness would disseminate the current information on disaster situation to the general public by official Radio/TV/Newspaper.

The DDP would send information to the UN Resident Coordinator/ SRSG on updated disaster situation.

The DDP would also convene an NGO coordination meeting. All NGOs/International NGOs registered with the DDP would be invited for the meeting.

Decisions in the meeting would cover the following aspects:

1. Available Resources - What & Where
2. Mobilization of Aid Workers.
3. Implementation issues.
4. Coverage

The Ministry of Defense would be requested to keep the army on standby for possible assistance.

The DDP would organise and coordinate with line ministries for information exchange and quick dispersal of relief to the affected communities.

In case of disaster of unprecedented scale and intensity, the DDP would carry out special activities within first 24 hours of the event.

First 24 hours

The following activities are to be carried out within two hours of the disaster event

- Formal declaration of a National Disaster.

- Information on the meeting of National Commission on Disaster Management
- Arrangements for all the required inventories from the concerned ministries.
- Constitution of Assessment Team
- Activation of Emergency Operation Centre
- Information of the situation to all cabinet ministries

Next 48 hour

- Reinforce rescue operations through dispatch of relief material and man power assistance.
- Channelize assistance from international agencies.
- Strengthen the donation management system and inform donors about locations for landing and distribution of relief material.
- Convene meetings of the National Commission and National & International Organisations at regular intervals for close coordination and immediate relief response.
- Issue media releases for public information.
- Set up a separate team for international aid in each department.
- Set up information desks at critical locations (entry, exit and transit points) and set up EOCs in affected and neighboring provinces
- Set up assistance centers at province and central airports with
 - Point of arrival
 - Point of departure
 - Assembly point

D. After Disaster (Recovery & Rehabilitation)

Following the relief phase, the DDP would coordinate the recovery and rehabilitation activities in the disaster affected areas.

The following activities would be carried out in this phase:

- Declaration of End of Disaster Situation
- Declaration of Compensation
- Declaration of Rehabilitation Schemes
- Coordination with respective ministries regarding implementation of rehabilitation programme
- Coordination of resources including international loans and funds
- Documentation of the disaster and revision of the NDMP based on experience.

3. Implementation Mechanisms

3.1 Emergency Operation Centre

Emergency operation center will be hub of all the activities related with disaster response in the country. For the effective management of resources, disaster supplies and other response activities, focal points or centers will have to be established. These points will have to be well networked starting from the Centre to the Province and finally leading to the disaster site. Emergency Operations Centers at the Centre and the Province and Field Coordination Systems at the disaster site are the designated focal points that will coordinate overall activities and the flow of relief supplies from the Centre.

An Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) will be maintained and run round the clock which will expand to undertake and coordinate activities during a disaster. Once a warning or a First Information Report is received, the EOC will become fully operational. The EOC will be under direct command of the President of Department for Disaster Preparedness.

The Emergency Operations Centre stays operational through-out the year in preparedness mode, working during day time in order to take care of the extended preparedness activities of data management, awareness and training, which is essential for the smooth functioning of the EOC during crisis situations. During an emergency, the EOC will get upgraded and will have all emergency stakeholders manning it round the clock.

Aim of the Emergency Operations Centre

The aim of EOC at the National level shall be to provide centralized direction and control of any or all of the following functions:

- Emergency operations
- Communications and warning
- Requesting additional resources during the disaster phase from neighboring province of the affected area
- Coordinating overseas support and aid
- Issuing emergency information and instructions specific to Central ministries; consolidation, analysis, and dissemination of Damage Assessment data and preparation of consolidated reports.

Location of EOC

The EOC will be set up at a suitable location with the entire infrastructure as per the given layout.

- The President his/her designee will initiate the activation of emergency services of the EOC as established.
- Activation of the EOC should immediately follow the declaration of a National Level Emergency. The individual who declares the Emergency shall announce the location of the EOC in case of any eventuality to the National EOC.
- The Individuals staffing the EOC are responsible for establishing communications with their respective departments through radio and telephone etc.
- The EOC Chief or designee will determine what staff he/she deems necessary to effectively operate the EOC apart from the prescribed staff.
- The designated officers of the Police will provide security at the EOC

Back-up EOC

It is recommended that an alternate EOC must also be established. This EOC will be a mirror image of the National EOC and will be a back up to handle any eventuality in which the National EOC is unable to function. It is proposed that the EOC be established at the Department of Disaster Preparedness since it is the focal agency, and the backup EOC in the Ministry of Interior since the Police for Disaster Preparedness is a dedicated department suited to the logistical management of an EOC. The backup EOC may be located at the Police

Academy and may be used during non-disaster times as a training centre for EOC operations.

Organisational Setup of EOC

The EOC will comprise the following:

1. EOC In-charge

The President of DDP will be the EOC in-charge. He is the primary roleplayer in the EOC, and is responsible for the overall coordination and decision making. He will also report the status of the EOC operations and the disaster situation to the President.

2. Operations Section

The Operations Section will ensure smooth and planned functioning of the EOC. It will fulfill the following functions:

- a) handle requests for emergency personnel, equipment and other resources
- b) designate responsibilities and duties for management of the EOC
- c) manage storage, handling and set-up of incoming equipment and personnel
- d) ensure medical care, feeding and housing for EOC personnel
- e) maintain documentation of resource inventories, allocation and availability.
- f) manage finances for EOC operations

3. Representatives of Line Ministries

Representatives of the following Line Ministries will be present at the EOC to take part in the operations and facilitate quick coordination between the EOC command and their parent ministries towards ensuring quick information availability and decision making:

Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
Ministry of Interior
Ministry of Health
Ministry of Defense
Ministry of Planning
Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
Ministry of Irrigation and Environment
Ministry of Information and Communication
Ministry of Transport
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Finance
Ministry of Public Works
Afghanistan Red Crescent Society
Afghanistan Television

EOC Layout

The EOC will be organised comprising the above features in a user friendly layout and in a disaster resistant building. A suggested concept layout is given below.

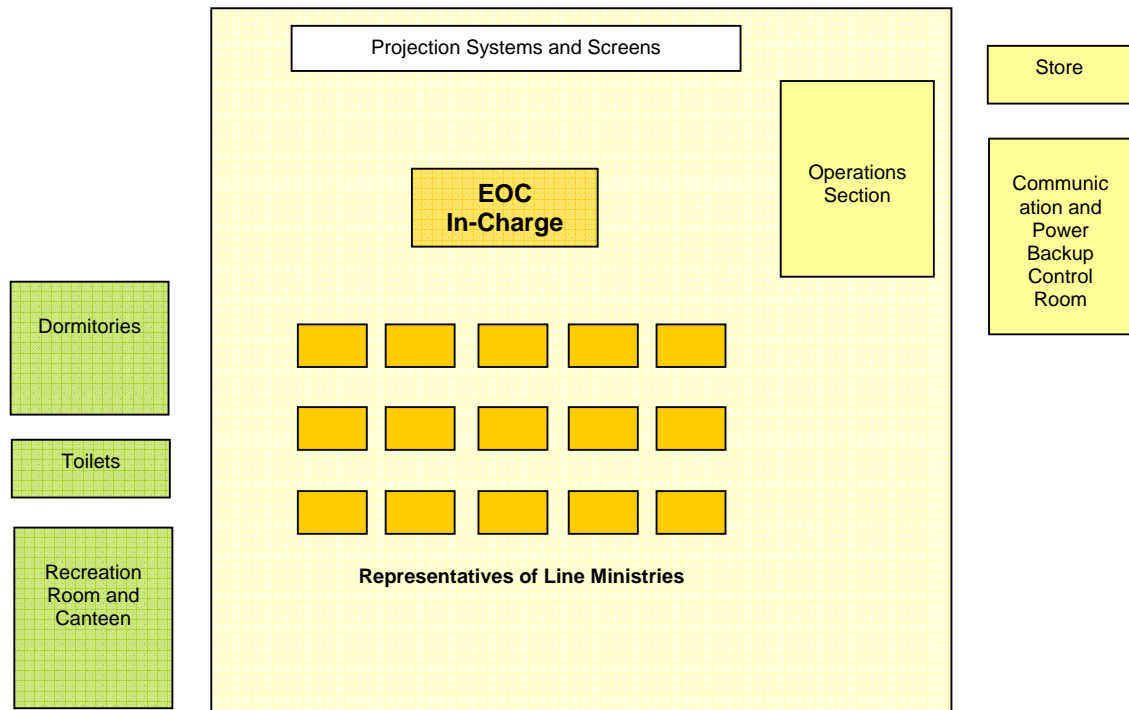


Figure 9: Concept Layout of Emergency Operations Centre

Equipment Requirements

The EOC will need to operate round the clock, and may itself be subjected to adverse conditions due to the impact of disaster. It needs to be equipped with the following hardware and software for its efficient functioning:

1. Resource Inventories and databank of maps and plans at district, province and national level on a GIS platform for quick retrieval and analysis.
2. State-of-art communication equipment for staying linked with the President's office, headquarters of line ministries, province governors, field teams, media, and national and international support agencies.
3. A mobile command vehicle with communication equipment.
4. Workstations and communication lines for all representatives of the line ministries.
5. Radios and television sets tuned to different news channels and coverage.
6. Video conferencing facility.
7. Projection equipment and screens.
8. Emergency power backup.
9. Stock of drinking water, food, medicines, bedding and essential items required for personnel manning the EOC for long time durations.

