

# Disaster Management and National Security in Nigeria: The Nexus and the Disconnect

Okoli, Al Chukwuma

Department of Political Science, Federal University Lafia

PMB 146, Lafia, Nasarawa State, Nigeria

+234(0)8037849366; [okochu007@yahoo.com](mailto:okochu007@yahoo.com)

## Abstract

*This paper explores the nexus between disaster management and national security in Nigeria with the aim of ascertaining if there is any strategic linkage between the two and proffering policy recommendations. This was necessitated by the concern to highlight the significance of management as a pivotal aspect of Nigeria's national security concern. The paper is exploratory and descriptive analytical in approach. Predicated on systematic exegesis of secondary sources, the paper assumes that emergency management is integral and indispensable to Nigeria's national security. This assumption is in line with the prevailing global standpoint that disaster management is a crucial development issue that holds strategic implications for national security of states. In view of the rising incidence, prevalence, diversity, and impact of disaster in contemporary Nigeria, as well as the country's appreciable vulnerability thereto, the paper posits that disaster occurrences constitute a veritable threat to Nigeria's national sustainability. This implies that success or failure of disaster management in Nigeria holds corresponding implications for the sustenance of her national security. The paper further observes that despite the criticality of disaster incidents and their dire outcomes in Nigeria, the issue of disaster management is yet to be properly situated and prioritized in her national security praxis. Hence, the prevailing policy and scholarly thinking in the country have largely failed to clearly underscore the indispensability and strategic importance of disaster management to national security. The paper contends that this scenario adumbrates the misery of national security conception and administration in Nigeria. It is, therefore, recommended that emergency management concerns be mainstreamed into the national security agenda in order to save the country from the jeopardy of disaster impacts, as well as guarantee sustainability of national security.*

**Keywords:** Disaster/emergency; disaster/emergency management; national security; contingency theory.

## **1. Introduction**

Disasters are veritable societal existential mishaps. Often referred to as emergencies, they have always seemed bound to occur, as a matter of eventuality. As Ndace (2008, p.17) rightly points out, “as long as man lives there will surely be one form of disaster or the other”.

Over the years, the world has experienced different forms and dimensions of disaster, ranging from natural to man-made incidents. In effect, there have been cases of tsunami of varying magnitudes, hurricanes, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, fire explosions, nuclear accidents, and the like. These occurrences have been associated with dire humanitarian consequences (Noji, 1997; Niekerk, 2005; Okoli, 2011).

The global incidence of disaster has appeared to be on a steady rise. Available records indicate that within the period of 1990-2000, the world lost US\$235 billion and 425,000 lives to disasters (CRED, 2002 in Niekerk 2005, p.1). Again, between 1994 and 2003 the world witnessed a total of 3,561 major disasters, ranging from ecological and industrial cataclysms to health epidemics (Ndace 2008, p.17). The regional breakdown of this figure suggests that Asia recorded the highest incidence of 1,309 events (36.75%), followed by Africa with 814 (22.9%) and America with 637 (17.9%) events (Ndace 2008, p.17).

In 2004, the report of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies revealed that sundry major disasters affected 146 million people world-wide with 250,000 deaths; while in 2005, more than 360 disasters were reported worldwide with around 92,000 people killed and 160 million affected. In this regard, India has the highest casualties on the country-specific data, followed by China and then United States of America (USA) (Ndace, 2008, p.17). Altogether, disasters affected 211million people per year in the past decade of 20000s (Munich Re, 2003 in Niekerk 2005, p.1).

More recent indicators pertaining to global disaster trends show that disasters are on the rise. For instance, year 2011 has been regarded as the worst hit in terms of disaster occurrence in recent years (Ferris, Petz, and Stark, 2013). This year recorded a total disaster loss of 366 million US Dollars (SGPP 2011, p.31). Again, between 2000 and 2012, it was estimated that 1.7 million people died in disasters and trillion US Dollars

damage was sustained (UNISDR 2013, p.6). The United Nations' *World's Risk Index* (2012, para1) concisely captures the contemporary global disaster trend thus:

The balance sheet for the ten years from 2002 to 2011 is alarming: 4,130 disasters, over one million dead and economic losses of at least 1.195 trillion US dollars.

The prevalence and impact of disaster among the less developed countries have been rather devastating owing to the 'inter-mix' of political, ecological, socio-cultural and socio-economic factors. As a Document of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) observes:

Among the most adversely impacted are the developing and least developed countries in Africa, because of heavy concentrations of population and economic activities invulnerable ones with high percentage of poor people, because of inadequate policies and mechanisms for whole-cycle disaster management, and because of climate change and rapid technological penetration of life systems... and so on (UNEP 2003, p.1).

Nigeria may not be rightly described as an archetype of disaster-prone country; yet it has had its own share of large-scale emergencies. In this regard, Adebimpe (2011, p.97), observes that "Nigeria is a disaster-prone country", by and large. In effect, Nigeria has experienced several incidents of disaster with far-reaching consequences on society in recent years. According to the Nigerian Red Cross Society, 280,000 Nigerians were affected by various disasters in 2001; also more than 183,000 people were displaced, about 3,683 injured and 1,099 died as a result of emergency incidents in 2003 (Ndace 2008, p.17).

A logical implication of the foregoing is that disasters constitute a veritable threat to Nigeria's national security. This recommends disaster management as an integral and indispensable component of her national security agenda. In effect, successive national governments of Nigeria have ostensibly accorded the issue of disaster management appreciable policy priority. This is evident in the creation of institutional mechanisms dedicated to managing national emergencies/disasters, paramount among which is the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). However, the efforts of the various Nigerian governments in respect of disaster management have been characteristically inefficient owing to the fact that such endeavours have not been organically blended into

the national development cum security strategy. This paper is therefore prompted by the need to interrogate this pertinent lapse in emergency policy in Nigeria with a view to making viable policy recommendations.

## **2. Aim, Basic Assumption, Rationale, Methodology and Structure of the Paper**

This paper seeks to explore the nexus between disaster management and national security in Nigeria with a view to ascertaining if there is any strategic linkage between the two as well as making policy recommendations. The paper rests on the assumption that the emergency management is integral and indispensable to national security. This is in the light of the prevailing global standpoint that sees disaster management as a crucial development question, which bears significantly on the national security of states (UNISDR, 2012; 2013). In essence, the paper has been necessitated by the concern to underscore the criticality and indispensability of disaster management to national security in contemporary Nigeria, which has been characterized by appreciable disaster incidence and prevalence. Incidentally, available information point to the fact that this area of study has scarcely received scholarly attention. In effect, apart from a few existing discursive works on the subject of disaster management (Olorumfemi and Adebimfe, 2008; Onuoha, 2009), no systematic study has been done to situate the linkage between disaster management and national sustainability. The need to address this apparent gap in literature also justifies this paper.

The method of the paper is exploratory and descriptive analytical in nature. Relying on systematic exegeses of secondary data (drawn principally from library materials and policy documents), the paper applies itself to discursive and deductive reasoning, whereby salient issues are schematically considered under selected themes and sub-themes. This methodological approach typifies qualitative mode of inquiry of which the study that underlies the paper typically exemplifies.

The paper is structured into eight (8) scope themes in addition to the introduction and the foregoing, viz: theoretical framework, conceptual issues, prevailing perspectives on global disaster management, historical and contextual background to disaster management in Nigeria, prevalence of disaster in Nigeria, the impact of disaster on

national security of Nigeria, relationship between disaster management and national security in Nigeria, and conclusion and recommendations.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

The rising incidence of emergencies in the contemporary world has necessitated the need for theory, concepts and proven practices of disaster management (Pine, <http://www.risk.isu.edu>). In respect of theory, disaster management as a field has benefited significantly from the contributions of management theory. According to Pine:

Although some might view that we do not manage disasters (emergencies), there is an overlap between the contribution of management theory and emergency management. Management theory stresses the need for effective planning to ensure that organizational goals are obtained. Emergency and crisis management emphasize that effective emergency response and recovering is based on good planning. Building sustainable organizations and communities is a common goal of both management and emergency management (<http://www.risk.isu.edu>, para 4).

In effect, some of the major management concepts such as the managerial role, strategic planning, systems and situational analysis have become critical to the understanding and practice of disaster management. For the purpose of this paper, *contingency theory* is adopted as the theoretical framework. The need for a theoretical framework in this endeavour is informed by the fact that it would provide the much needed analytical anchorage for the discourse. It would also leverage analytical systematization in such a manner that enhances patterned explication of the subject matter.

**3.1 Understanding Contingency Theory:** Contingency theory of management is an attempt to come up with a pragmatic paradigm for strategic management. This theoretical tradition has been influenced by the works of scholars such as Galbraith (1973) and Scott (1981). According to Okenwa and Ugbo (2003, p.36):

This school of thought states that the application of management principles and practices should be contingent upon the existing circumstance and that functional, behavioural, qualitative and systems tools of management should be applied situationally.

The implication of the above citation is that the manager should be able to know the way the sub-systems of specific organizations are uniquely interrelated within a given environment, and how best to deal creatively with a particular problem. Contingency theory recognized the fact that a unique organizational system is the product of the dynamic and often complex interaction of the subsystems and their organic environment. The theory therefore posits that what constitutes effective management varies with the specificities and peculiarities of the organization's total environment, as well as the make-up of the organizational sub-systems (Okenwa and Ugbo, 2003). Contingency theory is premised on a number of assumptions namely:

- (i) there is no one best way to manage or organize;
- (ii) any way to organizing is not equally effective;
- (iii) the best way to organize/manage depends on the nature of the environment to which the organization must relate (Galbraith, 1973; Scott, 1981, in Okenwa and Ugbo 2003, p.37).

