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DISASTER, DEVELOPMENT, GOOD GOVERNANCE AND THE TIME FRAME NEXUS: A CASE STUDY OF BALAKOT TOWN

Abstract

The vulnerability of Pakistan to a multiplicity of disasters like natural, hydrometer- logical, man-made, etc. is well known. The need for an over reaching and effective Disaster Management strategy is seriously felt by all Pakistanis particularly after the 2005 earthquake, 2010 floods and the civil-war like situation in the after math of the 9/11.

Unfortunately, there seems to be neither a will nor power on the government part to address the situation amicably and her performance is dismal. The Government's performance in Disaster situations and its ability in organizing and providing Disaster response including distribution of relief and the post disaster development is a far dream to come true. The main problem is the lack of governance and the culture of corruption generated and patronized by those who are responsible for it nipping.

Disasters offer socio-economic, politico-cultural, and environmental development opportunities which can be extrapolated in the post disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction period. The same can also be exploited to enhance the socio-economic and physical conditions of the impacted communities in the long run. However, time factor is important but limited up to

Two years approximately for the purpose of development and public satisfaction

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Introduction

Asia is the biggest continent of the planet with four billion souls comprising 60% of the world population and covers over 29% of the planet land area. The continent is subdivided into three major chunks of Southeast Asia, Southwest Asia and Central Asia.

The region is confronted by all kinds of hazards and disaster – like as earthquakes, landslides and volcanoes, floods, cyclones, droughts, epidemics, insect infestations, hot and cold waves, and forest fires and the last but not the least the armed conflicts called terrorism..

During early 1970 to the first half decade of this century, in the region, 86% of all disaster-related deaths were caused by natural hazards, with just 14% resulting from technological disasters such as transport or industrial accidents¹. Pakistan, being a part and parcel of the area, is no exception to these hazards.

It was 8th October, 2005, 8.00A am. everybody was busy with his/her work. Students had just entered the classes after the assemblies, women were busy with cleaning and washing the dishes after serving the break- fast to the children and men had just reached to the places of their daily jobs. Suddenly, an earth quick of 7.6 magnitude hit the northern areas of Pakistan including Kashmir, and Hazara Division, causing a wide spread destruction of human lives, roads, life line institutions like schools and hospitals.

According to International and national reports more than 77,000 human lost lives mostly women and children as Children were trapped in the debris of the schools collapsed building, women trapped in the collapsed houses. The damages include 128,304 injured, and 3.5 million affected. In addition to the human toll, it destroyed over 6,298 educational institutions, 796 health units, 600,000 houses, 6,440 km of roads and 50-70% of the telecommunication, power and water and sanitation services in the earthquake affected areas.

¹ Guga-Sapir D, Hargitt, D. & Hoyois, P (2004) *Thirty Years of Natural Disaster 1974-2003: The Numbers*, CRED, 2004

Now, after eight years of the disaster, the question is whether these development opportunities have been used or lost. The aim of this paper is to assess the development works performed by the concerned authorities which were created by the disaster.

“Disaster is defined as’

“a serious disruption of the functioning of the society, causing wide spread human, material or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected people to cope using their own resources. And so disasters are classified according to the speed of onset (sudden or slow) or according to their cause (natural or manmade)².

Many experts raise their eyebrows on this definition and say that this definition only allude to physical events be it they natural phenomenon/ event or man-made or technological and their categories effects, and thus presents an incorrect and incomplete visualization³.

Development

Sustained efforts intended to improve or maintain the social or economic wellbeing of a community. Development is a “positive change which contains five key words, wellbeing, livelihood, capabilities, equity and sustainability⁴”.

Method and Material

This empirical study conducted in the 2005 earth quake hit Balakot Town of Mansehra District, Khyber Pukhtun Khwa, during 2012-13, to assess the development activities carried out in the aftermath of the earth quake. Before that day, Balakot had a traditional social organization, very slow in social change but after the earth quake, it is further slowed down. The reasons are the lack or absence of good governance and missing the appropriate time of the early two to three

² United Nations, (1992) *An Over view of Disaster Management* (2nd.ed). (New York: UNDP , Disaster management Training Programme),p.14.