Resource Inventories

Resource inventories are useful in quick retrieval of vital information regarding availability and sources of rescue and relief material and personnel during times of emergency. Resource inventories are essential elements of EOC operations. Such inventories will be prepared and maintained through regular updating at the National and Province levels. Inventories will include the following basic elements, and other locally relevant information:

1. Contact details of all personnel and organisations concerned with emergency management
2. List, with specifications and availability procedures, of all equipment that may be useful for responding to an emergency. This will include communication equipment, transport vehicles, earth moving equipment, cranes, tools etc. that are available with agencies within the jurisdiction.
3. List, with specifications and rate schedules, of relief material that can be sourced from local aid agencies and markets. This will include dry rations, tents and bedding, clothing, utensils, first-aid items and other basic necessity items.

Field Coordination System

In the present situation, the District Administration and local authorities do not have the capacity to play an efficient role at local level to support the EOC's requirements for field information and coordination. The EOC will therefore need to field its own field teams and through them establish a Field Coordination System. The system will comprise:

- Field command
- Field information collection
- Inter agency coordination at field level
- Management of field operations, planning, logistics, finance and administration

Rapid Assessment Teams and Quick Response Teams described in 2.1 will be fielded by the DDP through the EOC as part of the Field Coordination System.

Non-Disaster Time Activities of the EOC

Non-Disaster time activities of the EOC, under the DDP and in association with other divisions of the DDP, are very crucial for the efficiency of its response in a disaster situation. These activities will include:

- Ensure through appropriate statutory instruments that the National Disaster Management Plan is operationalised
- Ensure that Standard Operating Procedures for various ministries are operationalised
- Ensure that funding mechanism for operationalisation of the plans are established
- Encourage Provinces to prepare their respective Disaster Management Plans
- Carry out specific vulnerability studies
- Identify and interact with research institutions to evolve mitigation strategies
- Serve as a databank to all line departments, planning agencies and others with respect to risks and vulnerabilities
- Upgrade and update the NDMP according to the changing scenario in the country
- Carry out post disaster evaluation and update the NDMP accordingly
- Disseminate the NDMP to all stakeholders
- Prepare personnel and organisational directories as well as resource inventories and keep them updated
- Monitor preparedness measures undertaken at national and province levels periodically, and specially before the onset of known disaster seasons.
- Monitor training imparted to government officials and NGOs
- Monitor public awareness campaigns on disaster mitigation and preparedness
- Receive reports and documents from provinces, warnings, and first information reports and submit the same to the President DDP for appropriate action.
- Ensure that warning and communication systems and EOC infrastructure are in working condition

EOC Activation Procedure

1. On receipt of a disaster warning or a FIR, the President of DDP, after verification that the situation merits declaration of a National Disaster, will

inform the President and get a meeting of the National Disaster Management Commission convened.

2. Based on the ratification of the Commission, the President of DDP will declare a National Disaster.
3. The EOC, till then operating in the preparedness mode, will be upgraded to the emergency mode. Concerned line ministries and departments will be informed to post their representatives at the EOC on a round the clock basis with immediate effect.

Rapid Assessment and Quick Response Teams

Quick response teams of specialized personnel will have to be sent for effective management of disaster. Depending on the magnitude of the disaster, two different types of teams will be fielded by the EOC:

- Rapid Assessment Teams
- Search and Rescue Teams

Rapid Assessment Teams

The Rapid Assessment Teams will be multi-disciplinary teams comprising four or five members. They will mainly comprise senior level specialized officers from the field of health, engineering, search and rescue, communication and one who have knowledge of disaster affected area, physical characteristic of the region, language etc. These officials should share a common interest and commitment. There should be a clear allocation of responsibilities among team members. To make a first / preliminary assessment of damage, the assessment report will contain the following basic elements or activities:

- Human and material damage
- Resource availability and local response capacity
- Options for relief assistance and recovery
- Needs for international assistance

Quick Response Teams

Deployment of search and rescue teams can help in reducing the numbers of deaths. A quick response to urgent needs must never be delayed for the reason that a comprehensive assessment has yet to be completed. The following teams must be sent to disaster site or disaster affected area as early as possible, even prior to First Information Report.

- First Aid Team
- Search and Rescue team
- Communication Teams
- Power Team
- Relief Teams
- Rehabilitation teams
- Transport Team

All other focal departments will keep ready their response teams, which may be deployed after receiving the first information report.

Reporting Systems

Representative of the affected community directly informs either the nearest district administration office or any government official or an NGO, who will then inform either the province Governor or his office. If the information comes directly to DDP, then the Administrator of the affected area will verify information. The DDP would call the Province Governor of the affected province and the neighboring provinces to verify scale and intensity of the disaster. Based on the information available, the EOC activation process will be initiated if deemed required.

First information Report

The main aim of the first information report is to confirm a disaster event. It specifies the location, scale, and magnitude of a disaster and its effect on the local

area and the people. It also talks about the steps that have been taken by the local administration to control the situation, the type of relief that may be required and the resources and services for immediate emergency measures. A sample format of a First Information Report is given below.

FIRST INFORMATION REPORT		AFGHANISTAN DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN	
1	NATURE OF DISASTER:		
2	DATE OF OCCURRENCE:	TIME:	
	SEVERITY HIGH MEDIUM LOW		
3	AFFECTED AREA NAME OF THE VILLAGE DISTRICT: PROVINCE:		
4	DAMAGE AND LOSS ESTIMATES NUMBER OF FAMILIES AFFECTED TOTAL POPULATION AFFECTED:		
5	TOTAL HOUSES DAMAGED: LIGHT DAMAGE: MEDIUM DAMAGE: HEAVY DAMAGE:		
6	NUMBER OF PEOPLE INJURED:	DEAD:	
7	NUMBER OF ANIMALS INJURED:	DEAD:	
8	CROP DAMAGED (SPECIFY TYPES): HECTARES:		
9.	ANY OTHER VITAL INFORMATION:		
10.	SPECIFY IMMEDIATE NEEDS: (With quantity) Food Medical Supplies Other Items		
11.	NAME THE CONTACT PERSON: AGENCY/ADDRESS: TELEPHONE NUMBER		
DATE:		SIGNATURE:	
ACTION TAKEN:			
FOR OFFICE PURPOSE:		REPORT NO.:	
INFORMATION DATE:			

Initial Assessment Report

A clear and concise assessment of damages and needs in the aftermath of a disaster is a pre-requisite for effective planning and implementation of relief and recovery measures. The objectives of damage and needs assessment are to determine:

- Nature and extent of disaster
- Damage and secondary threats
- Needs of the population

Two types of assessment that may have to be carried out are:

- Initial Assessment
- Technical Assessment

Rapid Assessment Teams will carry out the Initial Assessment. Sample format for initial assessment is given below.

AFGHANISTAN DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN											
INITIAL ASSESSMENT REPORT											
1	NATURE OF DISASTER:										
2	DATE OF OCCURRENCE:							TIME:			
3	DAMAGE AND LOSS ASSESSMENT										
	Name of the Site (Village, District, Province)	Total Population Affected	People missing	People injured	Severity		Immediate needs	Houses Damaged			Action taken
					H	L		L	M	H	
4	INFRASTRUCTURE DAMAGE										
	Name of the Site (Village, District, Province)	Housing	Agriculture	Animals	Water source	Road and bridge	Power	Communication	Govt Building	Others	
5	NEED ESTIMATES										
	Name of the Site (Village, District, Province)	Medical Needs	Population requiring shelter		Clothes	Food	Water	Sanitation	Any Other		
6	ANY OTHER VITAL INFORMATION										
7	SPECIFY IMMEDIATE NEEDS: (With quantity)										
	Food										
	First aid										
	Machinery										
8	Possible Secondary Affects:										
9	NAME THE CONTACT PERSON:										
10	AGENCY/ADDRESS:										
	TELEPHONE NUMBER										
11.											
DATE:					SIGNATURE:						
FOR OFFICE PURPOSE:					REPORT NO.:						
ACTION TAKEN:											

Technical Assessment Report

Line ministries will send specialist teams and prepare the technical assessment report to assess the losses and restoration of services. The following aspects will be covered in most disaster situations, but these may be determined by the EOC in accordance with situational requirements.

- Health
- Housing
- Social impacts
- Drinking water
- Power
- Agriculture and livestock
- Telecommunication
- Transport
- Environment
- Industries

Sample format for technical assessment report is given below.

AFGHANISTAN DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN									
TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT (Example: HEALTH)									
1	NATURE OF DISASTER:								
2	DATE OF OCCURRENCE:					TIME:			
3	AFFECTED POPULATION								
	Name of the Site (Village, District, Province)	Total Population Affected	Main health problem	People injured	Dead	People in trauma	Female	Children	Pregnant women
4	TYPE OF INJURY								
5	IMPORTANT HEALTH BELIEFS AND TRADITIONS								
6	LOCATION OF OPERATING HEALTH CENTERS								
7	NO. OF AVAILABLE BEDS								
8	NO. OF TRAINED PERSONNEL AVAILABLE - DOCTORS /NURSES								
9	CLIMATIC CONDITION								
10	NEED ESTIMATES								
	Name of the Site (Village, District, Province)	Trained health personnel	Drugs	Beds	Medical Equipment	Emergency Van	Ambulance	First Aid Kits	
11	ANY OTHER VITAL INFORMATION								
12	SPECIFY IMMEDIATE NEEDS: (With quantity)								
	Personnel								
	First aid								
	Equipment								
	Medicines								
13	Possible Secondary Affects:								
	NAME THE CONTACT PERSON:								
14	AGENCY/ADDRESS:								
	TELEPHONE NUMBER								
	DATE:					SIGNATURE:			
	FOR OFFICE PURPOSE:					REPORT NO.:			
	ACTION TAKEN:								

Leading ministries directly concerned in the given situation will set up their emergency operating center and update the national emergency operating center of their activities. After the initial report and the technical report stages, the National commission will re-assess the situation of the site for deciding on further action.

