GROUP 23

PROBLEM STATEMENT
- Inadequate lobbying in creating awareness on disaster preparedness & management
- Confusion of the public regarding NADMA's roles leading to controversies
- Present SFDRR is not adapted to pandemic situation
- Lack of integration and manpower

POLICY RECOMMENDATION
- Recruit NGOs & NGIs as part of disaster management team
- Introduction of Disaster Management Module
- Formation of ERTs in every organization
- Digital Mobile App on Disaster Alert

NADMA
(National Disaster Management Agency)

POLICY OPPURTUNITIES
- Open revenues to have partnership with various ministries and organizational bodies
- International collaboration with other advanced countries (eg Japan)
- Improve technologies on digital platforms, big data collection & validation to reach Global Marketing

Managing through Emergencies and Catastrophes with NADMA

GROUP 23

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Abstract

In response to the need for reform, the National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) was founded as a disaster management institution. During last year's severe flooding in Selangor, NADMA was severely condemned in newspapers and on social media. The unfavourable criticisms got so viral that they caused political chaos inside the agency's structure. While NSC Directive No. 20 is a clear and complete strategy, government agencies require an appropriate framework consisting of regulations, legislation, and specific directions. NADMA has the ability to enhance management and the state's catastrophe preparedness. In addition, coordination entails the incorporation of technologies and modules from all relevant parties, including police, fire departments, civil defence, welfare, and public health. This study begins by identifying concerns connected to disaster management support and then thoroughly evaluates the coordinating policy of disaster management in MALAYSIA. For disaster management-related policy, existing material has been analysed using a content analysis methodology policy tailored to Malaysia.

PART 1: POLICY GAP

1.1 Introduction

When National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) was founded, it was intended to practice an entire community strategy, and to hold disaster management simulations encompassing response teams from various agencies, state governments, regional office, and non-governmental organizations. NADMA is an agency which was established as a disaster management organization in response to the need for reforms following the December 2014 floods in Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, and Johor, which claimed 25 lives and forced 541,896 people to flee their homes, resulting in estimated losses of RM2.9 billion (Shafiai, 2016).

On July 29, 2015, the Cabinet decided to move the National Security Council's (NSC) crisis and disaster management function to the Prime Minister's Department, and on August 26, 2015, the Cabinet agreed to form NADMA to take over the responsibilities previously held by the NSC's disaster management division. On October 1, 2015, NADMA, which is also part of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), was formally established. The establishment of NADMA as a focal point agency for DRM in 2015 demonstrated that the government recognized the need for an appropriate disaster management agency. The most essential factor NADMA can focus on is mitigating the effects of climate change and closing the gap between climate change adaptation and improvement programs. A suitable strategy adaptive structure to climate change, and also connectivity among policymakers in NADMA, is critical (Yoo, 2017).

1.2 Key issues

As this flow of system/ framework is not well understood by the public, there is rise vast confusions and post-disaster critics. This unclear pathway of management also leads to persistent damage (in terms of houses, vehicles, belongings, and even lives) due to the disaster which could have been prevented with better damage control system. The National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy (NADMA), has the potential to improve management and increase the state's readiness for disasters. The policy can also, increase funding in disaster risk reduction projects in regarding human resource potential, organizational emancipation, prevention measure advancement, and technological applications (Koh Poh Lee, Abu Bakar, Aziz, and Taha, 2022).

During the heavy floods that hit Selangor last year, NADMA was badly criticized in dailies as well as the social media. The negative critics went very viral that there was political havoc in the hierarchy of the agency. Since NADMA is under the PMO, existing political officers were also condemned by the public. NADMA was highlighted that it failed to manage disasters and should be restructured accordingly. NADMA could focus more on the exercise of lessening disaster risks via systematic efforts to examine and handle disaster causal mechanisms, such as lower exposure to hazards, resilience of persons or property, viable land and environmental management, and enhanced disaster resilience of individuals, communities, and agencies. By so doing it can oversee the impacts of climate changes and put strategies to improve the situation and prevent negative consequences in future.

In reality, during such disasters, NADMA, which is situated in the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya, does not have any state or district officers and has no plans to hire any because it would be redundant and expensive. These matters can be resolved at the state and district level itself under the existing system. NADMA only had limited personnel at the federal level and can only help as a secretariat as it had no staff at the state and district levels. Such disasters, if unmanaged, may lead to various environmental impacts that subsequently lead to negative health impacts. Hence, a proper understanding of an efficient disaster management is essential, both to the governance system as well as to the public.