Fundamentally, contingency theory disputed the conservative thinking to the effect that a single form of organization or management is best in all circumstances. Contrarily, it holds that the most appropriate form of management is the one that is best suited to the kinds of action which the organization undertakes. Contingency theory emphasizes that organizational decisions depend or are contingent upon environmental conditions. Therefore the performance of each managerial role is tied to an analysis of the total situation at play within the organizational context. This recommends a highly situational and adaptive pattern of management, organizational leadership and strategy (Fieldler, 1967).

Contingency theory as an approach to management and organizational leadership grew out of the *Gamezic tradition* of management scholarship which gained popularity during the 1960s and 1970s (*Encyclopedia Britannica* in Okoli, 2012). The theory developed in dialectical relations to the mechanistic system of management, paramount among which is the bureaucratic theory. Burns and Stalker (1961) argue that a mechanistic system of management characterized by specialization of functions, precise role definitions, hierarchical structure, centralization of authority, etc, is more effective in environments (operational/organizational contexts) that are stable while an organic

system is more effective in unstable and crisis-prone environment (Inegbenebor 2005, p.29).

Contingency theory typifies the pragmatic system of management by virtue of its philosophical orientation. In this respect, Inegbenebor (2005, p.29) succinctly asserts:

This is a management system in which tasks are less structured and more flexible, and individuals are better able to exercise discretion in utilizing their knowledge, skills and experience.

In sum, contingency theory suggests that management principles and practices are dependent on situational appropriateness. Hence different situations are unique and require a managerial response that is based on specific considerations and variables. Therefore, for management and emergency management alike, the successful application of any theory or concept is greatly influenced by the situation (Pine, <http://www.risk.isu.edu>, para1). Therefore, emergency managers must build an organizational culture and structure that improvise and acknowledges that each disaster is unique. Consequently, a more dynamic organizational structure could be designed based on the nature and character of the problems (disaster situations) and who needs to be involved and the actions taken (Kreps, 1991).

Contingency theory agrees with the modern thinking in disaster management. It makes a radical departure from the traditional approach, which has been criticized as limited in analytical utility. According to Luthans:

The traditional approaches to (disaster) management were not necessarily wrong, but today they are no longer adequate. The needed breakthrough for the management theory and practice can be found in a contingency approach (Luthans 1976, p.28; in Pine, <http://www.risk.isu.edu>, para 1).

**3.2 Application and Critique of Contingency Theory:** Applied to the purpose of the present discourse, contingency theory presupposes that effective disaster management requires a highly adaptive and situationally amenable approach, predicated on contingency strategies. This is in view of the fact that every emergency situation constitutes an eventuality that requires a great deal of pro-activeness, pragmatism and operational circumspection in handling.

In sum, contingency theory suggests that the suitability of any disaster management principles and/or strategies is dependent on situational dialectics, dynamics and exigencies. Hence, different disaster situations would necessitate varying managerial responses, based on situation-specific considerations and appropriateness. Thus, for disaster managers and cognate stakeholders, successful application of any operational principle or concept should be determined by the nature of the disaster situation. Therefore, emergency managers must endeavour to build an organizational structure and culture that improvise, acknowledging the fact that each disaster situation is unique in its respect.

The implication of the foregoing is that emergency management in Nigeria must transit from the tradition of ‘reactive relief’ approach to a dynamic order that is amenable to contingency thinking and technique. In other words, we must depart from that tradition that awaits disaster to occur before action is taken to a more dynamic, pragmatic, flexible and proactively engaging approach capable of preempting disaster occurrence and putting measures in motion to either forestall or mitigate same. This is the essence of the prevailing global paradigm of disaster management as encapsulated in the concept of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

Contingency theory has been variously criticized in the literature. Prominent among these criticisms are the following:

- (i) It is not new; there is nothing novel about it as some of its principal propositions have been adverted to in Fayol’s Principles which sought to resolve the issue of multiple contingencies;
- (ii) It is too eclectic in approach in that it predicates the function of management on a multiplicity of situational factors;
- (iii) The various factors which the theory recommends managers to take into account are not well articulated; similarly the actual relationship between these factors and managerial behaviour are not well defined;
- (iv) The theory also criticized for not being able to effectively address and resolve the issue of multiple contingencies, which often impose the dilemma of conflicting demands and conflicting responses on the manager.



within the context of strategic decision-making (Okenwa and Ugbo, 2003; Inegbenebor, 2005).

Nonetheless, contingency theory enables managers to come to terms with the need to carefully determine and select the approach that promises the best results for a given situation. The adoption of the theory for the purpose of analysis in this paper is informed by its vantage analytical utility in situating the essence of disaster management, which calls for a highly adaptive and dynamic managerial approach amenable to the exigencies of a specific disaster situation.

#### 4. Conceptual Issues

Two basic concepts are embedded in the subject matter of the paper, namely disaster/emergency management and national security. In the sub-sections that follow, an attempt is made to explore these concepts in order to situate their contextual meanings in this presentation.

**4.1 Disaster/Emergency Management:** A disaster may be defined as a life- or system-threatening occurrence that happens unexpectedly and requires emergency intervention in order to remedy its impact. This definition presupposes that a disaster has three fundamental attributes namely: it is a dire situation; it happens unexpectedly/by chance; it requires prompt/emergency response. These three characteristics one-to-one translate to three elements of disaster, viz: danger, surprise, and urgency (Ogban-Iyam, 2004). A plausible definition of 'disaster' has been given thus:

a deviation from planned or expected behavior or a course of events that endangers or adversely affects people, property, or the environment (Russ 2000, p.1).

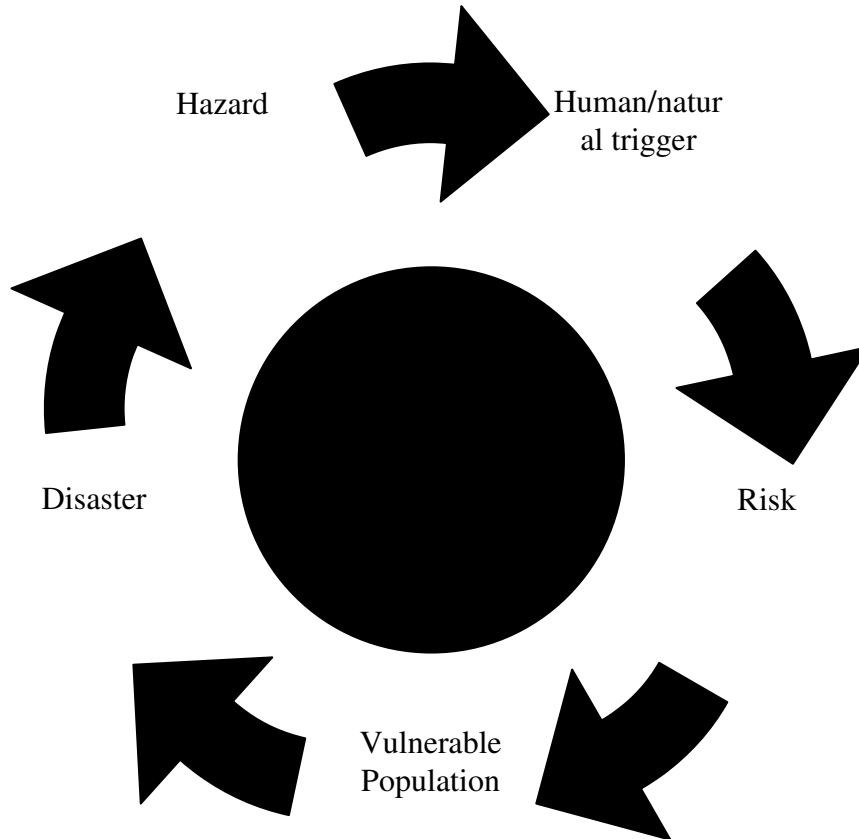
The phenomenon of disaster can be represented with the aid of the following symbolic construct:

$D=f\{HxV\}$ , where  $D=Disaster$ ;  $f=function$ ;  $H=Hazard$ ; and  $V=Vulnerability$ .

Put simply, disaster is the function of the interface between hazard and vulnerability. A disaster is not a one-off occurrence. It involves a number of isolated factors that interact to produce an outcome (Walker, 1989). These factors are hazards, risk, vulnerability,

and human or natural triggers. The relationship among these variables could be illustrated with the aid of the figure below.

**Figure 1: The Emergency Cycle**



**Source:** Author's concept

As indicated in figure 1, existence of a hazard is a precondition for any disaster occurrence. This hazard may be the presence of natural potentially threatening natural phenomenon such as volcanoes, or extreme climatic conditions; it may also be the presence of an industrial or technological facility (say a nuclear reactor or power plant). The mere presence of these factors (hazards) poses a risk (potential danger) to the human population in that environment. However, the mere existence of these threatening factors cannot constitute a disaster until there is a *tipping factor* arising from human or natural agent (error or negligence, technological failure, or natural incident), wherein a potential danger (risk) is translated into actual human harm (vulnerability). It is at this point that a

disaster is said to have occurred (Okoli, 2013). The afore-mentioned components of disaster have been incisively and elaborately explored in the extant literature (Walker, 1989, Russ, 2000, Olorunfemi and Adebimpe, 2008).