Disaster Documentation Report

Lessons need to be learnt from each disaster, and all disasters should be documented and maintained as part of a databank. A sample disaster documentation report is given below.

AFGHANISTAN DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN		
DISASTER DOCUMENTATION REPORT		
1	NATURE OF DISASTER:	
2	DATE OF OCCURRENCE:	TIME:
3	VILLAGE: DISTRICT:	PROVINCE:
4	TOTAL FAMILIES AFFECTED: TOTAL POPULATION AFFECTED:	
5	TOTAL HOUSES AND INFRASTRUCTURE DAMAGED: LIGHT DAMAGE: MEDIUM DAMAGE: HEAVY DAMAGE:	
6	TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE INJURED:	DEAD:
7	TOTAL NUMBER OF ANIMALS INJURED:	DEAD:
8	TOTAL CROP DAMAGED (SPECIFY TYPES): HECTARES:	
9.	ANY OTHER VITAL INFORMATION:	
10.	IMMEDIATE LOCAL RESPONSE:	
11.	EXTERNAL AID AGENCIES THAT RESPONDED, WITH DETAILS OF TIME, NATURE AND SCALE OF RESPONSE:	
12.	DETAILS OF GOVERNMENT AID AND PROCESS:	
13.	NATURE OF AID DELIVERED (SPECIFY):	
14.	TYPE OF MATERIALS AND QUANTITY DELIVERED:	
15.	ANY OTHER ASSISTANCE DELIVERED (SPECIFY):	
16.	NUMBER OF FAMILIES BENEFITED:	
17.	ANY PROBLEMS FACED BY VICTIMS:	
18.	LAPSES, CONSTRAINTS, AND LESSONS LEARNT:	
19.	SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMES, IF ANY:	
20.	ATTACH PHOTOGRAPHS, MAPS AND CASE STORIES.	
NAME AND ADDRESSES OF CONTACT PERSON		SIGNATURE

3.2 Standard Operating Procedures

The standing orders have been prepared with the avowed objective of making the concerned persons understand their duties and responsibilities regarding disaster management at all levels. All ministries, divisions, departments and agencies shall prepare their own action plans in respect of their responsibilities, under the standing orders for efficient implementation. The Department of the Disaster Preparedness (DDP) and the National Commission on Disaster Management will ensure coordination of the disaster related activities at national level.

The ministries, divisions /departments and agencies will organise proper training of officers and staff so that they can help in rescue, evacuation and relief work at different stage of disaster. Emergency response teams will be kept ready by each department so that they can move to disaster site/affected area on short notice. The Standard operating procedure shall be followed during normal times, warning stage, disaster stage and post disaster stage. Standard Operating Procedures for the relevant ministries, at National Level are listed below:

Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development

Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development is one of the main ministries that has the mandate to implement vulnerability reduction projects to alleviate poverty and improve people's livelihoods.

Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer in the Ministry and the Province Offices as the Disaster Management Focal Point.• Encourage disaster resistant technological practices in buildings and infrastructure.• Encourage the people in earthquake prone areas to adopt earthquake resistant technologies.• Prepare maps showing population concentration and distribution of resources.• Report activities in periodic meetings of the National Commission convened by the DDP• On the basis of its developmental responsibility, liaise with other line ministries, departments and agencies for a coordinated mitigation approach
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activate Disaster Management Focal Point .• Focal Point in Ministry to keep in touch with the EOC at the DDP.• Alert all concerned about impending disaster.• Ensure safety of establishments, structures and equipment in the field• Ensure formation of committee for rescue, relief and rehabilitation work and local volunteer teams.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure information flow from affected province and maintain regular contact with EOC (24 hrs). Position representative in national EOC.• Ensure availability of drinking water at times of need.• Provide necessary infrastructure to carry out relief works• Assess initial damage
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quantify the loss/damage• Organise reconstruction of damaged houses on self help basis with local assets and materials received from the government.• Arrange repair and re-sinking of tube-wells and cleaning of canals and kareezes.• Take up repair/reconstruction work of infrastructure damaged by disaster

Ministry of Interior

Ministry of Interior has established an office of Disaster Preparedness within the Ministry. The office would perform two important tasks in Disaster Management, Rescue Services and Fire Fighting, especially in urban areas.

Additionally, the other office dealing with security within the Ministry of Interior will ensure law and order.

The ministry is also important as it houses the Central Statistics Office and Geodesy and Cartography Section that are useful information sources for preparedness and response.

Office of Disaster Preparedness, Ministry of Interior
Non-Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chief of the Office of Disaster Preparedness shall be the Focal Point for the Ministry.• Impart training to the members of Police Force in first aid, evacuation, rescue and relief operations.• Identify the 'High Risk' and 'Risk' areas for different disasters and instruct the existing police installations located in those areas for keeping themselves in readiness for undertaking emergency rescue, evacuation relief operations.• Coordinate the wireless frequency of Police with the wireless network of Department of Disaster preparedness.• Train volunteers from among citizens, voluntary organisations
Alert And Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish the Disaster Control Room at National and Province level.• Focal point to keep contact with the EOC of the Department for Disaster Preparedness. Representative to be positioned at the EOC.• Inform Province Governors, Shura (Islamic Council) and nearest police station (from the likely disaster affected area) for dissemination of warning.• Arrange drills for fire extinguishing, rescue, evacuation and transportation of injured persons and prepare coordinated Action Plans in cooperation with District administration and concerned local agencies• Maintain communications with the police installations in the areas likely to be affected by disaster.• Instruct all concerned to accord priority to disaster related wireless messages if required by appropriate officials.• On receipt of directives from the DDP/Province Governor for evacuation - organise personnel and equipment for evacuation and undertake evacuation operations.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carry out search & rescue operations.• Carry out fire fighting operations• Maintain law and order, especially during relief distribution.• Keep close watch for any criminal and anti-state activity in the area.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrange security of government property and installations damaged in a disaster.• Coordinate with other offices of Ministry of Interior for traffic management in and around damaged areas.• Assist the local administration in putting a stop to theft and misuse in relief operation.

Police Department is the only department, which exists in the grassroots all over the country. Police Posts play an important role in disaster preparedness and post disaster period. Their disaster related activities include publicity of warning signals, rescue operations, evacuation, law and order, and assistance in relief and rehabilitation operations.

Ministry of Health

Every year natural as well as man made disasters and outbreaks of epidemic diseases take the lives of thousands in Afghanistan. Many lives and sufferings could be saved if proper emergency preparedness and response mechanisms were in place in the country. The Ministry of Health has a responsibility in the reduction and prevention of suffering during natural and man-made disasters.

The emergency department is responsible for prevention and response of natural disasters and man-made disasters, as well as in the investigation and response to outbreak of communicable diseases.

Emergency Department, Ministry of Health
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carry out and disseminate a risk evaluation of the Afghan population.• Develop a national plan on emergency preparedness and response with in the health sector.• Develop policy framework for the department.• Ensure adequate availability of Emergency Health Kits in high risk areas• Train volunteers on emergency preparedness programmes such as first aid and preventive measure against diseases in disaster prone areas.• Prepare a list of medical and Para-medical personnel in disaster prone areas and disseminate it to concerned governors and administrators.• Establish and operate an early warning system for health threats based on the routine health information and in collaboration with other departments.
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure pre-positioning of Emergency Health Kits and Personnel.• Assess health infrastructure• Assess likely health impacts and share with EOC for planning purpose
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one liaison Officer to be present at the EOC of the Department for Disaster Preparedness.• Mobilise medical teams and para-medical personnel to go to the affected areas as part of the Rapid Assessment and Quick Response Teams.• Provide medical assistance to the affected population• Carry out technical assessment on health infrastructure availability and need
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remain vigilant about outbreak /possibility of any epidemics and take effective steps against them.• Send report of health related activities in affected areas to the national EOC for planning purpose.

Ministry of Defense

Ministry of Defense has an important role of providing security, logistics, and if necessary, assistance in distribution of relief items and provision of equipment for emergency response. It can provide trained personnel with specialised skills such as in communication technology for placement in isolated areas, and can provide specialized transportation systems.

Ministry of Defense
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer in the Ministry as the Disaster Preparedness Focal Point.• Prepare operational Plan for responding to the call of Presidents Office/DDP during disaster.• Hold drills on disaster preparedness and response.
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish the Disaster Control Room at headquarters and convey to director of military operation, control room and duty officer of the EOC at the DDP.• Depute one liaison officer for the EOC at Department for Disaster Preparedness• Issue cautionary instructions to all concerned.• Organise task forces for working of disaster control units. Each unit should be composed of one full infantry company, engineers, doctors with medicines and nursing assistants.• Earmark a reserve task force, if needed.• Move task forces to the convenient positions, if needed.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide aircraft for assessment teams to visit disaster-affected areas.• Distribute emergency relief material to the affected people.• Keep direct contact with different officers like Administrators, Governors and Department for Disaster Preparedness for taking any steps to combat any situation.• Dispatch situation reports to the EOC.• Send task forces in disaster affected areas.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct survey in affected areas and assess requirements of relief and rehabilitation.• Assist local administration in removing the dead bodies and debris in affected areas.• Set up field hospital if required.• Participate in reconstruction and rehabilitation operation if requested.

Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock

Ministry of agriculture and livestock has a role in assessment of damage to agricultural crops and livestock, and impact of possible locust attacks. Their main role is to provide seeds and necessary planting material and other inputs to assist in early recovery.

Department of Agriculture
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate a focal point for disaster management within the ministry. • Identify areas likely to be affected. • Organise distribution of seeds, seedlings, fertilizer and implements to the affected people under loan/grant. • Arrange for keeping stock of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depute one liaison officer to the EOC in the DDP. • Monitor damage to crops and identify steps for early recovery.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantify the loss and damage within the quickest possible time and finalizes planning of agriculture rehabilitation. • Ensure availability of adequate supply of seeds, seedlings, fertilizers, pesticides and agricultural implements.

Department of Livestock
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate a focal point for disaster management. • With help from the Shuras, select and earmark highlands for use as shelter for livestock during flash floods. • Programme for vaccination for protection of livestock against contagious diseases. • Prepare schemes for supplementary arrangements for rehabilitation of livestock and recouping their loss. • Take up schemes for procurement of animal feed on emergency basis for distribution in the affected areas. • Establish fodder bank schemes as security against fodder shortage for livestock due to disasters.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate a focal point for maintaining link with the EOC of the DDP • During floods assist the Shuras for operations relating to the rescue and shifting of standard livestock and poultry. • During floods arrange for the quick vaccination and treatment of livestock and poultry at shelter places. • During prolonged droughts arrange for sustainability of livestock population.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange a rapid survey to assess the loss. • Form and dispatch Veterinary Teams with appropriate equipment and medicines to aid affected livestock . • Arrange for disposal of dead bodies of animals. • Implement all schemes for rehabilitation of livestock.

Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources & Environment

Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources & Environment is involved in disaster mitigation in relation to drought and floods, as they affect agricultural production, irrigation systems and water supply and management. Some of these mitigation activities include rehabilitation and management of watersheds and water catchment areas and enforcement of land use patterns. The role of the ministry is critical for improving and expanding irrigation systems to cope with drought situations and manage flood problems.

Ministry of Irrigation, Water Resources & Environment
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer in the Ministry as the Disaster Management Focal Point.• Promote Watershed Development Programs• Develop Schemes for restoration/conservation of Kariz systems• Ensure efficient management of flood forecasting and warning centres and improve procedure of flood forecasts and intimation to appropriate authorities.• Operate Flood Information Centre in the flood season every year.• Collect all the information on weather forecast, water level of all principal rivers originating from different places in Afghanistan and surrounding countries.• Inform all concerned about daily weather news and issue regular press bulletins.• Frame an appropriate law for preventing environmental disaster in chemical industry or industries emitting toxic gases and effluents.• Take steps for strengthening of flood protection works and canals before the flood season• Encourage afforestation.
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alert EOC in the DDP.• Since flash floods get triggered within short time-spans, take steps to alert all through telephone and wireless according to needs.• Mount watch on flood protection works and canal systems.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open the Control Room in the Ministry and depute representative at the national EOC.• Launch emergency repair operations for critically damaged flood protection works, canals and karizes.• Take steps for prompt removal of uprooted trees on the roads.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carry out Environmental Impact Assessment of the disaster.• Take up sustained programmes for rehabilitation of flood protection works, canals and karizes.• Take up afforestation drives for rehabilitation of vegetative cover lost in disaster.

Ministry of Communication

Ministry of communication can play an important role in providing communication links during disasters.

Ministry of Communication
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure communication connectivity between province governments and national government.• Take steps to ensure power back up for communication systems during possible emergency situations• Take proper and adequate security steps for the protection of own installations and properties.
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide support to the EOC of the DDP and ensure links with the Provinces/Regional Offices of the DDP.• Deliver early warning information to the agencies and communities requiring them.• Take steps for the protection of own property.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depute officer at the EOC operated by the DDP.• Operate communications at the EOC at the DDP round the clock (24 hours).• On request, provide additional communication lines to the EOC.• On request, establish communication links at the Governor's office in the affected province• Provide measures for satellite and other wireless communication from the area affected by disaster to the EOC.• Provide mobile communication facilities to the Rapid Assessment and Quick Response Teams.• Assess damage to telecommunication infrastructure and immediately take steps to restore it.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take steps to fully restore and rehabilitate any damaged communication infrastructure.

Ministry of Information & Culture

The ministry's most critical role is broadcasting/disseminating warnings to communities before a disaster occurs. It also has to play a major role in education and awareness programmes for better organised preparedness and response at government and community levels.

Ministry of Information & Culture
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Popularize the techniques for preparedness and survival during pre-disaster, disaster and post-disaster period through television, radio and other publicity media.• Ensure strict performance of the allotted duties by radio, television, news media, films and publications related departments.• Take proper and adequate security steps for the protection of own installations and properties.• Prepare guidelines/policy for necessary action by mass media on reporting disasters.
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer for maintaining link with the EOC of DDP• Arrange quick collection of weather bulletins to reflect the possibility of floods.• Launch information programme for quick dissemination disaster warnings to appropriate agencies and community groups.• Take steps for the protection of own property.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depute office to the EOC at the DDP.• Ensure that the news to be broadcasted reflects the true and clear presentation of the actual position and does not create panic in the minds of the people and also advises them to desist from taking unreasonable steps.• Take steps for publicity of news and directives relating to the situation issued by the President of DDP.• Curtail normal programmes to broadcast essential information on disaster if requested by the DDP.• Arrange visit to the affected area by the local and foreign journalists in the interest of publication of accurate and true report in the news.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrange dissemination of information of the short and long term measures of different ministries, Departments/Agencies for relief and rehabilitation of the affected people.

Ministry of Transport

During disaster situations, the ministry would need to take steps to arrange for sending personnel and relief material to the disaster affected area, relocate the affected people, keep access routes operational and inform about alternate routes.

Ministry of Transport
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer of the ministry as the Focal Point and inform all concerned.• Carry out survey of condition of all highway systems at national and province level.• Carry out survey of condition of all aircraft landing facilities at national and province level.
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depute an officer at the EOC of DDP.• Identify and inventorise transport vehicles, and ensure that they are all in good working condition.• Ensure availability of fuel, recovery vehicles and equipment.• Take steps for arrangement of vehicles for possible evacuation of people
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish contact with the EOC of DDP• Take steps for transportation of relief personnel and material to affected areas.• Take steps for movement of affected population to safer areas.• Collate and disseminate information regarding operational and safe routes and alternate routes, fuel availability etc. to personnel operating in the field.• Launch recovery missions for stranded vehicles.• Launch repair missions for damaged critical infrastructure and routes.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess damage to transportation infrastructure.• Take steps to ensure speedy repair and restoration of transport links.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

During a disaster situation, the ministry will submit a request for special assistance to foreign agencies. The ministry, through its foreign missions, will establish contact with respective foreign governments.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Ministry will designate one Liaison Officer as the Disaster Management Focal Point.• Advise Afghanistan missions abroad to keep uninterrupted and close contact with the disaster aid departments of foreign governments.• To enter into dialogue with neighbouring countries on possible disputes related to common causes of disasters such as rivers.
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure to keep missions alert and informed about the disaster position in the country and prepared to provide briefing to foreign governments for any possible aid/assistance requirements.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit a request for special assistance to foreign governments as per decision of the National Commission.• Advise its missions abroad to expedite visa formalities to enable foreign disaster assistance teams to land in the affected areas.• Advise immigration and custom authorities to expedite or relax requirements and allow quick entry to personnel, equipment and relief material from foreign sources.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep the donor foreign governments, international donor agencies and other donors informed about the manner of use of their donations.• Ensure sending of appropriate letter of appreciation to donor governments either through their embassies in Kabul or through Afghan embassies located in their countries.

Ministry Of Finance

Beside normal duties, the ministry of finance will perform the following responsibilities:

Ministry of Finance
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer in the Ministry as the Disaster Management Focal Point.• Arrange for the necessary funds as per decision of the National Commission
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure quick allocation of funds for meeting relief operations.• Control all accounts under the responsibility of the Government• Start mobilizing resources for construction of infrastructure, public facilities and structures required for recovery.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To monitor international loans and aid assistance to the country• To allocate and monitor government plan expenditure towards relief and rehabilitation of Disaster affected areas.

Ministry of Planning

The Ministry of Planning has an important role regarding allocation of funds on priority basis for disaster mitigation and rehabilitation projects. It needs to ensure that development programmes implemented in disaster vulnerable areas of the country incorporate disaster mitigation measures.

Ministry of Planning
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer in the Ministry as the Disaster Management Focal Point.• To ensure disaster risk reduction is incorporated in all development programmes• Prepare hazard and vulnerability maps at the national level for different kinds of disasters.• Accord appropriate priority to disaster mitigation projects like embankments, afforestation, telecommunications and construction of safe buildings.• Establish disaster management funding mechanisms to ensure adequate resources for mitigation and preparedness work, and quick availability of resources for relief and rehabilitation when required.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide information for the announcement of early warning for different kinds of disasters based on hazard forecast and vulnerability database.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allocate funds for the repair, reconstruction of damaged infrastructure after considering their overall loss and damage.