³ Sunil Chauhan (Cdr), (2009) *Disaster Management: A Social Process Perspective* :Abstracts: Thematic Session : Disaster, Development And Governance) New Delhi, Indian navy),p. 33.

⁴ Chamber, R.. (1997). *Who's Reality Counts?* London: Bath Press.

years, like hitting the line when the snake is gone.

The objective of the study was to assess the post-disaster development in the area to research the hypothesis that “Disasters provide development opportunities” and to whether the post disaster era has brought any positive change in the lives of the people or not?

A total of 30 respondents purposively selected were interviewed. They included the highly educated people like school teachers, Bankers, less-educated or illiterate traditional leaders of the area or the local opinion makers. They were asked question on a semi-structured interview schedule regarding the losses they suffered, the shape of the house before earth quake, the physical infra-structure in the area before and after the incidence etc. to assess the changes happened in the aftermath of the earthquake. A semi-structured interview schedule leaves the researcher at liberty to probe beyond the prescribed questions on the schedule⁵.

Results

Table-1: Age of the respondents

Age of the respondents (Years)	20-30	31-40	41-50	51+	Total
Frequency	8 (26.7%)	17 (56.6%)	3 (10%)	2(6.7%)	30 (100%)

Source; Field data.

Those who were interviewed were of different age groups as given here, ranging from young to elders. Age is a decisive factor in making a perception about a disaster. 8/30 respondents (26.7%) were of the age group 20-30 years, 17/30 (56.6%) were in the age group of 31-40 years, 3/30 (10%) were up to 50 years and 2/30 (6.7%) were in the upper age limit of 51 +years.

⁵ Nigel Gilbert, (1993) *Researching Social Life*. London: sage Publications. Pp???

Table-II: Educational status of the respondents

Educational status	Pri m.	Mi d.	Matr ic	Inte r.	B.A/B. Sc.	M.A/M. Sc.	Illitera te	Tot al
Frequency	5	5	4	0	3	3	10	30

Source: Field data.

Table-II As for as educational status was concerned, half of the respondents were illiterate because 5/30 (16.7%) were educated up to primary level, and 10/30 (33.3%) were totally illiterate giving a % age of 49%. As primary education is of no use to the respondents as it does not qualify a person to get a govt. job, functionally, primary level education is considered as illiterate. On the other hand, the quality of education in state run school is very low, so for practical use a primary level educated person is considered as illiterate.

5/30 (16.7%) were educated up to middle levels, 4/30 (13.3 %) were literate up to matric level, a level which qualifies a person for a govt. job. 3/30 (10%) were graduates and a similar no. was educated up to post graduate level.

Table-III: Occupation of the respondents

Occupation	Govt. servants	Semi-Govt. servants	Private /self-employed	Jobless/ students	Total
Frequency	6	2	19	3	30

Source: Field data.

Table-III: Occupation of the respondents

The table shows the occupational status of the respondents. The area is poor and there are very few jobs available in lieu of any kind of industry including cottage type. Among the respondents there were 6/30 persons in government jobs like school teaching, office clerks and low grade officials. 2/30 were semi-govt. employees in the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation. Majority 19/30 was of

shopkeepers, drivers, sales men, auto-mechanics and farmers. 3/30 was students having no jobs.

Table-IV: Income of the respondents

Income (Rs)	1,000-5,000	6,000-10,000	11,000-15,000	16,000-20,000	21+	Total
Frequency	8	12	5	1	4	30

Source: Field data. Average per capita income = Rs. 9833.00

Table-IV: Income of the respondents

The table gives an idea of the income level of the respondents. We have seen in the previous table that majority were self- employed people like drivers, small shopkeepers, and low grade government servants. The income level confirms that. It is evident that 8/30 respondents had a monthly income of rupees 1000-5000, 12 had monthly income of 6,000-10,000 rupees, 5/30 had up to 15,000 rupees income. Only one person had an income of 20,000 rupees and 4/30 was earning more than 21,000 rupees. On the average each respondent earned a sum of Rs.9, 833.00.

