DISASTER VS DEVELOPMENT

Disasters and development are closely linked. Disasters can both destroy development initiatives and create development opportunities. Development schemes can both increase and decrease vulnerability.

In the traditional approach to disasters, the attitude was that the disasters, especially natural ones, were an act of god and as such were beyond human control; accepting death and damage to property was part of the costs. With such an attitude, most development plans were designed without consideration for the effect disasters would have on community plans and vice versa. When a disaster did occur, the response was directed at meeting emergency needs and cleaning up.

In the current approach, it has been realized that much more can and need to be done to reduce the severity of hazards and disasters. A growing body of knowledge on the relationships between disasters and development indicates four basic themes as follows:

- Disasters set back development programming, destroying years of development initiatives.
- Rebuilding after a disaster provides significant opportunities to initiate development programmes.
- Development programmes can increase an area's susceptibility to disasters.
- Development programmes can be designed to decrease the susceptibility to disasters and their negative consequences.

Thus, the policy makers cannot ignore the relationship between the disaster and development.

Disaster affects the development& damage the economy of a countryin both destructive as well as in constructive ways.

DESTRUCTIVE IMPACT:

1. The cost of mitigating significant hazard risk can be extremely – even prohibitively – high. From preparing the land for resistant construction, to building resistant structures, using resistant materials and practices, and maintaining resilience, all come at a cost to the private and public sectors.
2. Disasters lead to damage and the destruction of significant investments in infrastructure, and require great expenditures to clean up the damage that occurs.
3. During long periods of recovery, critical social and other services are disrupted - for weeks, months, and oftentimes years or even decades.
4. Disaster destroys or stalls the lives and livelihoods of the same citizens that fuel the economy - through both their consumption of goods and the production and services their employment provides.
5. Mounting debt caused by disaster draws upon greater and greater segments of a nation's GDP to pay off both principal and interest. This funding is undoubtedly diverted from critical services, social programs, and meeting development goals.

CONSTRUCTIVE IMPACT:

1. Highlights areas of vulnerability
2. Creates a favourable political climate for social and economic changes.
3. Results in injections of capital from donors.
4. Allows destroyed problem areas to be rebuilt more safely
5. Productivity Effect:
    - Natural disasters forces ones hand to rebuild what's lost.
    - Things that require change but have not undergone change just out of disinterest now will have to undergo change.
    - Natural disasters are inevitable and when they pass people rebuild things and reinforce them to make sure mistakes that were made are not made again.
    - Disaster forces people to develop new technologies.
    - It compels people to develop various effective strategies to overcome the aftermath situation of a disaster.
6. Positive Social Effects:
    - Suffering brings people closer; this is a sad reality in this world we live in. Natural disasters bring the best out of humans such as the tendency to help and protect those around them.
7. Positive Ecological Effects:
    - Storms, hurricanes and heavy rains all transfer heat from the tropics to the poles without which there might be an imbalance in the climatic conditions.
    - The tremendous amount of rains is also beneficial to our ecology and helps farmers with their agricultural needs.
    - Hurricanes and storms also redistribute the top soil and balances it in places that lack top soil, this is also beneficial for agriculture.
    - A volcanic eruption brings up the nutrients that were trapped deep in the ground before the eruption, thereby enriching the soil.
    - Volcanoes have also known to expand small islands and overtime create more land mass. They also release useful chemicals into the atmosphere such as hydrogen and carbon di oxide which are part of the water cycle.
    - Floods bring with them nutrients that get deposited along the way in lands and water bodies helping these lands have more enriched soils and also helping the aquatic life.

Just as disasters affect development, it can be said that development affects disaster risk in the following ways.

- ✓ Efforts to build upon and improve the social and economic engines, infrastructure, and institutions within a country can either increase or decrease hazard exposure, hazard vulnerability, and risk.
- ✓ Practices that incorporate risk reduction methodologies, such as stringent building codes, resistant materials, proper land use planning, and other important mitigation

measures and practices, often reduce the likelihood of disaster events or the consequences that result when disasters do occur.

- ✓ Unwise, uncoordinated, or unsafe development can quickly and dramatically increase the disaster risk faced by the people of a country.
- ✓ Mass urbanization and coastal migration which occur with little regard to wise building practices – as is often seen in the megacities of the developing world – is a primary contributor to increased risk of development.
    - By concentrating more and more people into the small geographic areas of urban centres, hazard risk is likewise concentrated, and the pressures on structures, infrastructure, and services increase exponentially.
    - These factors coupled together equate to increased vulnerability without the proper and necessary risk-mitigation mechanisms incorporated into development planning that occurs.