

HUMANITARIAN RESILIENCE JOURNAL

RIGHTS BASED AND INCLUSIVE APPROACHES IN PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE





The flagship regional platform of Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP), was founded by six countries of Asia including Pakistan for improving the preparedness and emergency response to disasters by strengthening the capacity of local humanitarian actors. The initiative is being implemented by Asian Disaster Preparedness Center with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

In line with the regional initiative, Pakistan Resilience Partnership (PRP) was established in 2018, under the umbrella of NDMA. The objective of the PRP is to improve the interface and partnership between PRP partners namely government, local humanitarian organizations, private sector, media and academia for enhancing their capacities through partnerships, knowledge resources, training, and networking opportunities. The Pakistan Resilience Partnership is contributing towards strengthening the disaster preparedness and emergency response capacity at national and local levels in disaster-prone areas within the country. The PRP strategy aims to develop the local humanitarian networks comprising of National Governments, Local Humanitarian Organizations, Private Sector, Media and Academia, which will result in enhanced coordination and information exchange, during the period of emergencies caused due to disasters.

PREFACE

Humanitarian Resilience Journal is a biannual magazine published with the support of Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP) under the umbrella of Pakistan Resilience Partnership (PRP). This initiative has been undertaken to bring forward different perspectives on the general humanitarian landscape of Pakistan. Each issue of the journal is dedicated to a specific topic of national importance. The contributions to this magazine are purely on volunteer basis.

The tenth issue of the journal focuses on “Rights Based and Inclusive Approaches in Preparedness and Response”. It urges writers to contribute their opinions, experiences, and knowledge on this subject to enlighten and advise readers about the significance and viable methods of promoting inclusivity in humanitarian programs in light of international standards and best practices.

The views, thoughts and opinions expressed in these articles are those of the authors' and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position.

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Rights-based Humanitarianism in the Context of Inclusive Development



A rights-based and inclusive approach to humanitarian assistance is a comprehensive and empowering way to provide support to those in need. This approach is centered on the recognition and protection of the rights of individuals and communities, and is designed to ensure that all people, regardless of their identity or background, have access to the assistance they need. Here are some key elements of a rights-based and inclusive approach to humanitarian assistance:

Protection of Human Rights: The protection of human rights is at the center of a rights-based approach to humanitarian assistance. This includes the rights to life, liberty, and security of person, as well as the rights to food, water, shelter, and healthcare.

Inclusiveness: A rights-based approach to humanitarian assistance must be inclusive and consider the needs of all individuals and communities, regardless of their identity, background, or status. This includes considering the needs of marginalized groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities, and ethnic or religious minorities.

Empowerment: A rights-based approach to humanitarian assistance seeks to empower individuals and communities to exercise their rights and to make decisions that affect their lives. This can include providing information, training, and resources to enable people to take an active role in their own recovery and development.

Partnerships: A rights-based approach to humanitarian assistance must be based on partnerships with local communities, organizations, and governments. This helps to ensure that assistance is tailored to local needs and is based on local perspectives, capacities, and solutions.

Transparency and Accountability: A rights-based approach to humanitarian assistance requires transparency and accountability in the delivery of assistance. This includes clear and regular communication with beneficiaries, clear guidelines and procedures for the provision of assistance, and regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure that assistance is reaching those who need it. By taking a rights-based and inclusive approach to humanitarian assistance, organizations and governments can provide support that is empowering, effective, and respectful of the rights and dignity of those in need.

Under a rights-based humanitarianism approach, governments work alongside international organizations and local communities to create equal opportunities for all. Governments ensure fundamental human rights are respected, promote transparency in aid delivery and fight corruption in aid organizations. This approach emphasizes the importance of local solutions to global problems and encourages international organizations to partner with local initiatives to achieve these goals.

By focusing on both human rights and development, this new paradigm can greatly improve social conditions around the world.

As mentioned above, rights-based humanitarianism is an approach that emphasizes working with local communities to promote social justice. The difference between past and present humanitarian actions is evident in its focus on human rights: under right-based humanitarianism, human rights are considered above all else when addressing any humanitarian problem or crisis. This is in contrast to past approaches that focused on relieving human suffering without concern for civil or socio-economic rights. Humanitarianism often fails to address development issues since it assumes that if people are provided with food and shelter, all other problems will go away on their own. Although this may be true for some people, it is not for others; there are still sociological barriers preventing many from obtaining food or shelter despite having a roof over their head.