Disaster/emergency management, therefore, “is the continuous process by which all individuals, groups and communities manage hazards in an effort to avoid or ameliorate the impact of disasters resulting from hazards” (NEMA 2012, p.244). More comprehensively, disaster/emergency management implies:

The systematic process of using administrative decisions, organization, operational skills and capacities to implement policies, strategies and coping capabilities of the societies and communities to lessen the impacts of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters. This comprises all forms of activities, including structural and non-structural measures to prevent or limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse effects of hazards (NEMA 2012, p.243).

Disaster/Emergency management is seen both as a field of study (discipline) and field of organized professional activity (practice). As a discipline, it deals with the principles, precepts and practices by which risks arising from hazards are dealt with and mitigated. According to NEMA (2012, p.244), “it involves preparing for disaster before it occurs, as well as supporting and rebuilding society after natural human-made disasters have occurred”.

**4.2 National Security:** The conception of national security in this paper identifies with the revisionist perspective (Gambo, 2008; Onuoha, 2007), which sees national security from the point of view of human security. According to Onuoha (2007, p.4), human security entails:

Freedom from actual and potential threats to human life, safety and survival which may arise as a result of human actions or inactions, or from natural disaster such as flood, earthquake, famine, drought, disease and other non-man-made calamitous events resulting in death, human suffering and material damage.

National security is therefore understood in the context of this writing to mean the ability of the state to protect its citizenry from hunger, poverty, ignorance, disease, and all forms of defenselessness (Okoli, 2012). This entails protecting the citizenry from all forms of social, political, ecological, territorial, as well as cosmic vulnerabilities. This

conception of national security marks a radical departure from the orthodox perspective which conceives of national security merely from defense/military-centric point of view (Alkali, 2003).

### **5. Prevailing Perspectives on Global Emergency/ Disaster Management**

Perusal of more recent literature reveals a shift in terminological orientation on emergency/disaster discourse. In effect, the concept of disaster risk reduction/management is more or less generally used instead of the traditional concept of emergency management (See UNEP, 2003; UNCRD, 2003, 2004a, 2004b). This change is predicated on the new understanding to the effect that emergencies are “better approached through pre-emptive measures – by prevention and preparedness – rather than by managing the emergency” (UNEP, 2003, p. iii). This is also in line with the tradition set by the Hyogo Declaration (2005), which emphasizes, among other things, the imperative of proactive management of disasters. This marks a departure from the traditional thinking on emergency management. Accordingly:

The traditional focus of disaster management strategies has been the delivery of relief after a disaster. Even though disaster relief is an important issue, this approach alone does not effectively address the need to reduce the human and environmental impacts of future disasters. There is growing realization that countries and communities used to place more emphasis on a holistic approach to disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness if the social, economic and environmental costs of disasters are to be effectively reduced (UNISDR, 2004, p.9).

Contemporary thinking and practice of emergency management has been in the main guided by the three strategic goals outlined in the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA), namely:

1. Integrating disaster considerations more effectively with sustainable development politics, planning and programming at all levels, emphasizing disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, and vulnerability reduction;
2. Developing and strengthening institutions, mechanisms and capacities, particularly in communities, that can contribute systematically to improving resilience to hazards.

3. Incorporating risk reduction and approaches systematically in designing and implementing programmes for emergency preparedness, response and recovery, including programme for rebuilding affected communities (UNISDR, 2013, p.3)

These objectives reflect the need to make disaster management “an integral part of existing policies and infrastructure rather than addressing it as a separate activity” (UNIDR, 2013, p.3).

The need for a holistic and co-ordinated emergency management has been underscored in literature. Voice (Spring, 2013) makes a case for a coordinated approach to DRR whereby the concerns of climate change adaptation and sustainable development are integrated. According to voice:

Disaster risk reduction requires a long-term approach and is relevant throughout the whole aid and development cycle. Sometimes targeted projects are required to reduce specific risks (e.g. river bank reinforcement to prevent flooding). However, mainstreaming of a DRR perspective is also required in poverty reduction, climate change adaptation and other development prospects of sustainability in the face of possible shocks and hazards (Voice Spring, 2013a, p.1).

Proactive emergency management requires proper understanding of disaster risk in the context of its relationship with hazards, vulnerability and coping capacities in the face of a disaster. Hence:

...there are many ways to anticipate and prepare for such events and to minimize these hazards becoming a disaster. The key is to understand not only the hazard itself, but also the level of vulnerability of the concerned population, to prevent or respond to the disaster (Voice Spring, 2013b, p.1).

The dominant new thinking in disaster management stresses the need for effective legislation (IFRC, 2012), public private partnership (PPP) (Lassa, 2013) and community volunteerism (NEMA, 2010; 2011). For instance, a recent publication by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC, 2013, p.9) opines that “National disaster risk management legislation is a key enable for DRR”. In respect of PPP, Lassa (2013, p.3) observes that PPP presupposes “a new form of risk governance” whereby “non-state actors such as civil society and private entities” collaborate in disaster risk reduction. With reference to volunteerism, there has been frantic attempt at

encouraging self-help and civic volunteering in an effort to further the cause of disaster management (NEMA, 2011).

The role of science in disaster management has been emphasized by UNISDR. According to one of its recent publications:

...science can play an essential role in these efforts, uncovering new ways to prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters and determining which technologies are most effective in reducing disaster risk (UNISDR, 2013b).

The use of science in disaster management has made serious break-through in the areas of weather forecasts, remote sensing and other science-based early warning systems.

The extant global framework for DRR, the Hyogo Framework work for Action (HFA), was signed in 2005. It is expected to expire in 2015 when a new framework is to take effect (UNISDR, 2013). In this direction, there have been policy advances and suggestions on the way forward come 2015. In this regard, a Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR, 2013) makes a case for the incorporation of DRR priorities and concerns in the MDGs, as well as UNDP development agenda. The expectation is that this will ensure greater mainstreaming of DRR across the world in the light of emerging threats posed by disaster. This is consistent with the global standpoint that DRR is a core development concern (UNISDR, 2013a; Michell, Jones, Lovell and Comba, 2013).

There is also an emerging perspective among development scholars that seeks to underscore the interface between disaster management and sustainable development. This perspective has been aptly captured thus:

Sustainable development and disaster reduction are essential preconditions for each other. Natural disasters severely hamper the progress and achievements of sustainable development while, at the same time, physical infrastructure we are constructing may itself constitute a source of risk in the event of future disasters (Pandey and Okazaki, n.d, p,1).

The *UN/ISDR Background Paper for WSSD* (2002) succinctly re-echoes this perspective:

Can sustainable development along with the international instruments aiming at poverty reduction and environmental protection, be successful without taking into account the risk of natural hazards and their inputs? Can the planet afford the increasing costs and losses due to so-called natural disasters? The short answer is no (Cited in Niekerk, 2005, p. 64).

This new thinking apparently explains why some analysts insist that effective disaster management must be factored into the national development agenda to make for sustainability (Dokun-Oyeshola, 2008). Hence,

it is now widely recognized that the most likely solution to disaster problems is the implementation of successful developmental projects towards vulnerability and risk reduction, environmental management and sustainable livelihoods” (UNISDR, 2003, p.26-28).

To this end, UNCRD is currently carrying out various community-based programmes in some countries “to establish disaster prevention as an essential component of sustainable development” (Pandey and Okazaki, n.d, p.1); this drive has given rise to the idea of sustainable disaster management.

A critical element of sustainable disaster management is the question of community involvement in the process. The notion of community involvement presupposes community’s partnership, participation, empowerment and ownership. Community involvement in disaster risk management therefore demands their participation in risk assessment, mitigation planning, capacity building, participation in implementation and development of system for monitoring which ensures their stake (Pandey and Okazaki, n.d). It is this thinking that has given birth to what is known in the literature as ‘Community-Based Disaster Management (CBDM)’. This approach differs from the conventional paradigm of disaster response characterized by command-and-control structure and/or top-down (up-bottom) approach (Shaw, Britton and Gupta, 2003). In fact, the CBDM approach promotes a bottom-up approach while reinforcing the top-down (up-bottom) approach in dealing with disaster situations with the goal of leveraging optimal performance.

Extant empirical and policy-based researches seem to be identifying with the emergent thinking in disaster management, wherein the place of non-governmental and community participation is emphasized. For instance, in a recent work on South Africa, Niekerk (2005, p.1-2) makes a case for “a comprehensive framework for multi-sphere disaster risk reduction”, pointing out that a well coordinated multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach to disaster management is strategic to government’s efforts at ensuring reduction of disaster risks. He also underscores the need to incorporate disaster

management in the mainstream of national development planning (Niekerk, 2005:64-65). Another work by Pelling and Holloway (2005), also on South Africa, equally alludes to this fact. The implication of the foregoing is that there is a general tendency among scholars and practitioners towards a paradigm shift in understanding, conceptualizing, mastering, as well as strategizing for, disaster management.