Table-V: Housing conditions before and after earthquake

Before earthquake				After earthquake			
Nature of house	Mud house	Cement /concrete	shelter	Mud house	Cement/ concrete	Make-shift-shelter	total
Frequency	19	11	-	3	7	20	30

Source official statistics and Field data

Table-V: Housing conditions before and after earthquake

The table shows that before the event of earthquake 19/30 people had mud houses. It is worth to mention that in hilly areas like Balakot houses are built of stones and mud to erect walls and structure. The mud is normally kept between the spaces of stones which serves two

functions; first the holes are closed and no air can enter the rooms and secondly the mud holds the stones firmly and keep it in order. While 11/30 respondents reported that before the events they had houses made properly of cement and stone instead of breaks.

After the event of the earth quake in the last four years may people are still homeless and live in tent villages and other make shifts. 20/30 respondents so reported. Seven respondents reported having properly cemented houses and 3/30 had again made their mud-stone houses. This means in the housing sector no worth mentioning development had occurred.

The government intended to relocate the village/town of Balakot from the old location to to an area where there is no underground fault line but till this day there is a dispute between the land owning class and the landless people on the issue of the price of the property which the government could not resolve on the face of the billions of dollars aid from international agencies and organizations. As a result the poor people suffer. There are frequent complaints and protest about this issue in the area but to no avail.

Table-VI: Water and sanitation (WASA) and electricity

Type of infrastructure	Before earthquake		After earthquake	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Electricity	16	14	30	0
Latrine	10	20	30	0
Safe drinking water	20	10	24	6
Drainage system	8	22	16	14

Source: Official statistics and Field data.

Table-VI: Water, Sanitation (WATSAN) and Electricity

The table shows that before the disaster happened on 8th October, 2005, the area being a typical rural hilly area, lacked in terms of facilities like electricity, safe drinking water, drainage system etc. but after the earth quake, with the help of international community some improvement has been observed.

Before the event, 16/30 respondents had electricity connections in their homes while 14/ 30 did not have the facility. After the event all the respondents 30.30 reported that they have electricity facility now in their homes.

Before the event of the earthquake, 10/30 (33.3%) respondents had a latrine system in their houses while 20/30 (66.6%) had to go into the open fields/ hides etc. for defecation. After the earthquake, though people mostly live in tent villages or make shifts, all have been provided with the facility either by the donors or through own efforts. 20/30 (66.65) respondents had access to safe drinking water before the earthquake but after the incidence the change occurred and now 24/30 (80%) had access to/ provided with safe drinking water.

Before 8th October, a small portion of 8/30 (26.6%) had a rudimentary type of drainage system as the town was built on the top of a mountainous mound and water could not stay and stagnate but mostly spelled in the streets. After the incidence 16/30, almost double no. of residents reported having the drainage system as the people are now conditioned to live on the plain land meant for agriculture before the event. The overall picture is that a slight change in the physical aspects of the community has happened.

Table-VII: Impacts of disaster on Health and educational facilities

Institutions	Before disaster		After disaster	
	yes	No	Yes	No
Functional govt. health facility	24	6	24	6
Female HCP	2	28	10	20
Functional govt. school	18	12	30	0
Functional govt. school for girls	19	11	29	1

Source: Official statistic and Field data.

Table-VII: Impacts of disaster on Health and educational facilities

The table shows the overall impacts of the post-disaster efforts on the

social aspects of the area. It was found out that the health sector has been the most neglected one though billions of dollars poured in the area particularly for the purpose of education and health services in the area. Two respondents reported that they had female primary health facilities while 18/30 negated it. In the after math of the earthquake, 10 respondents reported in affirmative regarding female health facilities. 18/30 respondents reported that they had functional government school while after the event 100 % response was in affirmative. Similarly, the schools for girls were provided after the event.

The overall picture is that in seven years very little progress has been made in the social and physical aspects of the lives of the people and the government has failed to cash the disaster-development relationship.

Discussion

Disaster and Development

In the field of disaster related studies there are four paradigms/ hypotheses explaining the relationship between disaster and development. They are :-

- (1) Development can enhance vulnerability
- (2) Development can decrease vulnerability
- (3) Disasters destroys the fruits of development
- (4) Disasters can provide development opportunities.

This paradigm sees disasters as a window to socio-economic and psycho-physical development. The collapse and damage to the old, unsafe structures ultimately leads to quality reconstruction, or shifting of sites if vulnerable .The good example can be the relocation of old Balakot town, situated in the red zone or on a seismic fault line, to the new site of Bakrial. The reconstruction and rehabilitation resulted from huge disasters requires huge investment and hence which not only extensive provides job opportunities that may not be

available previously⁶.

