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STRENGTHENING CAPACITY BUILDING FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN TARABA STATE: A PANACEA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Disaster occurs almost every day and managing these disasters when they occur has been very challenging. Africa is one of the regions most affected by man-made and natural disasters and with the least capacity to cope with disaster management. This paper examines the challenges of disaster management and how to strengthen capacity building of stakeholders particularly the local communities to be better prepared for disasters when they occur. Literature review and documentary survey of relevant literature with focus on capacity building in disaster management in Taraba State was adopted in this study. The paper observed that although Taraba State had experienced various degrees of disasters over the years, Flooding, road accidents and fire outbreaks are the most common disaster incidents in the area. The paper also revealed that the State has weak capacity to respond adequately to disaster incidence. Some of the challenges of disaster management in the state include; lack of skilled personnel in the various aspects of disaster management, inadequate coordination among the various stakeholders, poor funding, lack of vehicles and ambulances to facilitate the movement of disaster management personnel, inadequate dissemination and sharing of information among stakeholders, non existence of disaster management structure at the local level and politicization of the disaster management system in the State. The paper recommends the development of effective disaster management and rescue infrastructure, synergize and networking between NEMA/SEMA and relevant stakeholders, enhance public enlightenment, advocacy and sensitization of communities on emergency preparedness and response at the grassroot and change in our personal and institutional attitudes and behaviours towards disaster preparedness, response and mitigation.

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INTRODUCTION

Africa is one of the region's most affected by man-made and natural disasters and with the least capacity to cope with disaster management. Disasters affect most critical resources and services, including communications, transportation infrastructures, water and electricity supply, housing, health-related services, the supply and/or availability of food and educational facilities. Depending on the severity, disasters can impact the economic development of nations and affect people's lives in the communities. Nigeria and Taraba state can be said to be very fortunate for not experiencing major disasters with devastating socio-economic consequences as witnessed in other parts of the world such as the Nepal's earthquake. However, in Nigeria and Taraba state, disasters occur almost every day and managing these disasters when they occur has been very challenging.

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Disaster is a major threat to socio-economic development, poverty reduction initiatives and millennium development goals (MDGs) in the Taraba state and the country as a whole. It has been observed that disasters often times result from unsustainable human activities and development practices, such as encroachment into high-risk areas as a result of urbanization, construction of unsafe shelters, pollution, reckless driving, electric power surge, loss of biodiversity and land degradation among others. It is also recognized that disasters could be natural, such as floods, droughts, hurricane, and earthquake. Man-made disasters include road accident, fire outbreak and conflict. The impact of disaster are most felt by the poor in the society because they are the most likely to lose their lives and livelihoods in event of disaster. In this respect disaster management practices can help the poor become more disaster-resilient and food-secure. This makes it imperative to link disaster management with poverty alleviation programmes. Effective disaster management can be achieved by promoting sustainable development practices.

This paper examines the challenges of disaster management and how to strengthen capacity building of stakeholders particularly the local communities to be better prepared for disasters when they occur.

Taraba State in Perspective

Taraba State was created out of the now-defunct Gongola State by the Federal Military Government led by General Ibrahim Babangida, on the 27th August 1991 along with eight other states. The State derives its name from the River Taraba, which is one of the main tributaries of River Benue. Historically, Taraba State comprises of the pre-1976 divisions of Muri, Mambilla and Wukari. The State is the second largest state in terms of landmass in Nigeria. It is located in the southern part of north-eastern Nigeria along the eastern borderland between Nigeria and Cameroon. The State lies roughly between latitude 6°25'N and 9°30'N and between longitudes 9°30'E and 11°45'E. It is bordered on the west by Nassarawa and Plateau States, to the north by Bauchi and Gombe States, by Adamawa State to the northeast, and by Benue State to the south-west. Taraba State is bounded on the south and south east by the Republic of Cameroon (an international boundary) that runs for a distance of 437 km (Oruonye and Abbas, 2011). The porous nature of Nigeria's international frontiers allows for the unregulated movement of people, goods, as well as arms and ammunition across the borders. This constitutes serious threat to the security of lives and properties in the State.