Bye and large, it is evident from the literature that the traditional pattern of managing emergencies/disasters based on *bureaucratic* and reactive approach is fast being overtaken by a new multi-stakeholder tradition that is built on proactive and contingent principles. The difference between these two traditions can be illustrated as below.

**Table 1: Two Traditions of Disaster Management Practice Compared**

| <b>REACTIVE PARADIGM</b>  | <b>PROACTIVE PARADIGM</b>  |
|---|--|
| 1. Primary focus on hazards   | Primary focus on vulnerability   |
| 2. Single event-based scenarios   | Dynamic, multiple risk issues.   |
| 3. Basic responsibility to respond to an event                                    | Fundamental need to assess, update and mitigate  |
| 4. Often fixed, location specific conditions                                      | Extended, shared or regional scales  |
| 5. Command and control, directed operations                                       | Situation specific functions, free association   |
| 6. Established hierarchical relationships   | Shifty, fluid and tangential relationships   |
| 7. Responsibility in single authority or agency                                   | Multiple interest, actors, responsibility  |
| 8. Urgent, immediate-to-short timeframes in outlook, planning, attention, returns | Comparative, moderate-to-long time frames in outlook, planning, returns, values                          |
| 9. Rapidly changing, dynamic information usage; often conflicting or sensitive    | Accumulated, historical, layered-updated, comparative information; op or public                          |
| 10. Primary, "authorized" singular sources  | Multiple and diverse, or changing sources  |
| 11. Need for definite facts   | Differing perspectives, point of view  |
| 12. Operational, or public information-base use of communication                  | Multiple-use, shared exchange, inter-sectoral information matrixes, nodal lateral flows in communication |
| 13. Based on bureaucratic tenets  | Based on contingency principles  |

**Source:** Adapted from Jeggle in Rosenthal, Comfort and Boin (2001, p.331).



## 6. Disaster/Emergency Management in Nigeria: Historical/Contextual Perspective

The search for a public disaster management system was necessitated by the need to safeguard Nigeria from the devastating impacts of natural and man-made disasters. This search predated Nigeria's Independence. According to *Response*:

Long before independence, Nigeria has seen the need for government's involvement in the management of emergencies. It was however after the drought which ravaged parts of Northern Nigeria from 1972 to 1973 that the need for more concerted efforts in disaster management became more imperative. This led to the establishment of the National Emergency relief Agency (NERA) (Response March 2006, p.1).

The establishment of NEMA in 1976 marked a watershed in the annals of public emergency management in Nigeria. Yet NERA was poorly structured to undertake the ever burgeoning public emergency challenges in the country. For instance, NEMA was merely concerned with dispensation of relief materials in the event of disaster. According to response (2006, p.1), "NERA was only mandated to distribute relief materials and was therefore inadequately structured for disaster management".

In 1990, following the United Nations' 'International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction', the federal government of Nigeria initiated a move towards developing ways of mitigating natural disasters in the country (NDMF, 2010). This culminated in the expansion of the mandate of NERA in order to accommodate all forms of disaster sequel, to the promulgation of Degree 119 (Fagbemi, 2007). Consequently, NERA became an independent institution under the Presidency (NDMF, 2010).

In 1999, by Act 12 as amended by act 50 of 1991, the Federal government of Nigeria created the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and charged it with the responsibility to manage all disasters (Sadiq n.d; NDMF, 2010). Since its creation, NEMA has been the principal disaster management organization in Nigeria, whose main function is to coordinate relevant stakeholders towards efficient disaster control (NEMA, 2011).

Over the years, two patterns or traditions of emergency management have obtained in Nigeria. These have been represented as the "vulture concept" and the "eagle concept" (Ndace 2008, p.17). The vulture concept is reactive in essence while the eagle concept is pro-active. The former is likened to what is often referred to as "command-

and-control” approach (Tietenberg 2006, p.609) while the latter could be referred to as “fire-brigade” approach (Ndace 2008, p.17).

In line with the prevailing global thinking, NEMA has launched a paradigm shift from the abiding reactive tradition of emergency management to a proactive pattern. According to Ndace:

It is a departure from the laid back ‘vulture concept’ where the agency waits for disasters to happen; to the now proactive ‘eagle concept’ through forecasting and early warning to prevent and mitigate large-scale humanitarian displacements and catastrophes (Ndace 2008, p.17).

In keeping with the new thinking and paradigm, emergency management in Nigeria has been re-conceptualized to emphasize the imperative of integrated approach to risk reduction and pro-active disaster management (Sadiq n.d, p.6). In the light of this, the Nigerian National Disaster Management Framework defines emergency management as:

...co-ordination and integration of all activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capacity to prepare for, protect against, respond to, and recover from threatening or actual natural or human induced disasters (NDMF 2010, p.1).

The advent of the National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) in 2010 affirmed Nigeria’s commitment to a progressive disaster management approach. The document stipulates a strategic, integrated and multi-tiered disaster management approach based on contingency principles (NDMF, 2010). Under this arrangement, NEMA is the lead agency for managing disasters at the federal level. Through its six Zonal Offices spread across the six geo-political zones of the country, NEMA is expected to co-ordinate activities of relevant stakeholders towards effective management of disasters in the country (Fagbemi, 2011).

The stakeholders of Nigeria’s emergency management can be categorized into three broad groups, namely primary, secondary, and tertiary responders. Primary responders are community-based institutions or groups, such as community associations, vigilante groups, Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), grass-root volunteers, etc (Sadiq, n.d, p.7). On the other hand, secondary responders include the Military, the Police, the Fire Service, the Para-Military Organizations, the Red Cross, and of course NEMA. The tertiary responders include humanitarian and development agencies (local or

international) which may intervene in disaster situations in order to assist the affected population in coping with, and recovering from the disaster impacts.

With NEMA in the forefront, emergency management in Nigeria has been flourishing amidst challenges and prospects. A crucial aspect of the challenges is the need to incorporate emergency concerns into national development agenda. In this respect, it has been observed that:

There have been concerted efforts, towards mainstreaming disaster management into national development plans, human settlement development, sustainable water resources, basic education curriculum, agricultural development, development communication, tourism development, and use planning and the electoral process. NEMA seeks to integrate disaster management into development interventions at the states and local government areas; and into National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme (Ndace 2008, p.17).

NEMA's aspirations in respect of the above and beyond have been hampered by inadequacies of strategy and resourcing (NEMA, 2011; Olorunfemi and Adebimpe, 2008). In effect, NEMA's "operation has been handicapped by several factors among which are inadequate funding and equipment, weak executive capacity and lack of decentralization" (Olorunfemi and Adebimpe 2008, p.205).

It is important to note that the National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) adverted to in the preceding discussion has not acquired the full force of law. Since its emergence in 2010, it has been awaiting legislative sanctioning. Until it elicits full legislative backing and signed into law, the document remains a mere guideline and not a legal framework. This poses a challenge to disaster management in Nigeria poses a challenge to NEMA in carrying out its statutory mandate.

Another challenge to NEMA arises from the inability of the states and local Governments in Nigeria to buy into the national disaster management agenda. The federal government had mandated the States to establish state Emergency Management Agencies (SEMAs). This is expected to be replicated at the Local Government level by creating Local Government Emergency Management Agencies (LEMAs). This directive has not been quite fruitful (Sadiq, n.d). While some States and Local Governments are yet to come up with their own SEMAs and LEMAs, those that have established theirs have not been making much significant impacts, which raises concerns concerning the strategic importance of such an endeavour.

The prospect of effective emergency management in Nigeria lies in a paradigm shift from the traditional relief intervention to a pro-active order that emphasizes the imperative of disaster risk reduction and control. As Olarunfemi and Adebimpe has rightly cautioned:

While relief intervention is needful especially at the critical phase of disaster impact and thereafter; it is, however, criminal for policy decision maker to wait for disasters to occur before allocating resources to address the catastrophes (2008, p.205).

By way of concluding this section, it is to be noted that disaster management in Nigeria is relatively nascent. In the views of Sadiq (n.d, p.1), “emergency management in Nigeria ... is in its infancy”. The implication+ of this is that not much has been written on the field. This explains the apparent poor depth of literature in the area of inquiry. Suffice it to note, however, that there has been growing interest in the field since the introduction of disaster studies in Nigerian Universities in 2010.

### **7. Prevalence of Disaster in Nigeria: An Overview of Nigeria’s Disaster Profile**

Nigeria may not typically fit into the typology of nations considered to be disaster-prone by Western taxonomy. For instance, the country has not been listed among the first 50 most disaster hit or prone country over the years (see the *UN Disaster Risk Index* since 2000s). Yet, she has witnessed sundry instances of disaster occurrences over the years, which indicate that she is appreciably vulnerable to the phenomenon of disaster. Scholarly information on disaster incidence and prevalence in Nigeria are barely beginning to blossom (Okorunfemi and Adebimpe, 2008; Sadiq, n.d)). More importantly, available disaster statistics on Nigeria are slim. They are also skewed in favour of natural disasters. Two important aspects of natural disaster statistics are considered hereunder, namely Nigerian risk profile in respect of natural disasters, and incidence of natural disaster. The tables below (Tables 1 and 2) shed light in this regard.