Accordingly, a rights-based approach differs from previous models of humanitarianism by emphasizing both development and human rights at the same time. The past models have focused on delivering food, water and shelter without regard for socio-political situations under which these needs arise. This new model is more inclusive since it focuses on both human and development rights - unlike the past models - which tended to ignore or marginalize indigenous and minority peoples' needs for self-determination, land, and culture and identity preservation.

Rights-based humanitarianism is an innovative approach that revolutionizes current methods of responding to crisis and poverty worldwide. It empowers governments, international organizations and local communities to work together to solve complex socio-economic problems through promoting human rights. Because it considers both human rights and development at once, it can be much more effective than previous models of humanitarianism.

Humanitarian assistance is an important part of responding to crises, disasters and other forms of human suffering. However, the traditional approach to providing relief aid has been criticized for being too narrowly focused on meeting immediate needs and neglecting the human rights of those affected by the crisis.

Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance

A rights-based and inclusive approach to humanitarian assistance is supported by a range of human rights laws and conventions, including:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets out the basic rights and freedoms that are entitled to all people, including the right to life, liberty, and security of person, the right to food, water, and healthcare, and the right to an adequate standard of living.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights sets out the economic, social, and cultural rights that individuals and communities are entitled

to, including the right to work, the right to an adequate standard of living, and the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the rights of children, including the right to life, the right to education, and the right to be free from discrimination.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities sets out the rights of persons with disabilities, including the right to live independently and be included in the community, the right to work, and the right to access healthcare and rehabilitation services.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination sets out the rights of individuals and communities to be free from racial discrimination, and includes provisions related to the rights to work, education, and health.

These and other human rights laws and conventions provide a framework for a rights-based and inclusive approach to humanitarian assistance, and help to ensure that all individuals and communities are treated with dignity, respect, and equality.

Human rights and humanitarian assistance are two sides of the same coin they work together to protect vulnerable populations from exploitation and suffering. Humanitarian context focuses on providing necessary aid to those suffering from violence, poverty, conflict and other disasters.

Humanitarian contexts require international cooperation, where individuals and organizations from all over the world come together to provide relief and assistance to affected communities. Human rights are at the core of the humanitarian context, providing a framework for protecting the rights of those affected by conflict or disasters. Humanitarian contexts must also account for long-term solutions that help vulnerable populations recover from conflict and disasters in a sustainable way, and promote the economic empowerment of people so that they can become self-sufficient. Humanitarian contexts ultimately seek to ensure access to resources such as food, shelter, healthcare, education and protection for vulnerable populations so as to promote their well-being and improve their quality of life.

The world's most vulnerable populations, including refugees, internally displaced persons, and disaster survivors, depend on both human rights and humanitarian assistance for protection and aid.

Inclusivity as a Core Principle of Humanitarian Aid

Inclusivity needs to be an essential principle of humanitarian aid. This means designing strategies to ensure that everyone affected by disasters, conflict and other crises is included in the assistance programs, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, race or any other factor. Humanitarian action must leave no one behind and be delivered in a manner that respects the human rights and dignity of all individuals.

This includes providing access to services such as healthcare, education, and clean water, which are essential for people to have a higher quality of life regardless of their gender, ethnicity, race or other factors. Humanitarian aid must also consider the needs of individuals with disabilities and those who are most vulnerable such as children, the elderly, and pregnant women. To ensure inclusivity within the humanitarian context, it is important to listen to communities affected by crisis and put into place safety-nets that meet their needs.

This is especially important for marginalized communities that are disproportionately affected by disasters and humanitarian crises, but are often overlooked in relief efforts; for instance, refugees, women and children with disabilities. When such communities are supported with specialized services and assistance tailored to meet their needs, it can help them recover from crises more quickly and efficiently also, it is essential to adopt a rights-based approach to relief efforts that emphasizes the needs of marginalized communities. This means providing context-specific services and assistance that is tailored to their unique needs and capacities. Properly investing in such communities not only creates a more equitable society but also helps them recover from crises faster.

To conclude, Humanitarian context is the overarching framework for protecting and aiding the world's most vulnerable populations, such as refugees, internally displaced persons, and disaster survivors. Human rights are essential for these populations to have a chance of surviving and engaging in meaningful activities in their lives. Humanitarian aid is necessary to ensure that these populations have access to essential services and basic needs. Humanitarian context provides a lens to understand the global responsibility of states and other entities in supporting these vulnerable populations. Humanitarian aid should not be seen as an opportunity to exploit vulnerable populations, but should instead be used to empower them to realize their human rights.

