

TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA

**NATIONAL POLICY ON
DISASTER PREVENTION AND
MANAGEMENT**

OCTOBER, 1993

I. INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia is frequently threatened by disasters induced by drought and other factors. In the last twenty years, disasters have, at varying degrees, been occurring annually, costing heavily both in terms of lives and resources. As concerted efforts are required to eliminate the root causes of disasters, a National Disaster Prevention and Management Policy has been developed so that relief assistance is provided to the affected population in a manner which ensures that such efforts contribute towards disaster prevention and sustainable growth and development, and that disaster prevention activities get due attention in the government's development efforts. The policy aims at a congruence of relief effort and planned development to strengthen the economic fabric of the disaster-prone areas so as to mitigate the suffering of the affected population and enhance their capability to face the challenge of such disasters in the future. To ensure that there is a close link between relief efforts and development programmes, different bodies at different levels need to be assigned specific responsibilities. This policy delineates functions and responsibilities in disaster management at various levels.

II. DEFINITION

1. Disaster:

For the purpose of this policy, disaster is defined as an event in which a society or a community undergoes acute deprivation of food and other basic necessities due to natural and man-made calamities to such an extent that the normal function of the society or the community is disrupted and that it cannot subsist without outside intervention.

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2. RELIEF

Relief to disaster victims is not confined to supply of food and other basic necessities, but encompasses measures covering all aspects of life in disaster areas so as to reduce vulnerability in the future.

3. RELIEF PROGRAMME:

Relief programme will comprise measures like employment generation schemes, supply and distribution of food and other essential commodities, availability of safe drinking water, health and nutrition support, support to the old and infirm, conservation of rural assets like livestock, support to non-farm and secondary economic activities, environmental rehabilitation, and other development activities with drought proofing content.

4. PREPAREDNESS:

Disaster preparedness is building up of capabilities before a disaster situation prevails in order to reduce impacts. Disaster preparedness measures include inter alia, availability of Food Reserve, Emergency Reserve Fund, Seed Reserve, Health Facilities, Warning System, Logistical Infrastructure, Relief Manual, and Shelves of Projects.

5. PREVENTION:

Disaster Prevention refers to measures taken to eliminate the root-causes that make people vulnerable to disasters.

6. GRATUITOUS RELIEF:

Gratuitous relief is the financial or food support extended to households without linking such relief to any service to sustain persons who cannot report for work on EGS or who have not been employed on EGS in times of disaster.

7. LINE DEPARTMENT:

Ministry, commission, autonomous organization, regional bureau, and agency that has full responsibility in a specific sector.

8. Normal Year:

Normal year refers to situations reflected by long term averages, preferably at least 10 years.

9. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Humanitarian organizations which, using their own resources, participate in the country's effort to eliminate poverty and deprivation.

✓ III. OBJECTIVES:

The national policy on disaster prevention and management shall have the following objectives:

- ✓ 1) no human life shall perish for want of assistance in time of disaster;

- 2) adequate income shall be ensured to disaster affected households through relief programme to give them access to food and other basic necessities;
- 3) the quality of life in the affected areas shall be protected from deterioration on account of disaster and the adverse impact is mitigated in time with utmost urgency;
- 4) relief effort shall reinforce the capabilities of the affected areas and population, and promote self-reliance;
- 5) contribution to sustainable economic growth and development shall be given due emphasis in all relief efforts;
- 6) the asset and economic fabric of the affected areas shall be preserved to enable speedy post-disaster recovery;
- 7) provision of relief shall protect and safeguard human dignity and reinforce the social determination for development;
- 8) disaster prevention programmes shall be given due emphasis in all spheres of development endeavors;
- 9) all endeavors in relief programmes shall be geared to eliminate the root causes of vulnerability to disasters; and
- 10) best use of natural resource endowment of the areas shall be promoted.

IV. POLICY DIRECTIONS:

1. Basic Principles

- 1.1 The community shall play the leading role in the planning, programming, implementation and evaluation of all relief projects, and Line Department role in this regard would be subservient to this.
- 1.2 The urgency of different measures shall be carefully assessed and resources shall be deployed for the more urgent measures of the moment; and precedence shall be give to areas where lives and livelihoods are more threatened.
- 1.3 There shall be clearly defined focal points of action for different tasks at different levels; and centers of co-ordination shall be properly empowered.
- 1.4 Relief must be addressed to the most needy at all times and no free distribution of aid be allowed to able-bodied affected population.