**Table 2: Nigerian Natural Disaster Risk Profile at 2009: Available Statistics**

| Hazard Type | Population Exposed | Country Ranking              |
|-------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Cyclone     | -                  | - out of 89                  |
| Drought     | 3,254,060          | 21 <sup>st</sup> out of 184  |
| Flood       | 226,622            | 15 <sup>th</sup> out of 162  |
| Landslide   | 14,038             | 18 out of 162                |
| Earthquake  | 1,155              | 129 <sup>th</sup> out of 153 |
| Tsunami     | -                  | - out of 76                  |

**Source:** 2009 Global Assessment Report, UNEP (2010; Data version v 11.08).

Table 1 considers only the ‘human exposure’ component of disaster risk. The human exposure to disaster risk refers to modeled number of people present in hazard zones that are thereby subject to potential losses of harm (UNEP, 2010). The table indicates that Nigeria is highly exposed to risks associated with the following hazards: drought, flood, and landside. The notion of landside in this context encompassed dire cases of soil erosion, which is prevalent in the South East of Nigeria (Ajaro and Mozie, n.d).

**Table 3: Natural Disaster Incidence in Nigeria (1980-2010)**

| FACT                                     | FIGURES   |
|--|-----------|
| No of events                             | 94        |
| No of people killed                      | 21,002    |
| Average killed per year                  | 677       |
| No. of people affected                   | 6,306,441 |
| Average affected per year                | 203,434   |
| Economic damage (US \$ x 1,000)          | 188,025   |
| Economic damage per year (US \$ x 1,000) | 6,065     |

**Source:** 2009 Global Assessment Report, UNEP (2010; Data version v 11.08).

Table 2 indicates, among other things, that Nigeria is significantly vulnerable to natural disasters. Hence, the United Nations’ World’s Risk Index for 2012 lists Nigeria as the 14<sup>th</sup> world’s most disaster vulnerable country (United Nations, 2012). The vulnerability of Nigeria to natural disasters has been complicated by a number of factors among which are preponderance of natural and man-made hazards, poor hazard control, inadequacy of emergency management mechanism, prevalence of poverty and socio-economic malaise, as well as poor livelihood, development and settlement practices which are not disaster-sensitive and resilient (Adebimpe, 2011; Okoli, 2013; Sadiq, n.d). Little wonder then that Nigeria has been exposed to sundry patterns and scales of emergencies over the years. Table 3 sheds light on the prevalence of emergency occurrences in contemporary Nigeria.

**Table 4: Common Instances of Contemporary Emergencies/Disasters in Nigeria**

| S/N | INSTANCE                | CASE(S) IN POINT   |
|-----|-------------------------|--|
| 1   | Auto crash              | 70 people killed in an auto crash involving a bus and other vehicles along Abuja-Lokoja highway (Sept, 2003); other comparable cases abound. |
| 2   | Plane                   | 2002 EAS Airlines (BAC 1-11-500) air mishap killing at least 148 persons; other comparable instances abound.                                 |
| 3   | Boat mishap             | 30 persons died in boat mishap in Jibu village, Wukari (Taraba State); 100 died in incident in Oron Akwa Ibom State in March, 2013.          |
| 4   | House Collapse          | Sunday cases in Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt and elsewhere  |
| 5   | Bridge Collapse/failure | Eziama Bridge Collapse (2006) in Abia State; Jalingo bridge collapse (2005) killing about 100 persons  |
| 6   | Communal clash          | Ezza/Ezillo clash in Ebonyi State (2008-date); Aguleri-Amuleri clash in Anambra State, etc   |
| 7   | Terrorist attack        | Independence day bombing (October, 2010); church bombings in 2011 and 2012   |
| 8   | Fire incident/disaster  | 26 school girls died in a blaze at Gindiri Government Girls School near Jos in 2001  |
| 9   | Pipeline explosion      | Jesse incident (1998); Ovim (Amaokwe) incident (2003); Arepo incident (2013), etc.   |
| 10  | Gas-fume suffocation    | A number of families and persons have been killed by generator fumes in various parts of Nigeria   |
| 11  | Chemical poisoning      | Lead poisoning in Zamfara State killed more than 150 persons (June, 2010)  |
| 12  | Oil spills devastation  | Sundry cases in Bayelsa, Delta and River States.   |
| 13  | Landslide/erosion       | Sundry cases in Anaocha, Aguata and Orumba South LGA, of Anambra State   |
| 14  | Drought                 | Occasional instances in North-Eastern Nigeria, eg the 1972-73 case; Yobe incident (2010)   |
| 15  | Wind/thunder/rain storm | Sundry cases reported in many parts of Nigeria   |
| 16  | Amoury mishap           | 2002 Ikeja cantonment explosion that killed more than 1000 persons   |
| 17  | Flooding                | The 2011 and 2012 dire incidents across States of Nigeria leading to loss of lives and property  |
| 18  | Dam collapse/failure    | Gusau dam collapse in Zamfara state in 2006 killed about 40 persons  |

|    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| 19 | Epidemic/disease pandemic                          | Cholera outbreak; Avian flu outbreak (2006)   |
| 20 | Ocean surge/beach encroachment                     | 5 persons died, 500 persons affected, and properties destroyed in Itak Abasi, Akwa-Ibom State in 2010; comparable case perennial in Lagos State                 |
| 21 | Ethno-religious violence                           | Sharia 12 riots in Kaduna State (2000); comparable cases in Kano, Plateau (Jos and Environs), etc   |
| 22 | Political unrest                                   | June 12 Political crisis and the attendant violence (1992); Post-election violence in parts of Northern Nigeria (2011)  |
| 23 | Military raid                                      | Raid of Odi town in Bayelsa State (1999); Zaki-Biam in Benue State (2001); Baga in Borno State (2013)   |
| 24 | Criminal raid/banditry                             | Raid of Potiskum Cattle market in Yobe State in May, 2012; comparable cases in Zamfara State including the Tsafe incident of June, 2013 with over 50 casualties |
| 25 | Petrol tanker explosion                            | Up to 200 persons were killed when a petrol tanker crashed into a queue of vehicles at Ile-Ife in 2000; other comparable cases abound                           |
| 26 | Refugee (Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) crisis | 200 displaced families (Bakassi returnee) stranded in Ekeki and Yenagoa LGAs in Bayelsa State (2010); Distressed Egypt and Libya returnees (2010/11)            |
| 27 | Mine collapse                                      | 2 persons were killed in gravel/clay mine collapse in Yayarin-Tukur village, Buji LGA of Jigawa State in April 2013   |
| 28 | Pest invasion/infestation                          | The 2010 Yobe incident  |
| 29 | Stampede   | About 30 persons were killed in a stampede that occurred on a religious crusade ground at Uke, Anambra State, on November 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2013                |
| 30 | Wildfire   | Perennial cases in various parts of northern Nigeria  |

**Source:** Compiled by the author from various media and documented adaptations.

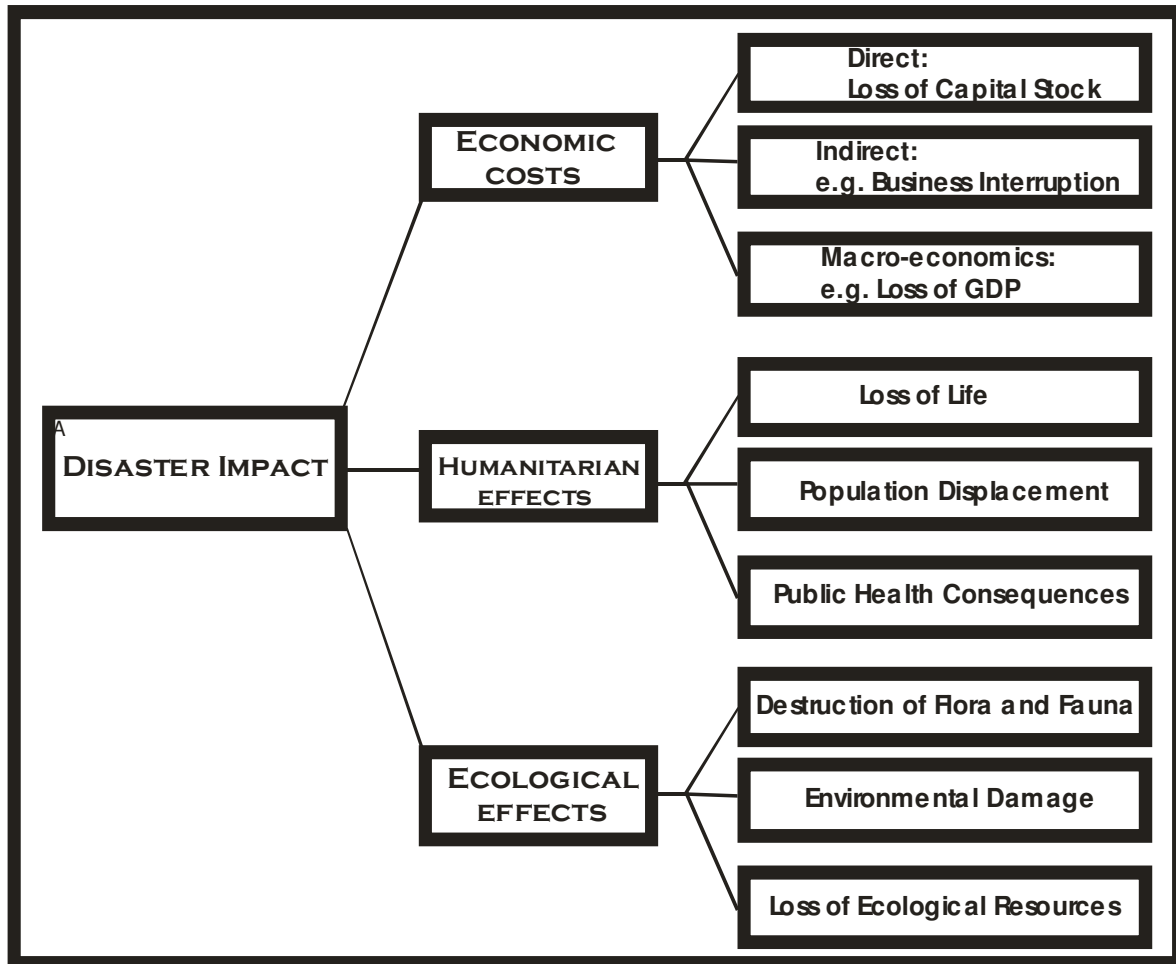
### 8. Disaster Impact and National Security in Nigeria: Situating the Relationship

The underlying argument of this study bears out the understanding that national security equates with development. To reiterate, let it be noted that “in a modernizing society, security means development” and “without development there can be no security” (McNamara 1968, p.149). In effect, national security has its real essence, substance, and basis in sustainable development.