A rights-based and inclusive approach to providing humanitarian assistance is necessary for adequately responding to crises, disasters, and other forms of human suffering. This approach must prioritize the human rights of all individuals affected, while also considering their long-term needs. Such an approach should emphasize respect for the dignity, autonomy, and self-determination of those affected by the crisis. By placing these principles at the heart of humanitarian assistance, we can ensure that relief aid is being provided in a manner that respects the rights of all people.

Rights Based and Inclusive Approaches in Preparedness & Response



Syed Javid Gillani

In current scenario when climate shift pushing humanity towards miserable future, the need of time is innovation, creativity, grassroots engagement and locally applicable solutions. Inherent behavior of human race is strongly connected with social networks, communications and participation. Applicable to any scenario, the philosophies of inclusiveness and equal participation holds key positions in humanitarian development narratives and forms the base for communities' access to basic human and citizen's rights. Inclusiveness is equally subject to localized approaches and with the absence of localization from humanitarian development planning, whole agenda became multifaceted and peculiar. Resilience building through communities' preparedness must be prioritized through multi-stakeholders' engagement including right-holders, duty-bearers, service providers and other complimenting actors/sectors at large. Policy push is required for localization and to create resilient communities within limited resources

Specifically in Pakistan's context, there are visible differences in years' long development and humanitarian operations and indeed they brought significant improvements in Preparedness and Response capacities of communities, service providers and duty bearers. However at both ends, desired pro-activeness is still limited and missing an holistic approach.

This issue majorly stems from exclusive and conventional programs' designed in isolation without observing the need of stakeholders' engagement. No doubt, there are success cases however these learnings needs to be replicated with customization. Localization has been instrumental in bringing diverse local opinions for preparedness and response operations. Yet, the nation's vulnerability to climate change resulting in recurrent disasters, the poverty trap leading to survival priorities of all sectors/actors, diversion of humanitarian and development aid from country and lastly but not least, lack in replication of past learnings has adversely effected sustainability and advancement.



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While speaking about efforts towards right based and inclusive approaches for preparedness and response in Pakistan, optimism has prevailed owing to the combined accomplishments by humanitarian and development alliances and forums including Government's disaster management agencies etc. More specifically UN agencies, I/NGOs and other donors through years long emphasize on localization agenda, they have visibly improved transition of civil society through self-improved donor supported organizational strengthening, rooting into the local communities and maximum utilization for development of local capacities. This transformation of civil society in Pakistan has positively affected overall humanitarian and development apparatus. We can say it is equally important to highlight the impediments faced during the course of this journey including struggle for organizational survival led to rat racing towards funds grabbing while leaving behind the right based and inclusive programming through visionary alliances and consortiums development. Likewise, to a good extent, right based programmes are either misrepresented to the Government regulators or misinterpreted within the communities at large e.g. self-accountability and transparency assurance.

Finally I would say localization has brought multiple positive outcomes within the sector however resource distribution among national and international humanitarian organizations is perceived negatively and against the rights of local civil society.



Emergency management cycle starts from preparedness and concludes at response and recovery phase. To ensure the whole cycle smoothly it is highly recommended that civil societies in Pakistan (I/NGOs) commits to have long term relationship and connections with communities and government at local level to create ownership and long term impacts.



The organizations who are working at grass root levels such as Muslim Hands and many other national and international and utilizing their continued presence rather than occasional glimpses in emergencies, they need to be at forefront in creating and preserving community capacities to deal with multi disasters in future. Transition plans from relief to early recovery and beyond ought to be part and parcel of disaster management at organizational, humanitarian forums and Government levels. Alongside, effective and meaningful discussions between the civil society and Government agencies on right based approach,

its purpose, modalities and importance is highly required. Knowledge and experience sharing on participatory and inclusive programming should be encouraged by civil society forums including NHN, PHF, START Network, UN agencies and Government departments with action planning and follow-ups. More important academia must be engaged in order to ensure the representation of all segments to incorporate comprehensive approaches for disaster management within humanitarian and development framework.