2. Preparedness and Prevention Linkage

- 2.1 Maximum benefit shall be derived from the application of scarce resources by identifying linkage between current relief and future capabilities and use preparedness as a tool for reinforcing the disaster proofing content (prevention) of relief measures.

- 2.2 In planning and executing relief measures within their spheres all organs of the government and grass root organizations of the community shall ensure that response to disaster contributes to ongoing development.

3. Inter-Sectoral Integration

- 3.1 There shall be an integrated approach in the formulation and implementation of relief programmes.
- 3.2 Relief programmes, touching on different aspects of economic life, shall sub-serve the goals of development and build up the assets of the community. Line-departments will dovetail relief projects into their long-term plans and bring a congruence of approach, strategy and techniques.
- 3.3 As part of the long term development effort, appropriate prevention plans and programmes shall be devised for disaster prone areas in order to eliminate the root causes of their vulnerability

4. DECLARATION OF DISASTER:

- 4.1 Disaster shall be declared when convincing and complete socio-economic reports from regional councils and the National Early Warning System are provided. National level declaration for disaster will be made only by the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee (NDPPC).
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4.2 The commencement of relief measures shall automatically follow the declaration of disaster in an area. However, it is not always necessary to await such formal declaration, or NDPPC's decisions on measures to be taken. Having regard to the general policies of the Government, relief operation may commence with the available local resources before a formal declaration if the state of distress warrants immediate intervention. Subject to its endorsement by NDPPC and depending on the extent of the disaster, the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission ^{RRC} ~~NDPPC~~ may also authorize certain essential measures to be taken in such situations.

5. RELIEF PLAN:

5.1 The extension of relief assistance to disaster victims shall be based on a relief plan to be prepared by the regions concerned and submitted to the NDPPC through the ^{RRC} ~~RRC~~. The preparation of the plan shall be bottom-up, and shall ensure that measures designed to relieve current distress contribute to the build up of future capabilities to meet the challenges of disasters.

5.2 Guidelines for reallocation of resources for relief programmes shall be issued from time to time and such detail guidelines will prescribe the limits, physical or financial, up to which different authorities at different levels could exercise powers of administrative approval and financial sanction.

6. EMPLOYMENT GENERATION SCHEMES (EGS):

6.1 Relief assistance to able bodied persons shall be through their participation in EGS.

6.2 EGS shall provide a means of distribution of income to deprived sections of society, build-up the assets of an area so as to improve its resilience to disaster, and create conditions and strengthen the infrastructure to help future development in the area.

6.3 EGS should ensure the full participation of women.

7. GRATUITOUS RELIEF:

Gratuitous relief shall, provided they have no close relatives able and custom-bound to support them, be made available to the aged, the infirm, the disabled, pregnant women, young children, persons who are required to attend constantly on young children and incapacitated adults, and under special circumstances, to victims of rapid onset disasters.

8. FOOD DELIVERY SYSTEM:

Relief-food-outlets, subsidized or otherwise, shall be established in disaster areas during disaster periods.

9. COMPLEMENTARY SECTORS:

9.1 Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that there are adequate logistical facilities necessary for an uninterrupted flow of relief items.

9.2 Measures for the waiver, total or partial, of recovery of land tax and such other taxes, as well as for the postponement of other government dues, in the event of disaster in an area shall be considered.

9.3 The mass media shall foster awareness about disasters and responses.

10. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: (NGO)

10.1 Every NGO desiring to operate in the country must get itself registered with RRC.

10.2 The general policy regarding NGOs operations in the country shall be announced, from time to time, by RRC.

11. FUNDING:

11.1 A National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund (NDPPF) shall be established for providing resources for the implementation of relief measures in disaster-affected areas. It will be a separate autonomous corpus used for financing relief operations and will be built up by contribution from the national budget and aid and donations from non-governmental resources.

11.2 To the extent possible, every region shall use its own local resources to finance relief measures. The shortfalls shall be projected in relief plans for allocation from the NDPPF.