Although disaster management is the responsibility of every individual of the nation, there has been no holistic study on exploring the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) that identifies the local needs, strengths, challenges and opportunities. Hence, this policy brief highlights that the DRRM capacities must include a comprehensive module that covers the following aspects:

a.   Mitigation and prevention

b.   Preparedness

c.   Response

d.   Recovery

This can be explained using the **SWOT Analysis**, as shown below:

A.   <u>Strengths</u>

i.   Strong political background and support system

ii.   Large network system with international, national and local bodies

iii.   Availability of existing framework such as Global Target-E, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

B.   <u>Weaknesses</u>

i.   Inadequacy of lobbying about basic awareness on disaster response and management at   community level

ii.   Inadequacy in understanding local demands and needs in times of emergency

iii.   Lack of direction in managing post disaster effect during the Covid-19 pandemic

iv.   Inefficiency in stakeholders analytical and functional roles (tasks, mapping and relationships)

C.   <u>Opportunities</u>

i.   Wide press and media coverage readily available for professional lobbying and marketing

ii.   Collaboration of advanced countries like Japan to implement strong action plans, interventions

   and frameworks on DRRM.

iii.   Enhanced networking and use of technologies which also automatically updates current demographic background and socio-economic status of the community

iv.   Prospects to obtain validated data from various verified sources

D.   Threats

i.   Unpredictable climatic changes and environmental conditions

ii.   Social media platforms which are easily accessible for public critics

iii.   Shortage of resources (in term of funding, manpower, volunteers and others)

iv.   Changing demands of stakeholder markets

PART 2: POLICY SOLUTION

NADMA can start by raising awareness and knowledge of disaster risks in Malaysia through the media outlet of the National Risk Register (NRR) document. It could also use social media platforms to reach a significant number of people in Malaysia. People can learn the risks of deforestation, releasing harmful emissions to the environment and also how to improve the environment to reduce the impacts of climatic change (Archibald, and Butt, 2018).

Such a system of disaster management is predominantly shared between the federal, state and local governments that should be well-organized. NADMA is supposed to act as an advisory secretariat to this system. The achievement and efficiency of disaster management efforts are dependent on all agencies and departments cooperating, comprehension, and carrying out their duties as described in National Directives. NADMA should therefore seek to partner with other bodies to be effective in responding t climate change as it is a major concern in this century.

There is lack of community awareness and knowledge in disaster risk management. Moreover, there is significant lack of awareness of the role of the community as initial responder during a disaster before response agencies arrive. Correspondence, education, and public awareness are the cornerstones to fostering a culture of mutual accountability, such as in disaster mitigation. This included experiential learning initiatives and encouraging young people's participation in public awareness, which in turn drives behaviour change toward disaster-resilient societies (Rega, 2022).

Presently, national disaster management practices information collection in a traditional approach that is not in line with the most recent technological innovation. Efforts to strengthen disaster management approaches, as well as delivering timely and accurate information to emergency organizations and climate change victims, ought to continue.

Increased cooperation between NADMA, multiple stakeholders, such as state governments and municipal governments, is critical to ensuring that climate disaster management is as successful as possible (Mohamed Shaluf, and Ahamadun, 2018).

PART 3: POLICY CRITERIA

Policy criteria are the objective's measurable dimensions. Criteria are used to measure how close different proposed policy approaches are in accomplishing the problem's goals. Criteria establish the ground rules for examining and comparing various suggested policy alternatives (solutions). Certain criteria are important in order to recommend a new policy. First and foremost, managing volunteers and training officers is the key concept to good policy criteria (Wies, 1996). A volunteer management system is required to be successfully constructed in order to avoid a scenario that can divert responders from doing their jobs and cause problems such as lack of security safety, and health issues in the disaster region. Furthermore, this policy will be based on existing issues in managing the large number of agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and non-governmental individuals (NGIs) in disaster management. As a result, the goal of this module is to gather and identify all NGOs. NGIs and agencies are systematically grouped under one entity. With an appointed government agency, such as NADMA, as the organizational head, management of the organization during disasters will be more efficient. As a result, it conforms with Malaysia National Security Council (MNSC) 20 on the directive of identification and participation of multi-agency in Disaster Management.(Che Hamid et al., 2019) This is to ensure security and to avoid any unwanted incidents during disaster management. Aside that, registered volunteer can attend any training provided by government or appointed agency for skills enhancement, expedient to government mandate. This will indirectly smoothen the disaster relief process.