Many disaster reduction practitioners believe that:-

“during the disaster recovery and reconstruction periods, flows of foreign currency into a disaster-affected country from aid, debt relief, insurance, private transfers and remittances can produce an apparent improvement in national balance-of-payments, and provide the financial means for enacting new development priorities Damaged buildings may highlight structural weaknesses which could be rectified, and may serve to improve building and planning regulations. Post-disaster situations create some kind of social and political atmosphere that important social, institutional and physical development programs could be initiated and implemented⁷”.

The world over, it is now realized that disasters can afford many development opportunities by creating a political and economic atmosphere conducive for positive changes more rapidly than under normal circumstances. For example, in a post-disaster situation major land reforms, housing improvement schemes, new jobs and skill creation, expansion and modernization of the economic base of the community that would not otherwise be possible. The collective will to take action is an advantage that should not be wasted⁸.

Disaster provides development opportunities in terms of introducing mitigation measures in context of reconstruction, relocation, new investment and the environment protection. The mitigation measures increase the local's capacity to cope with disasters. The State on the other hand realize the importance of standard disaster impacts studies for all development projects with increased emphasis on

⁶ S.Ali Badri, Ali Asgary, A.R Eftekhari,, and J. Levy. (2006), “Post Disaster Resettlement, Development and Change: 12 Years after Manjil Earthquake “.Cf. Ali Asgary, Ali Badri , Mojtaba Rafieian and Ali Haji nejad, Lost and Used Post-Disaster Development Opportunities in Bam earthquake and the role of stakeholders. (Canada: York University),p.3.

⁷ Albala-Bertrand, (1993), “The political economy of large natural disasters with special reference to developing countries”, Oxford: Clarendon Press.P.23.

⁸ United Nations, (1992) An Over view of Disaster Management (2nd.ed) Op.Cit. p.29.

hazard and risk mapping⁹.

The best aspect of the idea is that the Disaster and Development' realm create awareness among the masses and the governments to disaster threats and also increase flow of additional aid¹⁰.

We add to this paradigm two further hypotheses that in order to exploit the post-disaster scenario needs two major conductor in lieu of which instead of development disorganization and chaotic situation can result. The two conductors are (1) time frame and (2) good governance instead of government. The Balakot (the then NWFP, Pakistan) incidence of 2005 earthquake is a living example. The post disaster development does not take place automatically or in a vacuum but requires a time schedule of the early two years to harness the opportunities and organize the activities and financial and technical support of the 'friends'.

Good governance is important for every development particularly when the public is in hardship, which means;

*"induction of various Mechanisms, Rules, Regulations, Processes and Institutions through which people's needs and expectations are assessed and services delivered by the governments. The characteristics of Good Governance include transparency, participation, rule of law, responsiveness, efficiency & effectiveness, and accountability etc."*¹¹.

But we will add that due to bad governance and state in-sensitivity to timing frame instead of development we are losing many things including public confidence and promoting corruption. Bad governance in the shape of corruption is simply a norm in Pakistan. The foreign aid meant for the disaster victims has been syphoned into off shore personal accounts. The amount so embezzled runs in

⁹ University of Peshawar, 2007. Disaster Preparedness and Management Training Workshop 5-6 February, 2007. Workshop Proceedings.

¹⁰ Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), 2008. 17th Regional Learning Workshop on CBDRR 21 1st. July 2008- 1st. August 2008. Course Folder.

¹¹ P.K. Mohanty and M. Bhaskar Rao, (2009) "Disaster, Development and Good Governance: Institutionalization strategies and e- tools of Good Governance for Effective Management of Disasters" Andhra Pradesh: Dr. mMCR HRD Institute. Seminar Paper.

billion¹². When those at the helms of affairs or the patrons of corruption realized that now their corruption stories are gone public, they, instead of accountability of the corrupts, the ERRA, the organization responsible for development as well as this kind of corruption, is now slashed.

