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## ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

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### Introduction:

Disaster is a sudden calamitous event bringing great damages, loss and destruction and devastation to life and property. The damage caused by disaster is immeasurable and varies with the geographical location, climate and the type of the earth surface degree of vulnerability. This influences the mental, socio – economic, political and cultural state of the affected area. Generally, disaster has the following effects. It completely disrupts the normal day to day life, it negatively influences the emergency system, Normal needs and process like food, shelter, health etc. are affected and deteriorate depending on the intensity and security of the disaster. It may also be termed as a serious disruption of the functioning of society, causing wide spreads human, material or environment losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using its own resources. This paper examines how NGOs can play an important role to highlight the roles played by various agencies during the different stages of disasters occurred in India and also examine especially the role of government.

### The concept of Disaster:

The term “DISASTER” owes its origin to French word “Disastre”, which a combination of two words “Des” meaning “Bad” and “Aster” meaning “Star” thus the term Disaster refers to “Bad or Evil Star”. In earlier days disasters were considered to be an outcome or outburst of some unfavorable star. Ideally, a disaster may be defined as an event concentrated in time and space which threatens a society or a relative self-sufficient subdivision of a society with major unwanted consequences as a result of the collapse of precautions which had hitherto been culturally accepted as adequate. Disaster according to ‘Disaster Management Act 2005’ means a catastrophic, mishap, calamity or grave occurrences in any area, arising from natural or manmade causes or by accident or negligence which results in substantial loss of life or human suffering or damage to and destruction of property or damage to or degradation of environment and is of such a nature or magnitude as to be beyond the coping capacity of the community of the affected area. Disasters are extreme events which cause great loss to life and property. They pose a serious threat to the normal life as well as the process of development and strike with sudden violence, tearing bodies, destroying lives and structures and throwing apart families. Natural disasters which are both sudden and powerful, damage national economy and cause hardships to a large section of the population. They are the single largest concern for most of the nations as they take a heavy toll of human life, destroy belongings and infrastructure and have far reaching economic and social consequences for communities. Thus, the impact of disasters on human life is multi-dimensional, affecting it in all aspects domestic, social, economic etc. In common parlance, the terms, disaster and crisis, are used interchangeably, or synonymously. But strictly speaking, they have different meanings.

According to the New International Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language, the term, disaster, means crushing misfortune, a calamity, a terrible accident, and the term, crisis, means a turning point in the progress of an affair, or a series of events, critical moment. We shall use these two terms to connote these meanings. However, we would like to highlight the point that an event becomes a disaster only if and when it results in substantial loss of life or property and



a disaster becomes a crisis when the extent of damage done by it is well beyond the capacity of the victim to withstand it and the victim is almost at the breaking point.

### Type of disaster

Disasters and crises are generally classified as **Natural and Man-made**. Natural disasters and crises are caused by such natural calamity like floods, droughts, cyclones, landslides, and so on, where as man-made disasters are the results of human actions, and include road, rail, and air accidents, industrial accidents, strikes, civil violence, and wars, new man-made disaster threats that have developed, particularly since World War II are far more destructive in their potential than the traditional threats. Increased social violence including trans-border terrorism has drastically affected many nations and communities. Threats from industrial accidents, such as the Bhopal gas leakage in 1984, production, transportation and dumping of hazardous materials and substances endanger unprotected and unaware people. Atomic and nuclear sources pose yet another threat. The possibility of use of nuclear weapons has added a new dimension to the problem of disaster management and mitigation. For more than a century researches have been studying disasters and for more than forty years disasters research has been institutionalized through the disasters Research center the studies reflect a common opinion when they argue that all disasters can be seen as being human made their reasoning being that human actions before the strike of the hazard can prevent it developing in to a disaster. All disasters are hence the result of human failure to introduce appropriate disaster management measures.

### Role of Non-governmental Organization in Disaster Management

NGO is Non – profit organizations or associations of private citizens with a common interest to assist the disaster affected people”. NGOs are typically valuing based organizations which depend, in whole or in part, on charitable donations and voluntary service. NGOs range in their size and scope form large charities to regional, national and community-based self-help groups. They include research centers, religious institutions and professional associations. NGOs have contributed immensely in the development of our marginalized sections and backward areas through their selfless service. NGOs have more competitive advantages and flexibility of operations in fields like awareness generation, community level preparedness and capacity building of communities.

Volunteerism and social service has deep roots in India. Non – Governmental Organizations are playing very important role in different stages of Disaster reduction and different elements are attributed for its successful operation. The NGOs have some important skills for rescue, coordination and for relief activities. They have the flexibility to respond quickly and efficiently at the local level and are often the first organizer group to reach the disaster site. For any Ngo, Commitment is very important for rehabilitation, cooperation and reconstruction.

Today, NGOs play an important role in disaster response and mitigation indifferent regions. India and natural disasters have had a long unfortunate relationship together. Floods, droughts, cyclones, earthquakes and landslides have been recurrent phenomena. NGOs are active in responding to various disasters in different phases. In the immediate phase, the NGO response focused on emergency food relief, temporary shelter, emergency medical aid, debris removal and habitat restoration, trauma counseling, and raising families. Some NGOs also distributed temporary shelter materials among disaster – affected people soon after the disaster. Rejuvenating people's spirits and raising awareness about reconstruction challenges was an important part of NGOs intervention.

The Non – Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have been providing support in critical sectors like health, education, water supply and sanitation, shelter and infrastructure, restoration of



livelihood, food security and nutrition, environment, etc. India's multi – hazard risk and vulnerability to natural and man – made disasters, NGOs have been playing a significant role in providing humanitarian assistance to disaster – affected people in most of the severe disasters like the Latur earthquake in 1993, Orissa super cyclone in 1999, Bhuj earthquake in 2001, Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, Kashmir earthquake in 2005, Barmer floods in 2006, Kosi floods in 2008, cyclones Aila and Laila and the more recent cloud burst in Leh in August 2010, apart from participating in providing relief to disaster affected communities in various other localized disasters.

The selfless way in which the NGOs often come forward to assist the disaster victims in different parts of the country is appraisable. In spite of several constraints, NGOs reach the affected people after a disaster promptly, help in the establishment of temporary relief camps, and contribute to building community resilience to face disasters.

#### Important of NGO:

The coordination of Non – Governmental Organizations (NGOs) among themselves and with government agencies has been improving over the years and NGOs have made significant contributions in most of the recent disasters. The NGOs that responded to the Orissa Super cyclone of 1999 came together under the banner of the Orissa Disaster Mitigation Mission (ODMM) for coordination purposes. After the Gujarat Earthquake of 2001, a network of NGOs under the banner of Kutch Nav Nirman Abhiyan, popularly called “Abhiyan”, helped to establish a network of information kiosks called SETUs for two way information exchange between communities and the Government in the earthquake affected areas. After the Indian Ocean Tsunami in December 2004, in Nagapattinam in TamilNadu, more than 500 NGOs responding to the Tsunami came together as the NGO Coordination and Resource Centre (NCRC) to collect, collate, and share information. In Bihar during Kosi Floods, Sphere India supported the setting up of the inter – agency working groups at the state and district levels. Besides the formal arrangements, informal community based systems also exist in many areas, such as the civil society flood early warning systems that operate through community groups in the villages covering the flood – prone areas from upstream Assam to even the downstream villages in Bangladesh. Most of these have been isolated experiences of synergetic partnership between civil society organizations with government institutions, facilitated to a large extent by the senior administrations at the field level.

#### Conclusion:

In short today's day to day life NGO will provide best facility to the society, in the time of calamity they work actively because at the ground level NGO had better information.

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