Taraba state has abundant natural resources as aptly captured by the sobriquet "Nature's gift to the Nation". It is well endowed with climate and vegetation types that range from a humid climate and forest vegetation in the south, to a seasonal wet and dry climate and savannah vegetation in the north. The state covers a land area of about 60,291km² with a population of 2,300,736 people according to the 2006 census. About 80 per cent of Taraba State's working population are directly engaged in agriculture, while 20 per cent are engaged in other economic activities, including white collar jobs (TSEEDS, 2004). The State's agricultural sector is dominated by small scale rural farmers.

The state has over 52 discovered solid mineral resources, with the highest hydroelectricity power potential in the country. It is also a tourist haven with the largest National Park in West Africa (Gashaka - Gumti National Park). Fishing is an important economic activity in the State, with an average annual production of 1,987 metric tonnes (TSEED, 2004). The daily fish catch in some LGAs such as Ibi, Lau and Donga, is about 3,000 kg. Over 30,000 families are fully engaged in fishing (TSEED, 2004). The State has one of Nigeria's highest concentrations of livestock, with over 10 million heads of cattle, most of them on the Mambilla Plateau. About 30 per cent of the State's population are engaged in pastoralism (TSEED, 2004). Lumbering is also carried out in some parts of the State such as Sardauna, Gashaka, Kurmi and Ussa LGAs. Despite these resources, the people suffer from poverty. Bashir (1993 and 2000) described the State as the neglected and grossly underdeveloped part of the former Gongola state. Because of its rugged topography, lack of access roads from other parts of the country, and the neglect it

suffered from past administrations, the State remains largely peripheral to the nation's economic and political life (Bashir 1993 and 2000).

About 70 per cent of the population lives in rural areas. In a study on the structure of rurality in Nigeria by Madu (2008), Taraba State ranks seventh in the country, after Gombe, Kogi, Plateau, Bauchi, Kwara and Kebbi States, with a rurality index of 4.973. Poverty is especially severe in the rural areas where social services and infrastructure are limited or non-existent. The majority of those who live in rural areas are poor, and depend on agriculture for food and income. Taraba state has only three Microfinance Banks out of the 866 in the country (Tobi and Akani, 2014). The Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS) 2010 poverty profile report shows that only 31.1 per cent of the people in Taraba State fall within the non-poor category, while 68.9 per cent are core poor. The State ranks low in all major development and household indicators. The National Demographic and Household Survey (NDHS) 2014 report shows that 95.6 per cent of women in the State do not own a house and 93.5 per cent do not own any land. 43 per cent of men in the state do not own a house and 53.1 per cent do not own any land. The NDHS 2014 report shows that 70 per cent of people in the state experience difficulty in accessing health care facilities and 35.6 per cent of school age children are out of school.

Educationally, the State is very backward. Although the number of schools and of pupils and students has increased since the 1999 transition to civil rule, the quality of teaching in the schools leaves much to be desired. This is reflected in the fact that Taraba State has not recorded more than 16 per cent pass in secondary school terminal examinations such as the West African Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and National Examination Council (NECO) in the last decade (Oruonye, 2014). According to the National Population Commission, the distribution of population age six and above in Taraba State by literacy status stood at 856,756 (499,141 male and 357,615 female) which is 64.4 per cent of children within the schooling age group. A National Literacy Survey (2010) conducted by the NBS estimated adult literacy rates in Taraba State at 23.3 per cent and illiteracy rates at 76.7 per cent. Apart from the obvious benefits of being able to read and write, literacy also enables citizens to participate effectively in the governance of their community, but this opportunity is denied the large youthful population of the state who lack qualitative education, vocational training or requisite skills. With the high poverty rate of 68.9 per cent and an unemployment rate of 26.8 per cent, these excluded youths can become easy tools for conflict, crime and violence—portending a serious security threat to the State.

Taraba State is one of the most ethnically diverse state in the Federation, with over 80 different ethnic groups, including Mumuye, Ichen, Wurkun, Mambilla, Kuteb, Chamba, Jukun, Tiv, Yandang, Fulani, Jenjo, Kunini, Ndoro, Kambu, Kaka, Bandawa, Munga, Zo and Banbuka. Other ethnicities such as Igbo and Yoruba are also found in the state. Hausa is a commonly spoken language in the state irrespective of ethnicity. The state is also religiously diverse with large populations of Christians and Muslims. Although this ethnic diversity could have been a source of strength, it has been a

source of conflict that has stalled development in most parts of the State. Most of such ethnic conflicts are rooted in historical animosity, mutual suspicion and distrust among the different ethnic groups, but these divisions have been exploited by politicians for electoral advantage, thereby deepening differences among the people.