Ministry of Education

The ministry will prepare curriculum related to disaster management and conduct training programme for teachers and children. The ministry will coordinate with the local authority and arrange for mock drills, search and rescue drills.

Ministry of Education	
Non Disaster Time	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify one Liaison Officer in the Ministry as Disaster Management Focal Point.• In consultation with DDP, include disaster related subjects in the curricula in schools, colleges and technical education institutions.• Arrange for training of teachers and students of disaster prone areas about the steps to be taken at different stages of disaster and organise them, through coordination with Shuras, as volunteers and inspire them for rescue, evacuation and relief works.• Ensure that construction of all educational institutions in earthquake zones is earthquake resistant.
During Disaster	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the event of disaster, place required number of education institutions and their buildings, under the control of the Shura for use as emergency shelter and relief centre if necessary.• Students and staff can provide local voluntary assistance for distribution of relief material and assistance to special needy people in the locality.
After Disaster	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine the extent of loss in educational institutions and prepare plans for their rehabilitation.

Ministry of Mining and Industries

In addition to preparation and implementation of its own contingency plans, the Ministry (including subordinate agencies) will perform the following functions:

Department of Mines
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One Liaison Officer in the Department is to be designated as the Disaster Management Focal Point.• Issue detailed instructions to the employees about their duties and responsibilities in precautionary, disaster and post-disaster stages of normal disaster.• Arrange regular training for mining employees in the disaster prone areas on disaster issues.
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evacuation of the mineworkers from the mines on the receipt of early warning.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To keep in contact with the EOC of DDP• Provide equipment for search and rescue.• Provide search and rescue personnel on the request of the DDP
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After assessment of the loss/damage due to disaster, plan for rehabilitation of mines.

Department of Industries
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer in the Department as the Disaster Management Focal Point.• Ensure all possible steps for the security of manpower, implements, stock, installations/factories etc.• Prepare listing and locations of industries and establishments for possible sourcing of relief material during disasters.• Ensure training on preparedness programmes to be adopted at different levels for all manpower employed in factories and establishments in disaster vulnerable areas.• Promote the preparation of installation emergency preparedness plans by all industrial units.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request industries to provide emergency relief material such as food products, temporary shelter, medicines and medical equipment and search & rescue equipment.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take steps to plan for rehabilitation of industries adversely affected by disasters.

Ministry of Public Works

The Ministry of Public Works has a vital role in provision and maintenance of vital public infrastructure.

Ministry of Public Works
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer in the Ministry as the Disaster Preparedness Focal Point.• Take precautionary steps for the protection of government property against possible loss and damage during disaster.• Formulate guidelines for safe construction of public works.• Prepare list, with specifications and position, of heavy construction equipment in the country.• Organise periodic training of engineers and other construction personnel on disaster resistant construction technologies.
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instruct all officials at construction sites to keep manpower and materials prepared for protection and repair of public works.• Direct construction authorities and companies to preposition necessary workers and materials in or near areas likely to be affected by disaster.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide assistance to the damage assessment teams for survey of damage to buildings and infrastructure.• Take steps to clear debris and assist search and rescue teams.• Provide sites for rehabilitation of affected population
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carry out detailed technical assessment of damage to public works.• Assist in construction of temporary shelters.• Organise repairs of buildings damaged in the disaster• Prepare detailed programmes for rehabilitation of damaged public works.• Arrange technical assistance and supervision for reconstruction works as per request.

Ministry of Reconstruction

The ministry will prepare its own contingency plan for the maintenance of public infrastructure, retrofit important common buildings and identify safer places for relocation. The ministry also plays an important role in developing appropriate national building codes and byelaws and their proper implementation. In the post disaster phase, the ministry will undertake adequate steps to undertake building damage assessment and promote required reconstruction.

Ministry of Reconstruction
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one Liaison Officer in the Ministry as the Disaster Preparedness Focal Point• Take precautionary steps for the protection of property against possible loss and damage during disaster.• Periodic training of engineers and other construction personnel on safe construction.• Identify and plan for rehabilitation locations for those living in disaster vulnerable areas.• Prepare building regulations for safe construction
Alert and Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate with other development agencies for possible assistance in disaster affected areas.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide vital information to the EOC of DDP and line agencies in the field regarding status of available infrastructure that can be of use during relief operations.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate with concerned line agencies for all reconstruction activities under rehabilitation programmes.• Arrange technical assistance and supervision for reconstruction works as per request.

Ministry of Commerce

The ministry will import preventive and curative material and medicines to meet the requirement on emergency basis and ensure supply of daily necessities in the affected areas.

Ministry of Commerce
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate one Liaison Officer in the Ministry as the Disaster Management focal Point
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waive customs and duties for import of necessary relief assistance.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare plans for import of necessary rehabilitation material as per demands of concerned Ministries/Agencies. Take steps for the import of preventive and curative raw materials and medicines to meet the requirements in rehabilitation phase. Ensure supply of daily necessities at appropriate prices in the affected areas. The officials of the Ministry will keep close watch on the price situation of commodities, their supply and distribution in disaster affected areas and send reports to the DDP. Arrange for the supply of essential items not available locally.

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare will arrange for protection of manpower and organise special camps for the disabled, widows, children and other vulnerable groups. It will also provide necessary help and assistance for socio-economic rehabilitation.

Department of Labour
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate a liaison officer as a focal point and inform all concerned. Issue disaster management guidelines to all the industries and ensure on-site and off-site plans for all industries. Prepare and disseminate guidelines for the labor security and safety. Prepare and implement rules and regulations for industrial safety and hazardous waste management. Prepare and disseminate public awareness material related to chemical accidents.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide labor to other departments for relief supply and distribution. Provide skilled labor for maintenance of equipment and tools. Help in establishment of camps. Ensure minimum wages to labor during relief work in drought or other disasters.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take appropriate steps to provide labour assistance to concerned ministries in reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes. Introduce employment generation schemes and alternate livelihoods for affected populations.

Ministry of Women Affairs

The Ministry of Women Affairs has an important role in disaster management as women are more vulnerable to disasters due to their socio-cultural status. The ministry will take special steps to reduce vulnerability of women in disaster prone areas.

Ministry of Women Affairs
Non Disaster Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate one liaison officer as focal point and inform all concerned.• Sensitization of disaster managers related to gender issues in disaster management.• Prepare special projects for socio economic uplifting of women towards disaster risk reduction.• Organise health camps for regular medical checkups of women and aid to the needy.• Assist in provision of drinking water facilities near settlements.• Organise training programs for women to cope with disaster situations.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involve the Health Ministry in catering to special health needs of women.• Establish relief camps for women and ensure fulfillment of basic needs of women in general relief camps.• To take steps for safety of women and girls in disaster affected areas.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare special programmes for the rehabilitation of women.• Ensure separate sanitation facilities for women in relief camps.• Introduce special vocational training programs for women.

3.3 Province Disaster Management Plans

Administrative Structure

Province level preparedness activities will be planned and decided upon by Province Disaster Management Commissions. As per the Law, the Province Disaster Management Commissions comprise the following province authorities:

1. The Governor, Head of the Commission.
2. Deputy Governor, Deputy Head of the Commission.
3. Chief Commander of the National Army in the province, member
4. Chief Police Commander, member
5. Provincial mayor, member
6. Representative of Public Works Department, member
7. Representative of the Transport Department, member
8. Representative of the Water and Power Department, member
9. Representative of Communications Department, member
10. Representative of Health Department, member
11. Representative of Rural Rehabilitation and Development Department, member
12. Representative of Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), member
13. Representative of the Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Department, member
14. Representative of DDP, Spokesperson

These departments correspond to the nodal national ministries that are members of the National Disaster Management Commission. The members of the Province Commission, along with additional members from appropriate agencies and non-governmental organisations will constitute the Provincial EOC (Emergency Operations Centre). The Centre will be headed by the Governor.

The meetings of the provincial Disaster Management Commission will be held when a disaster occurs or the communities pass on information on the likely occurrence of a disaster to the respective authorities, or the Head of the commissions feel it necessary to call a meeting. During established disaster prone phases in the year, the Commissions will meet as a preparedness measure and will oversee preparedness activities being implemented on the ground.

Once the Province Commission deems a disaster to be beyond the management capacity of local authorities, it will declare it as a Province Level Disaster and activate the Province EOC. The EOC will operate on similar pattern as the national EOC. Once the Province Commission deems a disaster magnitude to be beyond its management capability, it will forward the report to the National EOC for deliberation at the National Commission on Disaster Management and subsequent appropriate national intervention. On verification of the magnitude of the disaster, and the scale of response required, the National Emergency Operations Centre will get activated and after declaring a National Disaster, will take control.

The role of various departments at the province level will follow the same guidelines as the SOPs of their counterpart ministries at the national level. They will keep in close contact and will coordinate their activities with those of their parent ministries at the national level in case of a national disaster, and will keep the parent ministries informed of the situation and actions taken in case of province disasters.

The DDP, directly or through its regional offices, will keep regular contact with the Governors' offices in the affected Province and neighboring provinces.