In contemporary world, development of nations is being threatened by the incidence of disasters, which makes it impossible to realize or sustain development gains on sustainable basis (Mechler, 2003; UNISDR, 2013a, b). In the case of Nigeria, occurrences of disaster have been the worst threat to public safety, human security and sustainable livelihood over the years. The incidence of disasters, much as its impacts, has been immense in Nigeria in the recent times. This has led to loss of lives and poverty, population displacement and family community dislocation, destruction of farmlands as well as aquatic and wildlife resources, environmental degradation leading to untoward public health conditions, loss of income and livelihood sources leading to exacerbation of poverty, infrastructural collapse, and economic losses (Onuoha, 2009; Ndace, 2008; Sadiq, n.d).

To put the impact of disaster on Nigeria's national security in proper perspective, the following illustration may suffice. In the event of any disaster, humanitarian, economic and ecological impacts and effects are likely to occur. These outcomes of disaster have been demonstrated by Mechler (2003) as follows:



**Figure 2: Dimensions of Disaster Impacts and Effects**

Source: Mechler, (2003) "National Disaster Risk Management and Financing Disaster Losses in Developing Countries" Ph.D Thesis Karlsruhe, University of Karlsruhe

Humanitarian effects include loss of life, injury and psychological post-disaster effects; ecological effects comprise the loss of arable land, forests and damage to physical assets, loss of production and wage arising from business interruption and aggregate impact on economic variables such as Gross Domestic product (GDP), etc. (Mechler, n.d; Mechler, 2003).

The impacts of disaster in Nigerian have followed the pattern illustrated in figure 2. These impacts are highlighted hereunder in turn.

**8.1 Humanitarian Impacts:** The humanitarian impact of a disaster encompasses its effects on human population. Dimensions of this include human fatalities, injuries, population displacements, livelihood crisis, psychological trauma, and public health and

safety harm. Figures pertaining to disaster-related fatalities have been staggering. In 2002 alone, 2,000 persons were estimated to have died as a result of disaster (*Response*, 2006, p33). Again in 2003, 4,013 were killed in various forms of disaster (*Response*, 2006, p.33).

In addition, scores of people have been killed in aviation and road traffic incidents in Nigeria over the years. Over 10,000 persons have been killed in such incidents (Okoli, 2012; Adebimpe, 2011). The 2012 flood disaster in Nigeria killed 363 persons, based on available records (NEMA, 2013). Over all, the average of 500 to 600 people was killed by disasters in Nigeria in over the recent years (UNEP, 2010). Between 1980 and 2010, it was estimated that Nigeria has lost a total of 21,002 people to disaster (UNEP, 2010: *Global Assessment Report, VII.08*).

In terms of population displacement, the consequences have also been so dire. For instance, the 2012 floods displaced 2.3 million Nigerians (NEMA, 2013). The duration of displacement arising from disaster varies in keeping with the nature and severity of disaster incident. In effect, it can be annual, biennial, perennial, or even eternal. Eternal displacement presupposes a situation where a household or community is permanently displaced from its original place of habitation owing to disaster impact. This has severally occurred in South-eastern Nigeria as a result of the menace of gully erosion (Ajero and Mozie, n.d).

It should be noted that apart from death tolls and displaced population, disasters have also engendered critical existential conditions that are inimical to public health, safety and general well-being of the people. This outcome of disaster has been accommodated in the notion of “affected population” or a “population at risk” (Ajero and Mozie, n.d). Humanitarian impacts of disaster can also be seen from the point of view of the ripple effects of disasters, such as mass hunger and starvation, malnutrition, and disaster epidemics.

**8.2 Economic Impacts:** Economic impacts associated with disasters in Nigeria have been diverse and telling. They include the following:

- (i) Destruction of farmlands.
- (ii) Damage of built physical environment.
- (iii) Mass killing of livestock.

- (iv) Destruction of economically vital microbes, aquatic and wildlife resources.
- (v) Destruction of economic trees.
- (vi) Loss or destruction of viable tourism resorts.
- (vii) Huge public spending on disaster mitigation, relief and recovery.
- (viii) Emergency household spending in remedy of disaster impact.
- (ix) Loss of jobs and means of subsistence/livelihood.

Some of the foretasted effects may not be easily amenable to quantification in terms of monetary and macro-economic valuation; yet each of them translates into significant financial costs and implications for the affected individuals, households, communities, and the nation at large. So far, there have not been any rigorous efforts at quantifying the economic impacts of disaster in Nigeria. Nonetheless, there exist pockets of facts and figures that crudely point to that direction. Consider the few isolated examples below from NEMA.

- (i) During the 1972-73 droughts in the north-eastern Nigeria, about 300,000 animals representing 13% of the livestock population of the region were estimated to have died.
- (ii) Also, during the 1972-73 droughts, crop yields dropped between 12% and 40% of the annual average.
- (iii) During the 1987 droughts in northern Nigeria, crop yields declined between the range of 56% and 65% of the 1986 totals.
- (iv) The 1992/93 wildfires in seven states of Nigeria affected 1,122 hectares out of 12,274 hectares of established plantation. Also 1, 78833 hectares, representing 14. 55%, was completely destroyed; a loss amounting to over 20 million Naira.
- (v) The 2012 flood disaster in Nigeria destroyed 597,476 houses.
- (vi) Also, the 2012 floods cost a total of 2.6 trillion Naira.

(<http://www.005a.unvienna.org/sap/2004ethiopia/presentation/3spoaker031PDF>; <http://m.new24.com/Nigeria/national/news/2012-flood-disaster-cost-nigeria-#2.6tn-NEMA-20130527>).

Besides, disasters are said to have cost Nigeria a significant portion of her Gross Domestic Product. This, however, has not been satisfactorily established in respect of Nigeria. For instance, the cost of the 2012 flood disaster was said to have amounted to about 036% of the GDP (McElroy, 2012, para 18).

**8.3 Ecological Impacts:** Ecological impact of disaster come in the form of environmental degradation, loss of eco-diversity and balance, damage of natural habitation, disruption of bio-physical system, and loss of arable land. The incidence of oil spills in Nigeria has been associated with untold ecological damage. According to Okoli and Orinya:

Associated with the incidence of oil spills is the attendant environmental degradation, which jeopardizes the land, vegetation and habitation of the affected area. This has been exemplified in desolation of farmlands, loss of aquatic and wild lives, as well as water and air pollution (2013, p.71).

The ecological impacts of disaster make the environment unsustainable, but also create multiple socio-economic and humanitarian conditions that threaten sustainable healthy human living. All the aforementioned impacts of disaster are related at some points. For instance, humanitarian effects, such as loss of life may lead to livelihood crisis for the affected household, particularly where the deceased is the principal breadwinner of the family. In the same vein, loss of arable land, which is an instance of ecological impact of disaster may lead to both economic and humanitarian misfortunes, especially in the context of a subsistence community that losses a chunk of its arable land to disaster.

In view of its devastating impacts and outcomes, disasters represent the biggest impediment to sustainable development and public safety in Nigeria. It is against the backdrop of this observation that this work posits that disaster are veritable threat to national security of Nigeria. It is, therefore, argued that the incidence and prevalence of disasters in contemporary Nigeria poses a daunting challenge to Nigeria's national security.

In tandem, there is no gainsaying the truism that disasters are threats to sustainable livelihood and development in Nigeria. If this assertion is so affirmed by reason and evidence, it followed logically that disasters are threats to Nigeria's national security. Hence, Olorunfemi and Adebimpe (2008, p.190) have poignantly averred:

The growing trend of disasters in Nigeria has implications for national sustainability. This is because, disasters, irrespective of casual factors are associated with diverse externalities such as mortalities, loss of income, home, farmlands, social networks, livelihoods and infrastructure.

## **9. Disaster Management and National Security: the Nexus and the Disconnect**

The principal assumption which forms the point of departure of this paper is that disaster management is integral and indispensable to national security. However, in the case of Nigeria, indications point to the fact that the issue of disaster management is yet to be properly prioritized as a crucial component of national security praxis. This observation is supported by the outcome of the research that has motivated this paper. In the subsections that follow, an attempt is made to establish this argument.