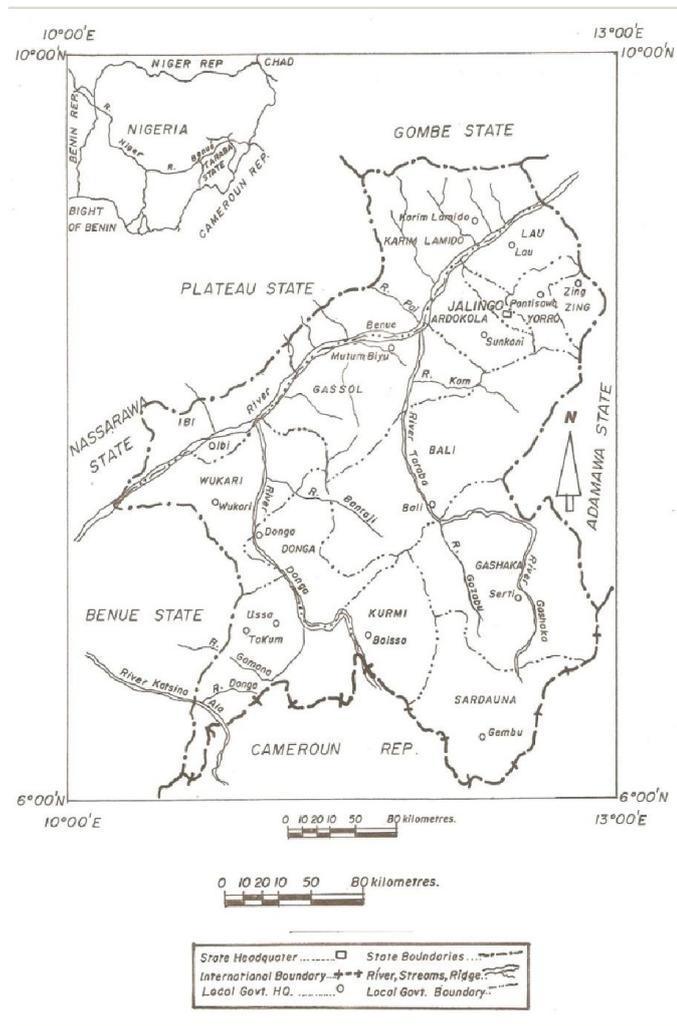


Fig. 1. Map of Taraba State

Conceptual Framework

Meaning of Disaster and Disaster management

There is no universally accepted definition of concept of disaster. The definition of disaster depends on the context in which the term is used (Shaluf et al, 2003). However, in general term, typical meaning or effects of disasters tend to be loss of life, loss of livelihood, loss of national economy, injury, destruction of property, disruption of lifestyle, disruption to essential services, damage to national infrastructure and disruption to government systems, sociological and psychological after effects (Carter, 1991). The definition also varies according to countries as a result of policy, law, organization and activity in disaster management of these countries (Booreang, 2015). A disaster is “a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or

environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources” (UNISDR, 2005). Worldwide trends indicate that both natural and human induced disasters are increasing in frequency, intensity and complexity (Ref. Required). According to Waeckerle, (1991), disasters are tragedies that overwhelm our communities, destroy our property and harm our population.

Disaster management is the process of addressing an event that has the potential to seriously disrupt the social fabric of the community. Booreang (2015) defined disaster management “as an applied science which seeks, by its systematic observation and analysis of disasters, to improve measures relating to prevention, mitigation, preparedness, emergency response, and recovery”. Disaster management is similar to disaster mitigation; however it implies a whole of government approach to using community resources to fight the effects of an event and assumes the community will be self-sufficient for periods of time until the situation can be stabilized. According to the United Nations Development Programme, Disaster management is the body of policy, administrative decisions and operational activities required to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and repair the effects of natural or man-made disasters. Disaster Management has to do with a full range of activities that are done in security and natural hazard events. The role of any disaster management authority all over the world is to regulate, coordinate, develop systems and train technical manpower for disaster management. It is as a result of this that the federal government of Nigeria established National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to respond to emergency cases in terms of response, relief and mitigation to victims of disaster such as, fire, flooding, storm, accident, among others.