Standard Operating Procedure for Province Governors

In the event of emergency situations, the concerned province governor will coordinate among province level officers of different departments, international and non governmental agencies, district administration and local-government organisations. The province governor will perform the following duties:

Normal Times
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare Province Disaster Management Plan and disseminate to different departments, agencies, volunteers and community groups.• Establish infrastructure for Province EOC and maintain in state of readiness with all equipment in working order and all inventories updated.• Train personnel on operations of EOC.• Ensure basic facilities for personnel who will work at province level for disaster response.• Review the preparedness level in the province twice a year and advice corrective steps in case of any weakness.• Ensure preparation and maintenance of updated inventory of personnel, aid material and equipment.• Ensure training of teams of volunteers for disseminating disaster warnings to the field level and also for evacuation, search, rescue, relief and rehabilitation operations.• Ensure availability of communication and transport facilities for delivery of warnings and relevant material to field personnel.• Ensure drills on disaster preparedness by the people of disaster prone areas for acquiring knowledge and consciousness of such preparedness in coordination with concerned departments, local administrative agencies and Afghanistan Red Crescent Society.• Identify high risk areas and populations and prepare vulnerability profiles, resource profiles and contingency plans for them.• Organise survey of buildings and installations for using as shelters/relief centres during disaster times.• Ensure state of readiness and operational status of facilities designated to serve as shelters.• Help District Administrators with additional resources for disaster preparedness, if necessary.• Arrange sufficient medical assistance for post-disaster medical treatment and control of contagious diseases and ensure stock of essential medicines.
Alert and Warning stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain contact with forecasting agencies and gather all possible information regarding the alert.• Ensure that all concerned in areas likely to be affected by imminent disaster receive warning signals and respond accordingly.• Ensure activation of province level EOC in standby mode.• Inform members of Province Disaster Management Commission.• Maintain contact with national EOC.• Instruct all concerned to remain in readiness for responding to the emergency.• Advice concerned District Administrators to carry out evacuations where required, and to keep transport, relief and medical teams ready to move to the affected areas at a short notice.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convene meeting of Province Commission on Disaster Management.• Activate Province EOC in full form.• Conduct Rapid Assessment and launch Quick Response.• Keep national EOC informed of the situation and implement directives received from the DDP.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organise initial and subsequent technical assessments of disaster

affected areas and determine the extent of loss and damage and volume and nature of relief required.

- Keep the Province Disaster Management Commission and the national EOC informed of the situation.
- Ensure supply of food, drinking water, medical supplies and other emergency items to the affected population.
- Request national government for assistance if the Province Disaster Management Commission deems the situation to be beyond the capacity of the Province to manage.
- Visit and coordinate the implement of various relief and rehabilitation programmes.
- Coordinate the activities of NGOs in relief and rehabilitation programmes.

3.4 International Organisations

Limited capacities of the National and State Institutions warrant an important supporting role to be played by the International Organisations and NGOs.

With their experience, expertise and infrastructure, international organisations and NGOs have a vital role to play in disaster preparedness, response and relief.

Operating Procedures for International Organisations and NGOs

For the execution of the National Disaster Management Plan, the agencies need to coordinate with Department for Disaster Preparedness as well as with their respective line ministries for carrying out the ministries' emergency functions. The extent to which the international agencies and NGOs are involved in these activities, and in the provision of direct operational support to the government, will depend on the nature and scale of the emergency situation and on the recommendations of the National Commission.

Operating procedures for International organisations and NGOs are outlined as below:

International Organisations/NGOs
Non Disaster Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate one officer in the agency to be the Disaster Management Focal Point. • Review prevention and preparedness arrangements within the country, including the progress of any relevant ongoing development projects related to disaster management. • Review preparedness arrangements within the agencies. Discuss the analysis and interpretation of data from in-country and external early warning systems. • Provide updated information on likely disaster scenarios, and baseline data in their ongoing field operations. • Establish and maintain working relationships with line ministries working in disaster preparedness and response. • Prepare action plan to include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defining the functional responsibilities of each member in the event of a disaster. 2. Establishing, in advance, the systems and procedures that will be needed to manage potential disasters, including arrangements for assessments, information management, communications and co-ordination. 3. Adaptation to the National Disaster Management Plan • Documenting all operational procedures and making them available to the DDP/UNAMA.
Alert Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put infrastructure and relevant personnel on standby. • Establish contact with relevant line ministries. • Seek confirmation and any additional information from the coordination

<p>meeting convened by the DDP and UNAMA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the level of preparedness of the organisation's system to assist, and establish arrangements for the exchange of further information. • Ensure that necessary communications and information systems are ready and operational. • Ensure adequate precautions for safety of staff and their families, with contingency plans for provision of emergency facilities, aid, and evacuation.
<p>During Disaster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact and exchange information with Head office: send an alert message, send regular field situation reports, and maintain online contact, if possible. • Get information, offer organisational assistance and reaffirm the capabilities in the coordination meetings of the DDP and UNAMA • Determine whether the Government requires international assistance and wishes to launch an international appeal. Consider needs for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Search and rescue (SAR), or other specialist assistance - Relief assistance • Confirm/define responsibilities within the team; arrange follow-up meetings and information-sharing. • Gather and collate information on the situation; participate in initial reconnaissance visits to the affected areas. • Mobilize and provide technical assistance for the assessment process. • Provide the international community with reliable information; an independent assessment of the priority needs for international assistance (taking account of local and national capacities and resources), and a consolidated statement of requirements of the various organisations and aid agencies. • Mobilize and provide international assistance, and do everything reasonably possible to ensure its timely delivery to victims in order to save lives, minimize suffering, and promote recovery. • Strengthen the management capacity of the responsible government institutions, where required, and provide operational support to help ensure the reception, transportation and distribution of relief supplies. • Ensure the effective use of internationally supplied resources and report to the international community on the use of those resources. • In this process, attention must be given to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying and exploiting possibilities for obtaining needed supplies and services locally. 2. Monitoring the situation and operational performance continuously, and being responsive to new information and changing needs. 3. Introducing rehabilitation, reconstruction, and further development activities in phases from the earliest possible moment. • Any requirement for any external teams such as Disaster Assessment and Co-ordination Teams or SAR Teams, or other specialist inputs to save lives must be identified and specified within hours. • Maintain contact and coordinate efforts with other international agencies and NGOs working in the area so as to avoid replication of efforts or gaps.
<p>After Disaster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out Rehabilitation works as per the organisation's capacity and area of expertise. • Mainstream disaster risk considerations into all new developmental projects and activities. • Prepare reports on assessment of damage and actions taken, and make them available for general review and planning. • Mitigate against loss of life and livelihoods in disasters and protect development gains. • Provide periodic reports on execution of rehabilitation activities in the field to the Line Ministries.

Role of UN Agencies

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will be the nodal agency on behalf of the UN and International Community for facilitating interagency coordination and management for disaster management. The expected roles to be played by the UN Agencies presently working in Afghanistan are as follows:

UN Agencies	Roles
UNAMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ UNAMA is coordinator of all UN relief, recovery and reconstruction activities.▪ It will work closely with the DDP for formulation and review of National Disaster Management Plans, policies and relevant programs on risk reduction.▪ Work with the DDP to convene coordination meetings with the International Community and NGOs.
UNCHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide inputs for risk reduction in their ongoing Urban Reconstruction programme.▪ Advise the government on adoption of building regulations.▪ Advise the government on necessary training programs to build national capacity.▪ Provide inputs for developing innovative methodologies of hazard and vulnerability analysis to determine risk levels.
UNHCR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide emergency food aid and temporary shelter in areas affected by disasters.▪ Protecting IDPs against potential disasters.
UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Promote the incorporation of disaster mitigation in development planning.▪ Provision for building capacity of the DDP at national and regional levels.▪ Support programs on mainstreaming risk reduction.
UNESCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide expertise help in the study of hazards of geological and hydro meteorological origins.▪ Recommend protection of sites of historic importance against potential disasters.▪ Establish earthquake resistance initiatives for educational buildings in earthquake vulnerable areas.
UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assistance in child health and nutrition especially in disaster-prone and disaster-affected areas.▪ Promote programs on good nutrition and family food security; access to potablewater; environmental hygiene and safe excreta disposal; child health services and reproductive health care for women.
FAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide technical advice in reducing vulnerability and in the rehabilitation of agriculture and livestock.▪ Provide reports on food production and forecast any requirements of exceptional food assistance.
WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide targeted food aid for humanitarian relief and support rehabilitation, reconstruction and risk reducing development programmes.▪ Provide infrastructure and emergency communication support at National and Province levels.▪ Assist in Risk Assessment and Surveillance programs.
WHO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide advice and assistance in all respects of preventive and curative health care including the preparedness of health services for rapid disaster response.▪ Promote capacity building for health personnel and infrastructure at province level in disaster prone areas.
UNOPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide expertise in implementation and management of relief and rehabilitation programs.▪ Provide expertise in damage assessment.▪ Promote joint mitigation programs with Shuras in areas prone to disasters such as in the case of "Afghanistan Conservation Corps".

In addition to the UN agencies, the UNAMA and the DDP would coordinate with donor agencies, independent institutions such as AERU and AIMS for formulating inter-agency programs on capacity building and implementation of risk reduction measures in disaster prone areas of the country.

3.5 Afghan Red Crescent Society and National NGOs

NGOs play a vital role in risk reduction and emergency relief in disasters situations in the country. The DDP would identify and enlist NGOs and their networks with their available capacity to be able to mobilize them when needed. The DDP will convene meetings of the NGOs whenever a disaster situation develops. NGOs will be requested to extend their cooperation in effective relief and rehabilitation of the affected communities.