Furthermore, managing asset is a crucial aspect in policy criteria during disaster. According to MNSC, the ability to request assistance and necessary equipment from any agency or group is critical during Disaster Management. As a result, having a system of asset and logistics management will make any Disaster Management process more convenient. This is related to the system's goal of providing an integrated database for every asset and logistics available in Malaysia. (Davoli, 2018)This will give a request and demand flow, locating and recommending the nearest asset and logistics accessible for improved access. For example, if a tragedy occurs, needed assets and logistics are only a request away.

In addition, another important aspect of policy criteria is communication. Communication is at the heart of the entire disaster management process since it connects all respectable, accountable agencies to take necessary action. Scholars have pioneered different techniques to catastrophe information transmission, including a website and mobile application with several functionalities included, as well as the use of social media(Planning for Disaster Risk Reduction within the Framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2018). Advances in information and communications technology allow deployments to contain information that may be used by organizations such as government bodies, rescue teams, disaster management teams, military, volunteers, citizens, and the media. Integrating current advanced network technology with multi-domain such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), information should be delivered more systematically and effectively to its intended audience.

PART 4: POLICY RECOMMENDATION & POTENTIAL IMPACT

There are several strategies that can be used including the **NADMA Volunteer Empowerment** Program. It is an agency established by the government in managing emergencies, NADMA is also a coordinator to government agencies that are directly involved with disaster enforcement and it is placed under the Prime Minister's Department of Malaysia. NADMA has the authority to coordinate emergency management work carried out by coordinating work on other agencies such as the Malaysian Armed Forces, Royal Malaysian Police, Malaysian Civil Defense Force, Fire, RELA and the Social Welfare Department. Through this NADMA program, disaster victims get help in a quick situation and are rescued at an immediate rate.

The second is the "**One Home One Disaster Reliever**" Program. This program can be carried out to victims of flood disasters or fire victims caused by short circuits. There are also flood victims who lost their homes due to very heavy water currents and caused the victims to suffer losses of thousands of ringgit. Even victims need a long time to re -accumulate assets and find shelter. So, through this program, it can indirectly alleviate the burden of victims who have suffered losses due to the loss of shelter.

In addition to that, another measure is to introduce the **Disaster Management Module**. This module can be done in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education. This module can be incorporated into learning in tertiary education centres. This is because it can be used as a guide in the event of a disaster so that assistance is present at the scene of the disaster. Furthermore, in the event of a disaster, intellectuals are individuals who are willing to take risks and help the victims. Therefore, all knowledge and guidance must be taught during learning so that it can be used when times of anxiety occur. Usually, only risk management lessons are given attention and no more natural causes subjects.

Furthermore, **Disaster Alert Application** on smartphones can also be developed. Now the country is heading towards industry 4.0. Through the development of this application, it can indirectly provide alerts to users at a fast rate. Even users can save themselves and important belongings including documents and so on. It can also minimize the risk of property damage and loss that will be suffered by the victim. Typically, the use of smartphones is now a necessity and no longer a want.

Besides, the government should also expand the functions of the **ERT team**. The members of the Emergency Response Team (ERT) in Malaysia are no longer ignorant and less attention is paid to the functions of the establishment of this team. So, the government should ensure that the team is able to plan and implement related activities and training, help mobilize the organization in the event of a disaster. Typically, only superiors and individuals who have earned confidence are appointed to an organization's ERT team. Nonetheless, individuals in each company should be exposed to the team's functions and activities in order to assist if the individual is one of the victims.

Although a strategic policy has been developed but all parties must play a role in order to attain the effectiveness of the policy that should be carried out effectively. Not only government bodies but there are many bodies that can provide cooperation in ensuring that policies can be carried out efficiently. One such effort is whereby the Ministry of Education of Malaysia can promote the Disaster Alert App for use during emergencies at primary school levels. The Ministry of Defense Malaysia can also come down to help victims of natural disasters and work with the Ministry of Health Malaysia to assist in channeling medical teams

in each center - centers for victims of natural disasters. Other examples of departments that can help are the Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Communications and Multimedia, Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Malaysian Meteorological Department, Statutory Bodies, NGOs, Associations and organizations and many more.

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