Coppola (2007) outlined the following steps to disaster management process;

1. Mitigation concerned with decreasing or eliminating the possibility or the effect of a hazard.
2. Preparedness concerned with providing people who are at risk to a disaster with the tools and knowledge to enhance their opportunity of survival and to reduce their life and property losses.
3. Response concerned with action to reduce or eliminate the effect of disaster that currently occurring and order to prevent further both life and property damage.

Disaster management is not only the management process during the disaster, but it is the management which place emphasis on before, during, and after disaster incident.

Capacity Building

The definition of capacity building as a means to promoting sustainable development is broad and can encompass a multitude of activities. In its publication “Capacity Building for Sustainable Development” UNEP described capacity building as building abilities, relationships and values that will enable organizations, groups and individuals to improve their performance and achieve their development objectives. The definition of capacity building is broad. It is a holistic enterprise, encompassing a multitude of activities. It means building abilities, relationships and values that will enable

organizations, groups and individuals to improve their performance and achieve their development objectives (UNEP, 2002). It includes strengthening the processes, systems and rules that influence collective and individual behavior and performance in all development endeavors. And it means enhancing people's technical ability and willingness to play new developmental roles and adapt to new demands and situations (UNEP, 2002).

Capacity building can also be described as initiating and sustaining a process of individual and organizational change that can equally refer to change within a state, civil society or the private sector, as well as a change in processes that enhance cooperation between different groups of society. This means building on existing resilience, which essentially makes an emphasis on enhancing capacity of affected communities to recover with little or no assistance following a disaster (UNISDR, 2005).

UNESCO (2014) defined capacity as the competency of individuals, organizations or systems to function effectively, efficiently, and sustainably. Thus, capacity may consist of physical, institutional, social or economic means as well as skilled personal or collective characteristics such as leadership and management (Booreang, 2015). Capacity can also be regarded as the ability of individuals and social groups, to cope with, recover from or adapt to, external pressure laid on their livelihoods (McEntire, 2012). Therefore, capacity building is the process which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, and societies increase their competencies to;

1. Perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives, and
2. Understand and cope with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner (UNESCO, 2014).

Capacity building in the broad sense is concerned with;

1. Human resource development which relate to the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively,
2. Organizational development which relate to the elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures, not only within organizations but also the management of relationships between the different organizations and sectors (public, private and community), and
3. Institutional and legal framework development which relate to making legal and regulatory changes to enable organizations, institutions and agencies at all level, and in all sectors, to enhance their capacities (UNESCO, 2014). Moreover, capacity building means that on-going evidence-driven process to improve the ability of an individual, team, organization, network, sector or community to create measurable and sustainable results (USAID, 2011).

Incidence of Disaster in Taraba State

Taraba State which is the study area and focus of this study had experienced various degrees of disasters over the years

some of which are natural such as flooding while others are man-made such as road mishap, fire outbreak, and communal conflicts which are avoidable. The most common disaster incidents in the State include;

- i. Flooding which could be as a result of the problem of climate change.
- ii. Fire outbreak, most often resulting from power surge and human negligence.
- iii. Road accidents which often results from non-compliance with road traffic regulation and over speeding on highways.
- iv. Ethno-religious conflict resulting from longstanding mutual suspicion and distrust.

Table 1. Impact of 2005 Flood disaster on human lives and properties in Jalingo LGA

| S/No | Flood Impact | No. of people affected |
|------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Loss of Human lives | Over 200 |
| 2 | Houses completely swept off | 80 |
| 3 | Houses extensively destroyed | 410 |
| 4 | Houses/Families displaced | 2,661 |

Source: SEMA Jalingo

Table 2. Distribution of Internally Displaced Persons in 2005 Flood disaster in Jalingo LGA

| S/No | Internally Displaced Persons Camps | Number of Families Accommodated |
|------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Mafindi Primary School | 1,100 |
| 2 | Lamurde Primary School | 880 |
| 3 | Nukkai Primary School | 621 |
| 4 | Total | 2,601 |

