

## UNDERSTANDING DISASTERS

This session forms the very basic of the entire training Programme. It will help the participant to understand various concept, terms and approaches related to effective disaster management

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### DEFINITION

A serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing widespread human, material, or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using only its own resources. Disaster is sometimes also used to describe a catastrophic situation in which the normal patterns of life have been disrupted and extraordinary, emergency interventions are required to save and preserve human lives and the environment.

Some common points which qualify an event as a disaster are:

1. Extensive Destruction of Life and Property
2. Usually sudden destruction without a warning
3. Need for large scale intervention following the event

### CLASSIFICATION OF DISASTERS

Disasters can broadly be classified into four, based on the cause:

- Natural Disasters
- Human- Made Disasters
- Slow- Onset Disasters
- Sudden- Onset Disasters

#### Natural Disasters

The selfless boundary of nature is gift to mankind. It is an eternal source of sustenance. It gives us air, water and food and of course a home stays. For centuries though, Mother Nature has been combining its gifts with its often-inexplicable moods of destruction and fury. These times of turmoil over land and water, or hazard often lead to disasters with

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large losses of life, livelihood and property. Disaster is some times referred to as Calamities.

## **Human- made Disaster**

Manmade disaster may result from major accidents, or inadvertent as well deliberate action of individuals, groups or governments. For example terrorists may blow up a train or building with explosives. More common manmade disaster are major fire, land, air and water accidents caused by collisions, breakdown etc. and collapse of bridge and buildings.

## **Slow- Onset Disasters**

These are also called creeping emergencies. These can be defined as situations where the ability of people to sustain their livelihood declines to a point where it is completely devastated may be described as slow onset disasters.

Also those disasters for which there is adequate warning time like drought, climatic changes.

## **Sudden- Onset Disasters**

Sudden calamities caused by natural phenomenon such as earthquakes, Industrial Disasters, tsunamis. These disasters strike with a very little or no warning at all. Since there is no warning therefore damage caused by these disasters is more.

## **DISASTER VOCABULARY**

### **Hazard**

A hazard is a natural or man made phenomenon which may causes physical damage, loss or threaten human life and well being if it occurs in an area of human settlement, agricultural or industrial activity.

### **Risk**

Risk is defined as the expected losses (lives lost, persons injured, damage to property, economic activities or livelihoods disrupted) to a community when a hazard event occurs. The probability of the loss will occur as the result of an adverse event, given the hazard and vulnerability.

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Hazard	What is at Risk
Earthquake	Weak buildings, Telecom,
Flood	Weak foundation, low level area,
Cyclone	Weak buildings, Trees, Infrastructure facility,
Fire	Wooden material,

## Vulnerability

Vulnerability is defined as the degree of loss It is sets of prevailing conditions, which adversely affect people's ability, prevent, to prepare for and respond to hazards event. These long term factors, weaknesses or constraints affect a household or community's ability to absurd losses after disaster or to recover from the damage.

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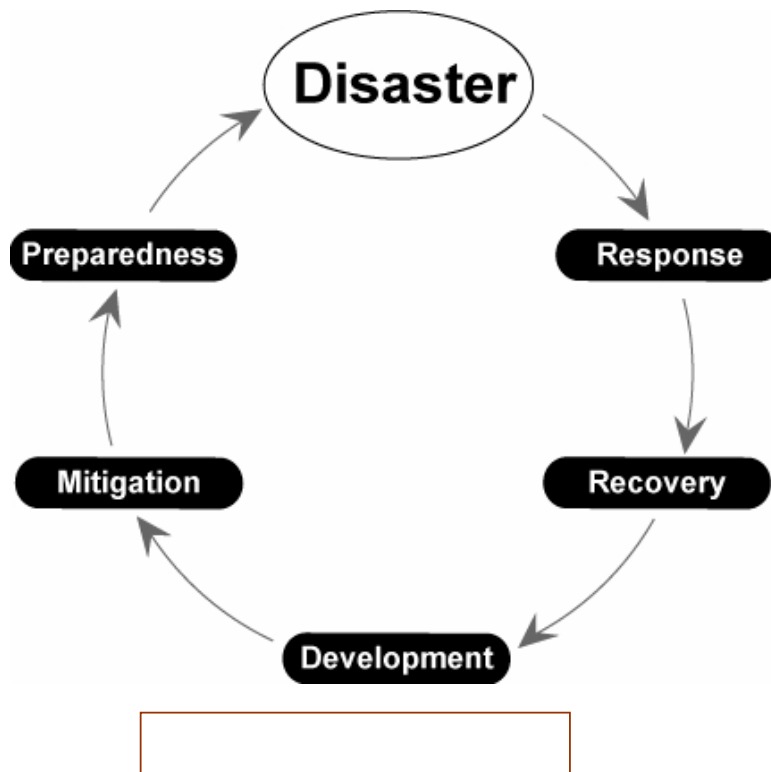


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## DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Disaster Management is a collective term encompassing all aspects of planning for and responding to disasters, including both pre and post disaster activities. It may refer to the management of both risks and consequences of disasters.

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Disaster can be viewed as a series of phases

- Before (pre) Disaster
- During disaster
- After (post) Disaster

The disaster management is cycle of event and continuum of inters linked activities.

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**Response** phase refers to the first or immediate phase after the disaster strikes. This covers measures required in search and rescue of survivors and in meeting basic survival needs for shelter, water, food and health care etc.

List some of the response measures:

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**Recovery** covers interventions like rebuilding assets, infrastructure, school building , houses. It is the process undertaken by a disaster-affected community to fully restore itself to pre disaster level.

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**Mitigation** includes measures taken in advance of disaster aimed at reducing its adverse impact on the school. And he community

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**Preparedness** covers activities to enhance the ability to predict, respond to, and cope with the effect of disaster. It includes action that assumes an event will be disastrous and prepare students and teachers to react appropriately during and following the event.

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