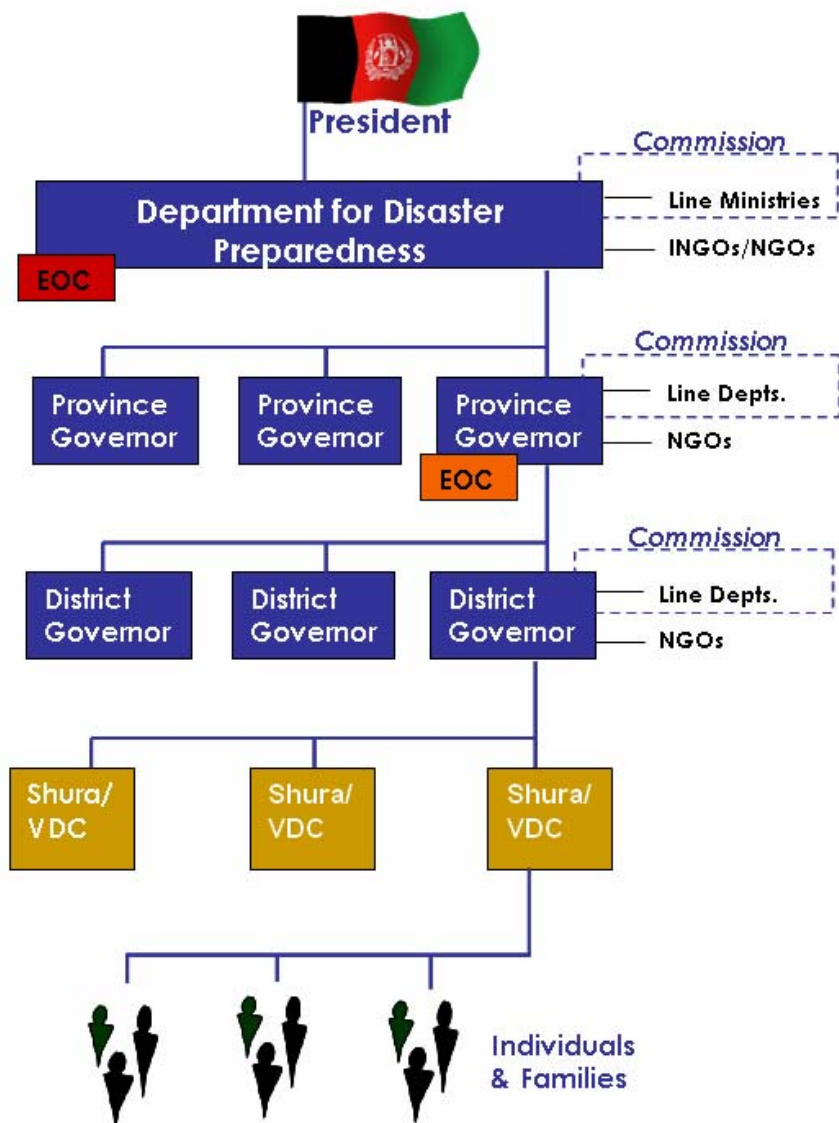
The Afghanistan Red Crescent Society is a recognized member of the National Commission and would perform the following duties within the ambit of its own rules and regulations and organisational structure, in association with various governmental organisations:

Non Disaster times
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ARCS will take steps for preparing community based disaster management plans. • Identify volunteers in disaster prone areas and arrange for their training. • Awareness raising programs, seminars and meetings with the people for improving their capacity to face disasters. • Maintain contacts with the DDP, Province Governors and District Administrators on its activities. • Ensure road communication and pre-positioning of relief material as close as possible to disaster prone communities.
Alert & Warning Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue warning notice to all concerned including the preparedness programs and relevant Red Crescent units in the country. • Designate a liaison officer for maintaining link with the EOC of the DDP. • Keep the survey and relief team of head quarters on stand-by in readiness with required transport and equipment. • Attend the National Commission meetings and keep contact with DDP. • Mobilise volunteers and issue instructions for sending them to potential disaster affected areas. • Take part in evacuation programme of population with close cooperation of volunteers and Shuras. • Coordinate with pre identified NGOs for possible joint operations.
During Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure survey of loss and damage in affected areas and dispatch of relief teams from concerned Red Crescent Society Units. • Assist the Province Government to determine loss, damage and needs related information. • Give emergency assistance to disaster affected people especially in the following cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Help in rescue and evacuation work, temporary shelter, first aid, food and clothing, ○ Arrange for distribution of relief material received from Red Crescent Unit of areas not affected by disaster and from headquarters. • Send request for requirement of relief and rehabilitation to the International Federation of Red Cross and Crescent Societies (IFRCS) after informing about loss and damage due to disaster.
After Disaster
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes in special circumstances. • Take steps for correct and effective evaluation of preparedness work and for correcting errors/weakness in such work. • Extend Cooperation to the National EOC for disaster documentation.

3.6 Community Based Disaster Management

As Afghanistan is currently going through a large scale exercise of nation rebuilding, it needs to address its management capacities and gear up as a disaster resilient society for a safer future. Community based disaster management is the most viable means for this. One major problem faced at present by community level stakeholders is that they do not know whom to contact for assistance or guidance when they need to respond to a disaster or to prepare for one. In order to be truly effective, the NDMP must provide for such venues of communication and information flow from grassroot level stakeholders to the highest of authorities and vice verse.

Though province, district and local level plans may take time to come about alongwith capacities of these levels to implement the plans, channels of information flow should be made clear now, so that this basic function of community participation may be addressed by the NDMP. A structure rising from individuals and families, and getting consolidated at Village Shuras or Village



Development Councils (currently being established in villages as part of the National Solidarity Programme) before it enters the governance domain through the district, province and national administration, can successfully establish such a link between the individual and the President of the country. This schematic structure is illustrated below.

It may be emphasized here that as the DDP, the line ministries and other stakeholder organisations get active to implement the NDMP, they must take specific measures to ensure that their procedures are operationalised in a manner that not only keeps this channel of information flow with the communities open, but promotes it. This may be achieved through extensive community education and awareness campaigns on disaster management and the provisions for community participation in the upcoming National Disaster Management Programme.

A specific channel for initiating community based programming of the national disaster management system is the National Solidarity Programme (NSP). The NSP

is the Government of Afghanistan's priority community empowerment programme and is executed by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). The NSP aims to develop the ability of communities to plan, manage, and monitor their own reconstruction and development projects based on locally mobilized and externally provided resources. The NSP consists of four core elements: (a) a facilitated participatory planning process at the community level to assist with the establishment and strengthening of community institutions; (b) a system of direct block grant transfers to support the rehabilitation or development activities of such institutions; (c) capacity development to enhance the competence of communities for financial management, procurement, useful technical skills, and transparency; and (d) activities which facilitate links to other institutions and programs with available services and resources.

The NSP will be implemented in all of Afghanistan's 32 provinces, covering all villages of the country over the next three years. It operates through NGO facilitating partners and eventually establishes Village Development Councils that are capable of managing the development projects at local level.

The NDMP should make use of the NSP as a viable vehicle for bringing about community based disaster management programming at a nationwide scale. It is a move that will benefit the NSP by adding content to the programme, and will benefit the community most of all by delivering a more comprehensive package. Immediate steps to be taken in this regard are:

1. Make the ongoing village information gathering exercise of the NSP consistent across NGO facilitating partners so that a nationally consistent database may be created,
2. Add parameters related to community risk and capacity assessment to the information gathering exercise so as to make the database useful for disaster management purposes,
3. Initiate a national public education and awareness campaigns on disaster risk reduction and efficient local response through the NSP,
4. Initiate a programme on participatory preparation of village disaster management plans through the NSP,
5. Develop a scheme for allocation of local disaster management tasks to village disaster management task forces as subsets of the VDCs,
6. Allocate and channelise small grants for village disaster preparedness activities under the NSP.

Part III. National Disaster Management Programme

The present Disaster Management Plan is a beginning towards organising the national resources and capabilities for a coordinated and efficient disaster preparedness and response. However, this quick impact plan will need to be followed up with elaborate and long-term interventions in keeping with the country's growing capacity. Prime areas requiring long term planning are discussed below.

	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
Policy	Preparedness and Quick Response	Mitigation and Extended Response	Comprehensive Disaster Management, Safe Development
Plans	Quick Impact National Plan	Detailed National Plan, Province Plans	District Plans Village Plans
Projects	Human Resource Development, Information Base	Infrastructure and Technological Upgrading, Community Base	Financial, Cultural

1. National Policy on Disaster Management

Disaster management being a matter of National concern in a setting where governance is still taking shape with emerging situations requires a broad yet comprehensive vision. With particular reference to the massive relief operations now ongoing in the country, a comprehensive disaster management policy will need to take a clear approach of linking relief and rehabilitation with development. The policy needs to be appropriate to the current dynamics in the country with respect to its physical, social, economic and political environment.

The National Policy on Disaster Management will, therefore, need to be cross-sectoral in nature and based on the premise that all other relevant sectoral policies will take note of it and will have appropriate linkages with disaster management systems.