Source: SEMA Jalingo

Sadly enough, whether natural or artificial, Nigeria and the State in particular has always been complacent on issues of disaster management and as such have often been caught unaware by disaster incidents because there had not been any efficient disaster management system in place. Each time disaster struck, it usually resulted in significant human and economic losses to the State. Flooding is the most recurring disaster in Taraba State and is usually caused by either climatic or non-climatic factors resulting to river floods, flash floods, urban floods among others. In the history of flooding, the State has experienced 4 major flood disasters which led to lose of lives and displacement of people and communities Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Stakeholders in Disaster Management

The legal instrument establishing the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was fashioned after the United State National Emergency Management Agency (USNEMA). This enabling legislation contains concepts like co-ordinate, liaise, monitor and collect, which presupposes that NEMA is a coordinating agency (Olurunfemi and. Adebimpe, ND). This is one area where stakeholders have not been able to understand clearly. Just like it is been said that security is everybody's business, disaster also is every ones business because when it occurs, affects everyone and every aspects of the community. But In Nigeria, even when there are several Federal and State run disaster relief and management agencies, only the NEMA

seems to be working thereby endangering the precious lives of our people who may be far away from the city centers where the activities of this Federal Agency (NEMA) are felt. Nigeria is bereft of effective national disaster response plan. National disaster preparedness, mitigation and response cannot be ascribed to a single Agency or level of government. National preparedness to disaster must include individual preparedness, family preparedness, and community preparedness and resilience. For National disaster preparedness to be meaningful, States and Local Governments, and all stakeholders among the three tiers of government, NGOs and the private sector must be actively involved. The stakeholders in disaster management in Nigeria include the following:

1. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was established through Decree 12 of 1999. By this decree, the Federal Government vested the authority for managing disasters in Nigeria in NEMA (Adeoye *et al.*, 2009). According to the provisions of this law, the Agency shall;
 - i. Formulate policy on all activities relating to disaster management in Nigeria and coordinate the plans and programmes for efficient and effective response to disasters at national level.
 - ii. Monitor the state of preparedness of all organizations or agencies which may contribute to disaster management in Nigeria.

Table 3. Impact of 2011 Flood on Human Lives and Properties in Taraba North

| S/No. | Flood Impact | No. of People Affected |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Jalingo LGA | | |
| 1. | Houses completely destroyed | 307 |
| 2. | Houses partially affected | 455 |
| 3. | Houses/Families Displaced | 4,409 |
| 4. | Farmlands completely washed away | 198 |
| Lau LGA | | |
| 1. | Houses completely destroyed | 500 |
| 2. | Houses partially destroyed | 1,097 |
| 3. | Families affected | 945 |
| 4. | Farm lands destroyed | 2,021 |
| Yorro LGA | | |
| 1. | Houses completely destroyed | 50 |
| 2. | Fishing ponds affected | 610 |
| 3. | Families displaced | 2,175 |
| 4. | Farm lands destroyed | 149 |

Sources: Taraba SEMA 2012

Table 4. Social Infrastructures affected in 6 LGAs in the 2012 floods

| S/No | Social Infrastructures | Ardo Kola | Gassol | Lau | Karim Lamido | Ibi | Wukari | Total |
|------|------------------------|---------------|--------|-----|--------------|-----|--------|---------------|
| 1 | Market | | | | 3 | | 2 | 5 |
| 2 | Culverts | 4 | 12 | 30 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 50 |
| 3 | Livestock | 1,201 | - | 280 | 570 | - | - | 3,051 |
| 4 | Bridges | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| 5 | Schools | 3 | 7 | 13 | 26 | - | - | 49 |
| 6 | Churches | - | 7 | - | 27 | - | 3 | 37 |
| 7 | Mosques | - | 7 | - | 16 | - | 2 | 27 |
| 8 | Clinic/ Dispensary | 4 | 3 | 1 | 5 | - | 1 | 14 |
| 9 | Fishing nets | 8,827 bundles | - | - | 562 | - | - | 9,389 bundles |
| 10 | Roads | 1 | - | 12 | - | - | - | 13 |
| 11 | Fish Ponds | 43 | 7 | - | - | - | - | 50 |
| 12 | Fishing hooks | 320 | - | - | - | - | - | 320 |
| 13 | Abattoir | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |

Taraba SEMA 2012

Table 5. The 2012 Flood Disaster Damages in Taraba State

| S/No | LGA | No. of Victims | No. of Camps | No. of IDPs | Farmlands affected (HA) | Types of Crops Destroyed | No. of Houses Destroyed | No. of Death | No. of People Missing | Types of Livestock destroyed | No. Villages affected settlement |
|------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Ardo Kola | 14,385 | 4 | 3,762 | 2,632 | Rice, Maize, Sugar cane, millet, guinea corn etc | 834 | - | - | Cattle, sheep, goat, etc | 12 |
| 2 | Gassol | 16,693 | 3 | 1,342 | 35,664 | “ | 2,326 | 2 | - | “ | 79 |
| 3 | Ibi | 17,265 | 4 | 1,188 | 10,000 | “ | 459 | - | - | “ | 25 |
| 4 | Karim Lamido | 36,778 | 8 | 16,582 | 14,500 | “ | 3,750 | 18 | 4 | “ | 60 |
| 5 | Lau | 13,313 | 4 | 2,332 | 10,600 | “ | 3,185 | 7 | - | “ | 26 |
| 6 | Wukari | 11,854 | 5 | 2,933 | 10,000 | “ | 325 | - | - | “ | 16 |
| 7 | Kurmi | 247 | 1 | - | 266 | Cocoa, maize, oil palm, groundnut, coffee etc | 250 | - | - | Sheep, goat, cattle, 2,500 | 12 |
| 8 | Sardauna | 720 | 1 | 372 | 60 | “ | 299 | - | - | Sheep, goat, cattle, 1,020 | 3 |
| 9 | Total | 111,255 | 29 | 28,511 | 83,722 | | 11,178 | 27 | 4 | 3,520 | 233 |

Source: Taraba SEMA 2012

Table 6. The 2012 Flood extent in Taraba State

| S/N | LGAs | Total Landmass | Submerged area (Km ²) | Submerged area (%) |
|-----|--------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Karim Lamido | 6,825 | 1,357 | 20 |
| 2 | Lau | 1,797 | 3 | 0.2 |
| 3 | Gassol | 5,901 | 1,005 | 17 |
| 4 | Ibi | 2,810 | 1,089 | 39 |
| 5 | Wukari | 3,747 | 256 | 7 |
| 6 | Ardo Kola | 2,388 | 120 | 5 |
| | Total | 23,468 | 3,830 | 16.32 |

Source: Nkeki et al (2012)

- iii. Collate data from relevant agencies so as to enhance forecasting, planning and field operations of disaster management.
 - iv. Educate and inform the public on disaster prevention and control measures.
 - v. Coordinate and facilitate the provision of necessary resources for Search and Rescue and other types of disaster curtailment activities in response to distress calls.
 - vi. Coordinate the activities of all voluntary organizations engaged in emergency relief operations in any part of the Federation.
 - vii. Receive financial and technical aid from international organizations and nongovernmental agencies for the purpose of disaster management in the country.
 - viii. Collect emergency relief supply from local and foreign sources and from international and nongovernmental agencies.
2. **Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC)** established in 1988, as the lead agency in Nigeria on road safety administration and management. FRSC tasks include: Making the highways safe for motorists and other road users; recommending works and devices designed to eliminate or minimise accidents on the highways and advising the Federal and State governments. It was to handle these challenges and put the nation on the path of safety and development, that the Federal Road Safety Corps was established in 1988. Basically, the Corps is charged with responsibility of ensuring safe roads through enforcement and public enlightenment strategies, while ensuring effective rescue activities in case of emergencies. To ensure command and control, FRSC has eight departments, 12 zonal commands, 37 sector commands including FCT and 170 unit commands spread across some Local Government Areas and black spots nationwide.
 3. **Nigerian Fire Service (NFS)** is 110 years old, having commenced operations in 1906 under the Lagos Police Fire Department. Unfortunately, of all the disaster management agencies, it is the least equipped and staffed to play its vital role (Jide, 2011).
 4. **Red Cross Society** –
 5. **Mass Media** – Importance of engaging the media cannot be underestimated: the media are key players in delivering messages.
 6. **Military/Police** –
- Challenges to Disaster Management**
- Taraba State SEMA, is a new agency that is still battling with a number of problems in an effort to establish itself properly. Some of these challenges include;
- i. Lack of skilled personnel in the various aspects of disaster management especially in project management and first aids services among others. Most staffs of SEMA were pooled staff from other Ministries and parastatals. There is thus a wide gap in terms of capacity building. This is further exacerbated by the lack of opportunity for training and re-training. This made it difficult for most staff of the agency to adapt to code of conduct of humanitarian organizations in emergency disaster response.
 - ii. Inadequate coordination among the various stakeholders, leading to disagreement on major issues and the taking of decisions that will impact positively on the affected persons. Lack of coordination among different level organizations, including government agencies, NGOs (local and International) and donors appeared to be a common issue. Despite local contribution in emergency incidence, external interventions have played significant role in recovery process. The unavailability of guideline for international donors' (INGOs) often affects funding of local NGOs and CBOs.
 - iii. Poor funding of the agency by the government is a major constraint to disaster management in the State. The budgetary allocation to the agency often ends up as paper work (Oruonye, 2012).
 - iv. Lack of vehicles and ambulances to facilitate the movement of disaster management personnel and volunteers greatly hampered coordination of efforts among various stakeholders. This led to delay in the distribution of relief materials to the affected persons in various locations and IDPs camps and quick response to emergency situations (Oruonye, 2012).
 - v. Inadequate equipment for critical stakeholders for effective preparedness and response. Many LGAs are without Fire Service Stations and where they exist, are not equipped.
 - vi. Inadequate dissemination and sharing of information among stakeholders and donor agencies immediately and after a needs assessment or emergency response. For example, the report on the 2005 flood disaster in the study area indicates that the affected persons were allocated land to relocate and assisted with some building materials and token amount of money. Records of these were never published, neither will it ever be disclosed because government officials sees it as classified information. This also includes delay in sending in update reports from the field and donations received from various donor agencies (Oruonye, 2012).
 - vii. One of the greatest challenges of disaster management in the study area is the politicization of the disaster management system. Most of the staff and members of the State Emergency Management and Relief Committees