11.3 For financing relief measures, every region shall be allotted a drawal right from the NDPPF depending on the severity of the disaster.

11.4 The NDPPF shall be managed by a board of management.

12. STRUCTURES AND FUNCTIONS FOR RELIEF MANAGEMENT

12.1 At the apex of the administrative structure for rendering relief to disaster-affected population shall be the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee (NDPPC.)

NDPPC will consist of:

Prime Minister	-	Chairman
Minister of Agriculture	-	member
" " Finance	-	"
" " Health	-	"
" " Defence	-	"
" " Planning and Economic Development	-	"
" " External Economic Cooperation	-	"
Chairmen of Regional Councils	-	"

Commissioner of RRC	-	Member and Secretary
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Other agencies as deemed necessary by the Committee

12.2

NDPPC will, at the request of the Secretariat, meet regularly, and

- review the status of rainfall, agricultural operations in various parts of the country and crop prospects;
- assess the food security situation;
- appraise the likely onset of drought conditions and other disasters;
- declare disaster areas; and authorize appropriate measures to be taken;
- issue policy directions to counter the threat of disaster and to undertake relief measures;
- prescribe guidelines for assistance and allocation of resources for relief effort;
- consider relief plans and determine the allocation of resources to regions for undertaking relief measures;
- review, monitor and direct relief programmes;
- determine general rules for operating the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Fund (NDPPF);
- prescribe general principles and guidelines for RRC to seek international/external aid for relief operations;
- specify thrusts in relief efforts to subserve long-term development objectives; and

- identify and enforce the incorporation of such specific components in sectoral programmes and strategy as would build up the capabilities of disaster prone areas and population.

⇒ 12.3

The focal point for all matters pertaining to relief and the secretariat of the NDPPC will be the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission. As a secretariat of the NDPPC the Commission, in addition to its mandated responsibilities, shall

- appraise the relief plans of the regions, and secure the decision of the NDPPC on allocation of additional resources to various regions for rendering disaster relief;
- monitor and coordinate the activities of various line departments and other state agencies in disaster-affected areas in relation to provision of relief and submit reports to NDPPC;
- review preparedness measures in disaster prone areas and ensure the preparation of shelves-of-projects and contingency action plans by individual Line Departments;
- issue directives emanating from the National Policy On Disaster Prevention and Management for implementing relief measures; and
- administer the NDPPF.

12.4 The RRC may establish a Crisis Management Group consisting of all nodal officers of Line Departments to assist it in all relief works.

12.5 National Committee for Early Warning comprising of appropriate government agencies will be established, and the secretariat shall be located in the RRC.

12.6 Every relevant ministry, autonomous organization, and other state organs shall designate to the RRC a senior person as nodal officer responsible for coordinating all matters relating to the provision of relief to disaster victims by his agency.

12.7 The over all control and direction of relief operations at regional levels shall rest in Regional Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committees (RDPPC) to be established by regional councils. The RDPPC which reports to the NDPPC, shall be chaired by the chairman of the regional council.

12.8 RDPPC shall, at the request of its chairman and the Relief and Rehabilitation Bureau, meet as required, and

- review status of rainfall, agricultural operations, crop prospects, and livestock condition in the region,

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- appraise the likely on-set of disaster conditions in the region,
- approve proposals of the declaration of disaster in any part of the region,
- consider and accord approval to the regional relief plan, and their submission to the RRC, and
- monitor the execution of relief measures in the region.

12.9 Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committees shall also be established at Zonal and Woreda levels with similar functions and structures at their levels as that of the RDPPC. The zonal level committee shall report to the RDPPC, and the woreda level committee to the zonal committee.

12.10 Formulation, planning and execution of relief measures falling within a particular functional areas of activities shall be the responsibility of Line Departments at regional levels. The Line Departments at the centre shall assist the RRC in monitoring and evaluation and in the provision of all supports to the region as per their mandated responsibilities.

13. DIRECTIVES FOR DISASTER PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT:

The details of the implementation procedures of the National Policy On Disaster Prevention and Management and the institutional responsibilities shall be as prescribed in the Directives For Disaster Prevention and Management.