Financial Inclusion in Disaster Preparedness and Response

Bridging the Gap for Marginalized Communities in Pakistan



Fareed Ullah

Pakistan has been facing various disasters for many years, ranging from natural disasters like floods and earthquakes to heatwaves, and more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. These disasters have a devastating impact on the country, causing widespread damage and loss of life. However, it's the marginalized communities that are the hardest hit, including women, people with disabilities, and low-income groups. These communities are already facing many challenges and barriers, and disasters only amplify their difficulties. One major issue that marginalized communities in Pakistan face during disasters is the lack of access to basic financial services. This lack of access makes it nearly impossible for these communities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Without access to financial services, they are unable to access resources to support their livelihoods, leaving them vulnerable and unable to rebuild their lives.

Financial inclusion refers to the provision of access to financial services, such as savings, credit, insurance, and other essential financial services, to those who are excluded from the formal financial sector. In Pakistan, many marginalized communities are excluded from mainstream financial services and are forced to rely on informal financial services, which can be expensive, risky, and can increase their vulnerability in the event of a disaster.

Financial inclusion can address this challenge by increasing access to formal financial services through digital solutions such as mobile banking, microfinance, and other digital financial services.

The use of technology and innovative solutions, such as mobile pay, has revolutionized the way financial services are delivered, making them more accessible and affordable for marginalized communities. Mobile pay and other digital financial services can provide access to credit, savings, insurance, and other essential financial services even in the aftermath of a disaster, when traditional banking services may not be available.

Financial inclusion can also play a key role in disaster preparedness, by empowering marginalized communities to build resilience and reduce their vulnerability to future disasters. This can be achieved through financial literacy and education programs, which can provide communities with the skills and knowledge to prepare for and respond to disasters. Financial inclusion can also support the development of innovative disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) interventions, such as microinsurance and other financial products that can help people manage the impacts of disasters.

Several organizations in Pakistan are working towards financial inclusion and disaster preparedness, including members of the National Humanitarian Network (NHN). For example, some NHN members in Pakistan are providing financial literacy and education programs to marginalized communities, offering access to microfinance and other digital financial services, and implementing innovative DRR and CCA interventions. These efforts are helping to bridge the gap for marginalized communities in disaster preparedness and response efforts.

In summary, financial inclusion is critical in disaster preparedness and response efforts in Pakistan. By empowering marginalized communities to access essential financial services, disaster response efforts can be more effective and efficient, while also supporting the development of a more resilient and prepared society. Governments, NGOs, and the private sector must prioritize financial inclusion in their disaster response efforts to ensure that the most vulnerable communities are not left behind.

Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR)



During a natural disaster, humanitarian conflict and emergency situations, the most vulnerable people are persons with disabilities among other vulnerable groups. Due to lack of information about emergency planning and mal-adaptation to evacuation mapping, when the calamity strikes, these people are left behind, and are unable to access shelter or receive appropriate support or relief for their suffering and loss. Exclusion of disability representative organizations from development planning, policy making, and their lack of participation in risk reduction and management programs, prior to a disaster and conflict due to barriers caused by inaccessible physical environment tends to exacerbate their survival.

Many awareness programs conducted internationally have managed to broadcast and acknowledge the risks faced by persons with disabilities, despite these efforts their inclusion in disaster risk reduction and management is not adequately addressed. Moreover, the consequences of a disaster and humanitarian crises adds up to the number of impairments in disability pool. All these factors reiterate that disability must be considered with equal importance in risk reduction preparedness and responses.



Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) in Pakistan

Geographical location of Pakistan puts it globally under 3 major fault lines out of 7. Furthermore, due to its land characteristics and inadequate land planning, exploitation and unsafe use of its natural resources increases the countries' vulnerability to natural disasters. After the earth quake in 2005, Pakistan has faced major casualties and increase in the number of people with physical impairment in the country.

Due to ineffective inclusion system, lack of resilience and a weak concept of Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR), vulnerable population of the community is at the higher risk of being affected by disasters that might strike again. STEP implemented a project on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in disaster risk reduction in collaboration with Malteser International with the support of BMZ. The objective of this project was contribution to the increased inclusion and participation of Persons with Disabilities in the planning and implementation of DRR measures on local level as well as to advocate for disability inclusive DRR in national and regional DRR policies and in the next framework of Action (HFA2).