engage in discriminatory distribution of relief materials instead of dealing directly with the Red Cross Society or groups that have the data on all IDPs. Several times, they collected names of beneficiaries from political office holders (Relief Web report, 2005). They starved donated relief items remained in government stores instead of distributing them immediately alongside with other relief items. Government officials also gave more to affected people outside the camps than those within the camps (ReliefWeb report, 2005).

- viii. Inadequate education and awareness at the community level is a major challenge to disaster management in the State and country at large.
- ix. Poor early warning system that will ensure accurate and timely emergency response.
- x. Low institutional capability in data generation, risk analysis and early warning services in disaster management in the State and country.
- xi. There is low level of disaster risk participation at the local government areas and communities where only 53 out of the 774 local government areas in Nigeria had some semblance of emergency management institution in their locality.

Conclusion

This study has examine the challenges of disaster management and how to strengthen capacity building of stakeholders particularly the local communities to be better prepared for disasters when they occur. The study reveals that the State has weak capacity to respond adequately to disaster incidence. Thus, we cannot decide how many storms will strike, or how fiercely the winds will blow, or the waters that will rage. But we can decide, and we must decide together, the impact they will have on our lives and on the natural ecosystem. This requires a collective approach by all stakeholders. Based on the challenges identified and discussed, the following recommendations are presented;

- i. The State and country must go back to the drawing board, design and implement effective disaster management agenda and ensure that at every level from the local council to the Federal level, institutional structures and frameworks are put in place.
- ii. Development of effective disaster management and rescue infrastructure (Onwubiko, 2012).
- iii. NEMA and SEMA need to network and synergize with relevant stakeholders for effective coordination of their activities.
- iv. There is need to enhance public enlightenment, advocacy and sensitization of communities on emergency preparedness and response at the grassroot. In this regard, SEMA and NEMA need to partner with the National Orientation Agency (NOA) for effective information dissemination.
- v. There is need for change in our personal and institutional attitudes and behaviours towards disaster preparedness, response and mitigation. In the past more emphasis was placed on humanitarian response and relief activities, with little attention to disaster reduction strategies that have the potential to save thousands of lives through simple and affordable measures.

- vi. While we cannot do away with natural hazards, we can eliminate those we cause, minimize those we exacerbate, and reduce our vulnerability to most. Early warning systems and forecasting have a very important role to play in the reduction of the impacts of disasters and the emerging hazards associated to climate change phenomena. If the incidence of disasters can be predicted, it may be possible to adopt preventive and adaptive strategies.

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