Within these postulates the following broad principles will inform the policy:

- 1) Policies and initiatives will be so framed as to do away with the difference between natural and man-made disasters to the extent practicable.
- 2) The primary responsibility to deal with disasters shall be with the Province Governments with the Central Government playing a supportive role wherever necessary.
- 3) In keeping with its supplementary role, the Central Government shall endeavour to establish and maintain systems for rapid deployment and rescue operations for which the resources available with the Provinces are likely to prove inadequate.
- 4) The Central Government shall, in particular, render assistance, technical and material to build capacities to deal with disasters at Province and sub-Province levels so as to make them comparable to International Standards and to bring about as large a degree of Inter-Province uniformity as possible.
- 5) The general approach to management of disasters shall be holistic; Prevention, mitigation, preparedness, management and rehabilitation shall, to the extent feasible, find place in integrated strategies that would find place in preparedness plans and other ancillary exercises.
- 6) Disaster Management Plans will be prepared at National, Province, District and Local levels. A culture of preparedness planning will be inculcated so as to effectively take disaster management planning down to institutional, family and individual levels.

- 7) People are primary stakeholders in the disaster management process. All strategies, programmes and plans will embrace 'community participation'.
- 8) Minimum standards and equity will be maintained in relief operations with an objective of justly covering all interest groups and people of all ethnicities.
- 9) Arrangements to finance Relief expenditure shall be laid out in accordance with a national disaster management funding mechanism, to be developed by the national government. This may, however, not affect such supplementary funding mechanisms as may be considered necessary to assist the Provinces to undertake systemic developments.

These broad principles need to be articulated in detail in the form of concrete formulations, contained in a policy document. Detailed action points emerging from such formulations shall find place in a Programme of Action to be drawn up in pursuance of the national policy.

2. Disaster Management Plans at various levels

2.1 The National Disaster Management Plan

The National Disaster Management Plan has been prepared with a view that it needs to be simple so that it can be immediately implemented. The entire process of disaster planning for Afghanistan is going to be a long one, since it needs to move at a pace matched with the development of infrastructure, resources and capacities. However, the process has to be kick-started with immediate effect, and the first step is operation of the present plan. This will provide a basis of testing the approach and moving ahead on its refinement and detailing alongside its implementation.

2.2 Province, District and Local Disaster Management Plans

The National Disaster Management Plan focuses on procedures for various role-players and their inter-coordination. The plan lays down the general guiding principles to be followed by the disaster management system in the country. However, in order to have an efficient ground based preparedness and response mechanism, it is essential to prepare Province and District Disaster Management Plans covering the entire country in detail and with locally appropriate specifications. Preparation of these plans needs to be taken up with immediate effect and the exercise may go in parallel with that of constant revision and upgrading of the National Plan. In addition, local plans for villages and urban centres need to be prepared. These should primarily have a people based approach. Such participatory plans can be prepared as an activity linked with the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) that is going to cover all villages of the country in the coming years.

3. Projects of National Importance

3.1 Human Resource Development

Training is an integral component of capacity building. However, it needs to be designed for specific needs and equipped with a practical technically sound approach. Strengthening of resources and information is also essential to capacity building for a coordinated quality effort. Role players in disaster management include Government Organisations, NGOs, CBOs, International Development Aid Agencies and Donors, Academic Institutions, Private Sector Organisations,

Religious Organisations, Defence, Police, and the Community. Since each of these have specific work areas, strengths and weaknesses, it is important for them to complement each other's efforts for achieving an efficient overall disaster management system. It has to be a true enterprise of public-private partnerships in the flow of skills, finances and specialized personnel or institutional knowledge. Media can play an important role to highlight the vulnerable condition of the community that is acutely affected at the time of disaster and can become an active medium for community awareness.

A network of training institutions led by a national level disaster management institute with symbiotic linkages with other National and Province level institutions like National Police Academy, Academy of Science, Universities etc. will need to be forged and developed.

3.2 Capacity Building of NGOs and CBOs

Non-Governmental and Community Based Organisations form the backbone of the civil society, that can be very useful in disaster management. Afghanistan may be wanting in financial and material resources, but it can boast to be one of the topmost countries of the world in terms of having a disaster resilient community. NGOs and CBOs have the potential to tap the community base and provide the interface between the government's plans and their field level implementation. Capacity building of NGOs and CBOs thus needs to be taken up at the widest levels and these organisations need to be entrusted with major roles in the area of disaster management.

3.3 National Disaster Response Network

The present situation of multiplicity of agencies working on disaster management in Afghanistan is leading to a situation which has certain overlaps, large gaps, and absence of knowledge about each other's work. The disaster context itself is so wide that a large amount of inputs are required at all levels and in various sectors. However, there is an urgent need to establish a system for sharing of knowledge, resources and strategies towards a larger national goal. This can be best achieved through establishment of a national disaster response network that links all agencies working in the areas of preparedness, response and rehabilitation, and establishes a framework for effective coordination at different levels of operation.

3.4 Public Awareness for Community Participation

It has now been revealed that the community as an institution in itself is emerging as the most powerful among the entire mechanism of disaster administration. In the event of actual disasters, the community, if well aware of the preventive actions it is required to take, can substantially reduce the damage caused by the disaster. Awareness and training of the community is particularly useful in areas that are prone to frequent disasters.

Creating awareness among the community through education and training and information dissemination about disasters and empowering them to cope with hazards are all mitigation strategies. On the other hand, establishment of monitoring, prediction, forecasting and warning systems, attempting at reducing factors that aggravate hazards, vulnerability and risk analysis, development of proper guidelines and standards, enactment of legislation and building byelaws and transfer of technology etc. further go on to reduce the wrath of disasters. Public awareness campaigns need to be carried out linking community participation with administrative and technical programmes on disaster management.

3.5 Risk Atlas

An Afghanistan prepared for handling disasters will be unattainable without ensured availability of reliable maps, especially for areas with history of known hazards. For the effort of production of Hazard maps to succeed, it is imperative that the administration ensures availability of topographic and other maps at appropriate scales. Once the base maps are available other factor maps, such as those of geology, hydrology, land use etc can be produced. And their eventual integration could then lead to single and multi hazard maps. The digitized version of the hazard maps when overlaid on infrastructure map can help us identify elements at risk and the consequent economic worth of loss, for any given disaster scenario. A risk atlas needs to be prepared that may provide a broad picture of possible hazards and vulnerable areas. Developmental Planners, architects and engineers do require large-scale maps, preferably of scale 1:10 000. Precision GIS/Digital Maps of all Provinces, Districts and Urban Centers, with spatial and non-spatial data need to be made available for multi-purpose use, at appropriate scale. Identification of agencies, tasks, resources, and funds should be taken up at the earliest.

3.6 Technical Upgrading of Response Agencies

Disaster response agencies such as the police, fire services, medical services, public works departments etc. are in urgent need of technical upgrading. These agencies are the first responders with critical roles to play in the immediate aftermath of any disaster. The communication, transportation and technical operation capabilities of these organisations need to be built on a priority basis.

3.7 National Disaster Management Fund

Disaster management requires committed funding with adequate backup resource to meet unforeseen situations that arise from natural disasters. Presently much of the assistance for disaster-affected communities comes from international aid sources. However, for the long term the country will need to build its own financial capacity to meet calamity relief needs, and also to be able to spend on preparedness and mitigation efforts. Establishment of a National Disaster Management Fund will make this possible in a planned, coordinated and efficient manner.

3.8 Special Plans for Urban Centers

Urban populations are growing rapidly and the situation is most alarming since it is taking place in the absence of well-planned and structured settlements. The civic services and the general quality of the settlements is of a low standard, as a result of which the urban communities are being subjected to an ever increasing risk of natural as well as technological disasters.

The urban planning and management processes need to be very sensitive to the disaster risk faced. Besides urban planning technologies, a viable way to a safer living is through preparedness to face disasters, which requires concerted efforts on the part of the government agencies, voluntary organisations, and most importantly the community itself. Risk awareness has to be created, and preparedness plans formulated, so that the urban populace may live a safer life. With the introduction of relatively simple, effective risk reduction measures (those which 'reduce vulnerability and increase capacity') into existing urban improvement practices, and those which involve communities in decision making, degrees of protection can be afforded within the most vulnerable urban settlements, which in the long term contribute to both protecting lives and enhancing livelihoods, thus reducing poverty.

3.9 Development Regulations and Building Codes

A significant cause behind the high vulnerability of the population is the poor quality of physical development, including building construction. Though standardizing the material and construction technology parameters will take a long time, steps need to be taken up for formulating an appropriate National Building Code and development regulations for different kinds of settlements existing in the country. These may initially be treated as guidelines, and gradually formalized into techno-legal tools for ensuring safe physical development.

3.10 Livelihood Security

Long-term disaster risk reduction in a community is a function of its capacity to access resources and build assets. Household livelihood security is the most basic means for achieving risk reduction as it provides households with financial, social and physical assets to protect themselves from shocks and stresses. Efforts focusing on disaster risk reduction in poor communities need to be closely linked to livelihood programmes.

3.11 Needs of Special Vulnerable Groups

When addressing the preparedness and relief requirements of the disaster victims, focus should be placed on the special needs of the vulnerable population that is, children, women, aged and the disabled. Socio-cultural needs should be accounted for in all phases of disaster management planning. In the context of Afghanistan, this need is further accentuated by the fact that two and half decade of turmoil and suffering has left a large section of the population physically and mentally affected, and left without adequate protection from the vagaries of nature. Afghanistan needs to develop a specific strategy for addressing the risk reduction needs of these vulnerable groups.