**9.1 Linking Disaster Management and National Security:** This paper presumes that disaster management is integral and indispensable to Nigeria's national security. The dominant perspective in the existing literature appreciably upholds this assumption (Sadiq, n.d; Olorunfemi and Adebimpe, 2008; Okoli, 2012). It has been established that disaster occurrences pose great threat to Nigeria's national security. This is in view of the fatal effects of such occurrences on both human and environmental security (Onuoha, 2007; 2009).

From the point of view of oil pipeline explosion disasters, it was observed that scores of lives have been lost in the event of such disasters. This is in addition to environmental damage and associated humanitarian consequences, such as population displacement (Okoli, 2013). For instance, no fewer than 5,000 people have been killed by oil pipeline explosion in Nigeria since 1998 (Onuoha, 2009; Ogeni, 2011; Sadiq, n.d). This is in addition to loss of livelihood sources, population displacement, as well as environmental pollution and/or degradation that have come with such incidents.

Other forms of large-scale disaster such as road accidents, place clashes, flooding and disease epidemics have equally drawn large tolls on the Nigerian human population (see for instance NEMA's Annual Report, 2009, 2010, and 2011). The 2012 flood disaster in Nigeria was noted to have killed over 300 people, with hundreds of others displaced. This is in addition to destruction of farmlands and valuable households and wildlife assets in the process.

The effects of disasters as highlighted above underscores the significance of such occurrences as a critical concern of public safety and national sustainability in Nigeria. In the views of Olorunfemi and Adebimpe:

The growing trend of disasters in Nigeria has implications for national sustainability. This is because, disasters, irrespective of casual factors are associated with diverse externalities such as mortalities, loss of income, home, farmlands, social networks, livelihoods, and infrastructures (2008, p.109).

The implication of this is that disasters are veritable threats to Nigeria's national security. This has made the issue of disaster management a crucial and fundamental aspect of the national security praxis. This recommends among other things, the incorporation of the concerns of disaster management into the national security agenda. The next sub-section further emphasizes this crucial point.

**9.2 Disaster Management and Nigeria's Development Policy:** Generally, disaster management is acknowledged as a crucial development concern in Nigeria (Okoli, 2012; Sadiq, n.d). This observation is consistent with the reining perspective in the literature to the effect that disaster management is a core development issue (UNISDR, 2013; Mitchell, Jones, Lovell, and Comba, 2013). Yet, it has not been adequately accorded priority in development planning and administration in the country. The assumption here, perhaps, was that Nigeria is not a disaster-prone country; but this assumption can be readily flawed considering the frequency, scale, and prevalence of public emergencies in contemporary Nigeria. According to Olorunfemi and Adebimpe (2008), Nigeria is characterized with high disaster vulnerability. What is more, the fatal consequences of such emergencies have posed fundamental threat to public safety and sustainability in the country.

Curiously, extant development strategies in Nigeria have not paid adequate attention to the issue of disaster management and its nexus with national security. At best, they have simply and merely papered over it. In effect, both the *NEEDS* policy of the Obasanjo administration and the *7-point Agenda* of the Yaradua government were bereft of any content on emergency (disaster) management. Likewise is the current President Jonathan's *National Transformation Agenda*.

The *NEEDS* documents, for example, devoted attention to the concern of public security, albeit from the cyclical point of view of peace-conflict calculus. The document talks about reforming "the security sector" and establishing "an early warning and response system that will detect conflicts" (*NEEDS* 2005, p.27). Yet the notion of

security in this context does comprehend, let alone emphasize, the concerns of public safety or civil defense to which disaster management is principally dedicated. The nascent *National Transformation Agenda* alludes to only two critical security-specific concerns, namely the Niger Delta and Boko Haram debacles. Again, the document misses out completely on the issue of emergencies.

More significantly, the Nigerian Fourth Development Plan or Grand Strategy (Vision 20: 2020, 2010) also papers over the issue of disaster management. Apart from its vague and skeletal reference to ‘social’ and ‘environmental’ protection whereof the endeavours of NEMA was slightly mentioned, the Document fails to accord importance and emphasis on the imperative of disaster management. This pertinent lack gives out the Document as inadequate and conceptually deficient. This deficiency must have stemmed from the apparent reductionist conception and apprehension of national security by the drafters of the Document. A corollary of this lack could be seen in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)’s document, which has been criticized for failing to encompass disaster-specific goals (UNISDR, 2013a&b).

The contention of this paper is that the issue of disaster management has been so grossly neglected in government’s development agenda in Nigeria. In effect, the concerns of disaster management have not been properly prioritized in national development policy, planning and administration. It is high time now that disaster management be accorded its rightful strategic place in Nigeria’s national development thinking and practice. This is in view of the fact that disaster management is a crucial development issue, which dovetails into national security.

Hence, principles of pro-active disaster management should be incorporated into the various dimensions of Nigeria’s development policy. Areas of emphasis in this respect include the industrial policy, ecological policy, urbanization policy, infrastructural development policy, insurance policy, public health policy, and rural development policy. This would help in mitigating emergencies in Nigeria.

**9.3 The Place of Disaster Management in Nigeria’s Security Strategy:** As pointed out above, disaster management is reckoned by many as a crucial component of Nigeria’s

national security. This recommends its incorporation in the National Security Strategy (NSS). Unfortunately, realities on the ground point to a different direction.

The Draft NSS document (2011) incidentally ignores the issue of emergency management in conceptualizing and framing Nigeria's national security. The document curiously views Nigeria's National Security merely from the reductionist prism of internal security and territorial defense. In effect, the document narrowly defines "the strategic context" and core concerns of Nigeria's national security merely in terms of "political violence, violent extremism, communal violence, the Niger Delta, and maritime security and transnational crime" (NSS in TSA 2011, p.16).

Incidentally, this document leaves out the concerns of public disasters altogether. The pro-military conception of national security in the document agrees with the otiose traditional apprehension of national security (Gambo, 2008; Onuoha, 2009), which is antithetical to the position of this paper. This skewed pro-defence conception of national security is based perspective is possibly traceable to the background of the draft NSS. The document was drafted by the National Defense College (formerly National War College), Abuja. The College is a foremost military institution in Nigeria, whose understanding and thinking of security are bound to reflect an orthodox pro-military bias and stance. It is imperative that the issue of disaster management be accorded required priority in Nigeria's national security agenda. This would invariably necessitate a radical re-conceptualization of the national security strategy in order to accommodate and prioritized the concerns of disaster management.

## **10. Conclusion**

Disaster incidents have posed a sapping threat to human security in the contemporary world. Going by its adverse consequences on human lives, livelihood sources, ecological and economic assets, disasters have been identified as one of the biggest challenges of sustainable development and security of nations (Mitchell, Jones, Lovell, and Comba, 2013).

The impact of disasters on the developing nations has been more debilitating owing principally to their high vulnerability to such occurrences as well as the inadequacies of emergency management infrastructure and practices in such contexts



(Sadiq, n.d). In Nigeria, the incidence of disasters, much as their impacts, has been rather threatening in recent years. This has recommended disaster management as a crucial issue in Nigeria's development and security strategies. Unfortunately, the issue of disaster management in Nigeria has not been properly situated and prioritized.

This paper has interrogated the strategic linkage between emergency management and Nigeria's national security, with the assumption that disaster management is integral and indispensable to Nigeria's national security. This assumption presupposes that disaster impacts are detrimental to Nigeria's national security and that success or failure in controlling such occurrences holds strategic implications for the country's sustainable national security. The paper observed that Nigeria is yet to get it right in terms of efficient and effective disaster management. In effect, extant policy thinking in the country is yet to come to terms with the imperative of proactive disaster management and the need to make same an enduring and integral facet of the national development cum security endeavours. Our analysis revealed that disaster management in Nigeria has at best been problematic and redundant, lacking essentially in terms of operational efficiency and strategic efficacy. This is worrisome considering the growing incidence and prevalence of disasters in contemporary Nigeria. How does the foregoing imply for Nigeria's national security? Strategically, one of the crucial implications is that Nigeria is yet to come to terms with the essence of contemporary threats to her national security. Slacking in capacity to protect her population and territorial ambience from the untoward impacts of disasters, Nigeria is toying with a critical concern of national security. In effect, the country has over the years been exposed to dire disaster impacts of which the government has been ill-equipped, and often helpless, to mitigate. This adumbrates the crisis of national security in Nigeria.

## References

Adebimpe, R.U. (2011). "Climate change related disasters and vulnerability: An appraisal of the Nigerian policy environment". *Environmental Research Journal*, 5(3), pp.97-103.

Alkali, A.R. (2003). *Issues international relations and Nigeria's foreign policy (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*. Kaduna: North-point Publishers.

Dokun-Oyeshola, O.P. (2008). *Sustainable development: Issues and challenges for Nigeria*. Ibadan: Daily Graphics Ltd.

Donahue and Joyce (2001). "A framework for analyzing emergency management with an application to federal budgeting". *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 61, No. 6, pp. 728 – 740.

Encarta (2009 DVD). 'Stress'; 'Crisis'; 'Risk', 'Disaster'; 'Emergency'; 'Hazard'; *Microsoft ® students encyclopedia DVD) premium edition*. Redmond W.A: Microsoft Corporations.

Fagbemi K. (2011). "Nigerian: national progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2009-2011). *Prevention Web* (Assessed January 14, 2012).