International Commitments in DiDRR

Sendai Framework for Action 2015 -2030

Disability Inclusion is considered a guiding principle for DRR by the international community. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-30) reflects this guiding principle by acknowledging that all-of-society engagement is a requisite of DRR management. It promotes an inclusive participation of all people who are at the risk of experiencing a loss to the disaster. Therefore, an effective, empowering risk reduction strategy involves a non-discriminatory gender, age and disability in policy making, preparedness and response.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol was embraced on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and was opened for signature on 30 March 2007. There were 82 signatories to the convention, 44 signatories to the optional protocol, and 1 endorsement of the convention. This is the most noteworthy number of signatories in history to any UN convention on its first day of the session. It is the principal exhaustive common liberties arrangement of the 21st century and is the primary basic freedom show to be open for signature by territorial reconciliation associations. The Convention went into power on 3 May 2008.

Paris Agreement of United Nations Framework Convention (2015)

The Paris Agreement (2015) of the United Nations Framework Convention emphasized on inclusion of persons with disabilities and ensured that their right of voice for taking actions against climate change disasters must be exercised to provide them with a better chance of combating climate change. A similar climate change preparedness, response and emergency evacuation program has been mainstreamed in SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. It emphasizes on the importance of strengthening contingency planning and engaging person with disabilities and their representative organization in climate change risk reduction initiatives.

World Humanitarian Summit (2016)

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called for the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, which took place in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23-24 May 2016. The Summit was a critical moment to set a new vision on how to meet the needs of the millions of people affected by conflicts and disasters. The commitments made for the most vulnerable people including people with disabilities, will also have a critical role in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Ensuring Inclusion and Rights Based Approach is Crucial in Ensuring a Resilient Pakistan



Pakistan is a country that is no stranger to natural disasters and emergencies, ranging from earthquakes to floods to terrorist attacks. As such, preparedness and response efforts are crucial for mitigating the impact of these crises and protecting the lives and livelihoods of the country's citizens. However, these efforts must be undertaken using a rights-based and inclusive approach to ensure that everyone is accounted for and no one is left behind.

A rights-based approach to preparedness and response means that the human rights of all individuals are at the forefront of decision-making processes. This approach requires a focus on the most vulnerable populations, including those who are marginalized, disadvantaged, or have limited access to resources or services. It also means that there is a commitment to upholding the principles of non-discrimination, participation, and accountability.

An inclusive approach, on the other hand, means that all individuals and groups are actively involved in decision-making and planning processes. This approach acknowledges the diversity of the population and recognizes that different groups may have unique needs and experiences. Inclusion requires the participation of all members of society, regardless of age, gender, religion, ethnicity, or ability, in planning, implementation, and evaluation of preparedness and response efforts.

In Pakistan, the adoption of a rights-based and inclusive approach has become increasingly important as the country faces a range of challenges, including natural disasters, political instability, and social inequalities. However, there are several key areas where this approach can be particularly impactful.

Firstly, in the context of natural disasters such as earthquakes or floods, it is important to consider the needs of marginalized communities who are often disproportionately affected by these crises. This includes providing access to safe shelter, clean water, and medical care. Additionally, it is essential to ensure that emergency relief efforts are non-discriminatory and that aid is distributed equitably to those in need.

Secondly, in situations of conflict or terrorism, it is crucial to ensure that human rights are protected and that the response is non-discriminatory. This means that all individuals affected by the crisis, including refugees, internally displaced persons, and other vulnerable populations, should have access to safe and secure living conditions, healthcare, education, and other basic services.

Finally, in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a rights-based and inclusive approach is essential to ensure that vulnerable populations are not left behind in the response effort. This includes ensuring access to vaccines, testing, and treatment, as well as

providing support for those who have lost their livelihoods due to the pandemic.

In order to implement a rights-based and inclusive approach in preparedness and response efforts in Pakistan, there are several key strategies that can be employed. These include:

- **Engaging with local communities:** This involves building partnerships and collaborating with local community members to identify their needs and priorities and to develop tailored responses that meet their specific needs.
- **Promoting participation:** This involves involving all members of society, particularly those who are marginalized, in decision-making processes related to preparedness and response efforts.
- **Strengthening accountability:** This involves ensuring that those responsible for preparedness and response efforts are held accountable for their actions and that there are systems in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of these efforts.
- **Advocating for human rights:** This involves advocating for the protection and promotion of human rights at all levels of society, including in policy and decision-making processes.

In conclusion, a rights-based and inclusive approach is essential to ensure that preparedness and response efforts in Pakistan are effective and equitable. By prioritizing the needs of marginalized communities and ensuring the participation of all members of society, these efforts can help to build resilience, protect human rights, and promote a more just and inclusive society.