Corruption in Pakistan is not some thing new. Twenty years back CIA reported to the US government on the issue in Pakistan as:-

“Pakistan is at a stage in its development wherein corruption is simply the norm. Those who have any kind of influence or access to the corridors of political powers flout the laws of the land with impunity. Pakistanis are not far wrong in their belief that the country’s elite leaders, politicians, industrialists, generals, bankers, landlords with few exceptions use their positions to enrich themselves, their families, their relatives...positions throughout the public service are valued for the wealth their holders can amass: jobs in the country’s bureaucracy are literally purchased: those moving up or laterally to more lucrative positions buy it from those above. And, if the highest bidder lacks the capacity to honour his bid right away, he simply takes the money out of the salaries of those below him.... Jobs in the police from the Station House Officer (SHO or Thanidar) at the bottom of the management cadre to the provincial Inspector General of Police are now routinely sold”¹³¹⁴.

¹² The Express Tribune with the International New York Times, January 30,2013. Quoting the Accountant General of Pakistan Revenue, the news paper say that according to the draft audit report of 2011 to 2012, approximately Rs14.71 billion was shown in ERRA’s books but the reconciliation was not available on record with the Accountant General of Pakistan Revenue (AGPR) ; The Nation ,Islamabad, July 08, 2013 reported that “ [Audit unveils Rs10.88b irregularities in ERRA](#) : The Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) has detected irregularities, unauthorised and unjustified payments, unlawful investment and negligence within the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) to the tune of Rs 10,880 million during the financial year of 2011-12, The Nation learnt on Sunday. ; The dawn. Com. 16.12.2012 reported that “The Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority distributed Rs94 million among hundreds of bogus earthquake victims” ; The Nation ,Islamabad. November 10, , 2013 say that “[NAB arrests Balakot City Project contractor](#)”. As per details, the NAB KPK while taking cognisance of complaints, viz-a-viz embezzlement by officials of ERRA and PERRA in connivance with the contractor had authorised the inquiry. The total losses assessed come to Rs7.4 million.

¹³ CIA Report on Heroin In Pakistan, “ Sowing the Winds” in Friday Times (Lahore: 26 March, 1992.) p.17.

Can we call it good governance?

The second indicator in the Disaster and development paradigm is the time frame. The early two years are the most important which at least, lays the foundations of the future development and policies. The example of Bam earthquake in Iran of December 26, 2003 can be a good example in this regard which has brought tremendous positive changes to that society despite the fact that Iran is not in the good books of some super powers. What happened after eight years of the earthquake in Balakot, is reported by national and international media as;

“...Only 14 percent of development work has been done on New Balakot City Project, and even now it is estimated to take another few years to complete¹⁵”

but the ERAA is no more there now after 13 August, 2013 as it is abolished completely “.

Conclusion

The damages caused by the 8 October, 2005 earthquake include over 73,338 deaths, 128,304 injured, and 3.5 million affected. In addition to the human toll, it destroyed over 6,298 educational institutions, 796 health units, 600,000 houses, 6,440 km of roads and 50-70% of the telecommunication, power and water and sanitation services in the earthquake affected areas¹⁶. Billions of Dollars poured into Pakistan for relief and rehabilitation by the international community. The government immediately handed over the management to the Pakistan Army and an organization named ERAA (Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority) was established for the development of the area.

¹⁵ The Daily Pakistan Today Nov.13, 2013. “Earthquake victims of Balakot miserable even after 7 years”. See more at: <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2012/10/09/news/national/earthquake-victims-of-balakot-miserable-even-after-7-years/#sthash.P7oFtizA.dpuf>

¹⁶ <http://www.erra.pk/Reports/Social%20protection/ExecutiveSummaryEnglishVersion-16012009.pdf> 13.11.13

The statistical data show that very little work has been completed on the multi-billion dollars reconstruction and rehabilitation. In eight years only 14% of the total work or less than 2% work per year, and the amount spent there on do not commensurate and indicates that massive corruption and embezzlement has happened. Only minor works like drinking water supply, public toilets, provision of prefabricated houses to a few hundred people, construction of schools and health facilities etc by donor and NGOs is the total work. On macro level there seems nothing has happened except corruption. The obvious reason are the misgovernment or bad governance with no accountability of the corrupt officials and the lapse and wastage of proper time frame required for such rehabilitation works.

This hypothetico-inductive study reveals that disaster does provide development opportunities but good governance and proper timing for carrying out such development are necessary components.

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