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2006). *National Defence Policy (NDP)*. Abuja: Ministry of Defence.

Ferris, E. Petz, O. and Stark, C. (2013). *The year of recurring disasters: A review of natural disasters in 2012*. London: Booking Institution

Gambo, A.N. (2008). *Conflicts in the Niger Delta and national security in Nigeria*. Jos: Mono Expressions Ltd.

GNDR-VFL (2013). *Views from the frontline: Beyond 2015*. A Publication of Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Reduction; [www.globalnetwork.dr.org](http://www.globalnetwork.dr.org)

Hewitt, K. (ed) (1983). *Interpretations of calamity*: Boston: Allan and Uwin.

IFRC (2012). *Report of the International Federation of Red Cross*, Geneva.

- IFRC (2013). *Better laws, safer communities? Emerging themes on how legislation can support disaster risk reduction.* A Publication of International Federation of Red-Cross/Crescent Societies, IFRC-Geneva
- Inegbenebor, A.U. (2005). "The world evolutionary history of management" in B.A Agbonifoh, A.B. Agbadudu and F.I.O Iyayi (eds), *Management: A Nigerian perspective.* Lagos: Malthouse Press Ltd.
- Kent, R.C. (1987). *Anatomy of disaster relief.* London: Printer Publishers.
- Kreps, G. A. (1999). "Organizing for emergency management". In *Emergency management: Principles and practice for local government.* Washington D.C: International City Management Association.
- Lassa, A.J. (2013). "Public private partnership in Disaster reduction in a developing country: Findings from West Sumatra, Indonesia". *Working Paper no.4*, Institute of Resource Governance and Social Change (IRGSC), Kupeng.
- McNamara, R.S. (1968). *The essence of security: Reflections in office.* New York: Harper and Row.
- McElroy, A. (2012). "Nigeria agrees to strengthen disaster resilience"; <http://www.unisdr.org/archive/33565>
- Mechler, R. (2003). "Natural disaster risk management and financing disaster losses in developing countries". Ph.D. thesis, Karlsruhe, University of Karlsruhe
- Michel, T., Jones, L., Lovell, E., and Comba, E. (eds) (2013). *Disaster risk management in the Post-2015 development goals: Potential targets and indicators.* London: Oversea Development Institute.
- Ndace, B.J. (2008), "From, 'vulture concept' to 'eagle concept'". *The Market*, Vol.3, No 4 (March).
- NDMF (2010). *National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF).* A Publication of National Emergency Management Agency, Abuja, Nigeria.
- NEMA (2010). *2009 annual report. National Emergency Management Agency , Abuja-Nigeria.*
- NEMA (2011). *2010 annual report.* National Emergency Management Agency, Abuja-Nigeria.

NEMA (2012). *2011 annual report*. National Emergency Management Agency, Abuja-Nigeria.

NEMA-Response (2006). "NEMA: The journey so far". *Response*, vol.1, No.6, p.2

Niekerk, D.V. (2005). "A comprehensive framework for a multi-sphere disaster risk reduction in South Africa". A Ph.D Thesis submitted to the School of Social and Governmental Studies at North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus (May).

NPC (2010). *Nigeria Vision 20: 2020*. National Planning Commission, Abuja- Nigeria.

OFDA/CRED (2011). *International disaster database (EM-DAT)*. University Catholique de Lauvaun, Brussels.

Ogban, O. (2004). "Crisis management: Explication of crisis and strategies of crisis management". *African Journal of Political and Administrative Studies (AJPAS)*, 1(1), pp. 260-269.

Ogeni, O.O (2012). "Fuel pipeline vandalism in Nigeria"; <http://chatafrik.com/articles/economy/item/1287-furl-pipe-vandalism-in-nigeria.html>.

Okenwa, C.P. and Ugbo, I.E. (2003). *Management: Theory and practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Oko: Polytechnic Press Ltd.

Okoli, A.C. (2011) "The state and crisis management in Nigeria: Evaluation of Nigeria's response to the global economic meltdown". A paper presented at the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference of the Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA), held at Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto on 19-22 June, 2011.

Okoli, A. C. (2012). "Emergency management and Nigeria's national security: examining NEMA's role in oil pipeline disasters in South-eastern Nigeria". Ph.D proposal presented to Department of Political Science and Defence Studies, Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), Kaduna.

Okoli, A. C. (2013). "Emergency management and Nigeria's national security: examining NEMA's role in oil pipeline disasters in South-eastern Nigeria". Draft PhD Dissertation submitted to Department of Political Science and Defence Studies, Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), Kaduna.

Olorunfemi, F.B. and Adebimpe, R.U. (2008). "Sustainable disaster risk reduction in Nigeria: Lesson for developing countries". *African Research Review*, vol. 2(2), pp.187-217.

Onuoha, F. (2007). "Poverty, pipeline vandalization/explosion and human security: Integrating disaster management into poverty reduction in Nigeria". Draft Paper, African Centre for Strategic Research and Studies (ACSRS), National War College, Abuja – Nigeria.

Onuoha, F (2008). "Oil exploitation, environmental degradation and climate change: Assessing the vulnerability of the Niger Delta environment to natural disaster". In *International Conference on the Nigerian state, oil industry and the Niger Delta* (Conference Proceedings). Yanagoo: Niger Delta University, pp. 1025-1042.

Onuoha, F. (2009). "Why the poor pay with their lives: Oil pipeline vandalization, fires and human security in Nigeria". *Disasters* 33(3): pp.369-389.

Pandey, B. and Okazaki, K. (n.d). "Community-based disaster management: Empowering communities to cope with disaster risks". Unpublished paper, United Nations Centre for Regional Development, Japan.

Pelling, M. and Holloway, A. (2005). "Legislation for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction". Unpublished paper (online), <http://www.google.ca> (assessed June 10, 2011).

Pine, J.C (n.d). "The contributions of management theory and practice to emergency management" [<http://www.risk.isu.edu>] (assessed August 20, 2011).

Rosenthal, U. Comfort, L. Boin, A. (2001). *Managing crisis: A global perspective*. USA: C.C. Thomas Publishers.

Russ, J. (2000). "GIS technology for disasters and emergency management" *ESRI white paper* (May), ESRI.

Sadiq, A. (n.d). "A look at Nigeria's burgeoning emergency management system: Challenges, opportunities, and recommendations for improvement". Available online at... [www.spea.iupui-edu/facultyandstaff/faculty...sadiq.php](http://www.spea.iupui-edu/facultyandstaff/faculty...sadiq.php).

SGPP (2013). *Building resilience by earning: The disaster risk management handbook, 2013*. Pakistan: Support to Government in Pakistan Programme (SGPP).

Shaw, R., Britton, N. and Gupta, M. (eds) (2004), PNY: Towards Sustainable Community Recovery; UNCRD, Kobe, Japan (January).

Tietenberg, T. (2006). *Environmental natural resource economics* (seventh edition): New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

TSA (2011). *Nigeria National security strategy*. A publication of Think Security Africa (TSA). London ([www.thinksecurityafrica.org](http://www.thinksecurityafrica.org))

UN/ISDR (2004a). *Disaster risk reduction for sustainable development. Guidelines for mainstreaming disaster risk assessment in development*. A Publication of the United Nations' International for Disaster Reduction, Geneva.

UN/ISDR (2004b). *Land use, disaster risk and rewards: A community leader's guide*. UN/ISDR Africa 3, Sept, 2004.

UN/ISDR (2004c). "Poverty reduction and disaster risk reduction". *UNISDR Africa Educational Series*, 2(5), December.

UNCRD (2003). "People, communities and disasters." *Proceedings on International Workshop on Earthquake Safer World in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*; Kobe, Japan (February) UNCRD Disaster Management Planning Hyogo Office.

UNCRD (2004a). *Sustainable community-based disaster management (CBDM) practices in Asia: A users guide*; Kobe, Japan (December) UNCRD Disaster Management Planning Hyogo Office.

UNCRD (2004b). *Defining the post and building the future of CBDM, UNCRD Tapestry*; Kobe, Japan (December).

UNEP (2003). *African regional workshop on environmental disasters: Workshop report*. A publication of the United Nations Environment Programme, Japan.

UNEP (2010). *2009 global assessment report of natural disasters*. A publication of UNEP, Geneva.

UNISDR (2003). "Disaster risk reduction: Synthesis of the UNISDR/UNDP online Conference"; August 25 to September 30, 2003 (<http://www.unisdr/dialogue>).

UNISDR (2013a.). *Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action: Summary of reports 2007-2013*. A Publication of UNISDR, Geneva.

UNISDR (2013b.). "Using science for disaster risk reduction". Report of the UNISDR Scientific and Technical Advisory Group-2013; UNIDR, Geneva.

United Nations (2012). *2012 world's risk index*. United Nations' University Institute for Environmental and Human Security, Brussels.

Unugbro, A.O. (2005). "Planning". In B.A. Agbonifoh, A.B Agbadudu and F.I.O Iyayi (eds), *Management: A Nigerian perspective*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Ltd.

Voice (2013a.). "Disaster risk reduction: Joining the dots". *Disaster Risk Reduction Series*, Spring, 2013, p.1.

Voice (2013b.). "Disaster risk reduction: Understanding risks". *Disaster Risk Reduction Series*, Spring, 2013, p.1