Responding with Care



Waqas Qureshi

Pakistan is currently experiencing one of its worst floods ever. A third of the country is under water. It is estimated that 33 million Pakistanis have been affected by the floods, and more than 1,100 people have died. According to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), at least 72 of the 160 districts in the country are disaster-hit. In addition to other infrastructure, 287,000 homes have been completely destroyed and 662,000 have been partially damaged. More than 735,000 livestock and 2 million acres of crops have been destroyed. It is significant to note that this year's June to August rainfall across the country was almost 200 percent more than the average for the previous 30 years. Pakistan is one of the ten countries most affected by climate change. The government of Pakistan and the United Nations have launched an appeal to support the flood-affected people. An appeal for \$160 million was made.

Since the calamity first emerged, rescue and relief operations have begun; in the days to come, recovery will take place. Many national and international organisations are developing emergency response plans that will soon be put into action. Now is the moment to take into account that emergency response plans must be inclusive and address the needs and concerns of all vulnerable groups, including older people and persons with disabilities. It has been noted in the past that while providing aid to those affected by a disaster, the limited mobility of older

persons and those with a disability are often ignored. Services, including health, food, nutrition, water supply and sanitation, are hardly developed, keeping in view the needs of older people and persons with disabilities. It is important to collect data on older people and persons with disabilities as well. Collecting age and disability-specific data will help in the development of inclusive programmes and policies.

In times of crisis and calamity, older people are more vulnerable. Their life is often at risk, as they need specific health care measures. In older persons, heart disease, diabetes and hypertension are common. According to the International Diabetes Foundation (IDF), 26.7 percent of all adults in Pakistan are living with diabetes. This is the highest national prevalence in the world. Diabetes patients must take their prescribed medications on time, such as insulin. A failure to do so could put elderly people's lives in danger.

It has been noted in the past that while providing aid to those affected by a disaster, the limited mobility of older persons and those with a disability are often ignored. Services, including health, food, nutrition, water supply and sanitation, are hardly developed, keeping in view the needs of older people and persons with disabilities.

The nutritional needs of older persons must also be considered because of the various illnesses and ailments that limit their food choices. For instance, those

diabetes cannot consume foods containing sugar, while individuals with hypertension must limit their salt intake. Unfortunately, these factors are not taken into consideration in the design of the food baskets. It is essential for emergency responders to design the food basket in a way that is inclusive for all. When designing food programmes, elderly people's nutritional needs must be taken into consideration. Additionally, older people's medications must be available in the medical camps set up in disaster areas, and the staff there must be aware of their needs.

Disasters always have a psychological impact, which is particularly severe for the elderly. To consider older people's mental health, measures for psychosocial counselling and assistance should be developed.

Older people frequently miss out on services because they are unable to walk far or stand in a long queue due to a variety of health issues and disabilities. It can be highly difficult and challenging for older people and persons with disabilities to access the central distribution points; it is crucial that they are supported to make the services accessible. The same holds for water and sanitation services, as older people regularly require these services.

However, when distances are long, older people and persons with disabilities find it extremely challenging to access washrooms.

When constructing new shelters or repairing damaged shelters in camp settings, it is crucial to take into account the need to construct latrines close to places where elderly people are living. In camps, make sure older people are placed in areas with access to restrooms and water sources. It is crucial that the road leading to the restrooms be levelled and made accessible for wheelchair users and those with mobility challenges.

Pakistan is one of those 15 countries in the world where the number of people of age 60 and above is more than 10 million. The number of older people in the country is estimated to be 16 million. According to international surveys and the World Health Organisation (WHO), 15 percent of a country's population has a disability. Since Pakistan's population is roughly 220 million, 15 percent equals 33 million people.

The number of persons with disabilities is rising, as it is directly proportionate to the number of people who are getting older. According to estimates, globally, 46 percent of older persons have a disability, which indicates that about every other older person has a disability.



Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) with support from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) is implementing the program 'Increased Locally Led Actions to Prepare for, Respond to and Recover from Disasters in selected high risk Countries of Asia' in 6 South and South-East Asian countries namely- Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Philippines and Myanmar.

The program utilizes a unique network approach by creating the Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP) - a multi-stakeholder regional partnership through the program. APP strives to improve inter-organizational coordination and dialogue between Governments, Local Humanitarian Organization networks and Private Sector networks for enhancing capacities through partnerships, knowledge resources, training and networking opportunities. The program's goal is to strengthen the emergency response capacities in these countries to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.



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