Emergency disaster management essay samples

Business, Management

Key Strategic Driver

In the context of the emergency preparedness and disaster management, it is very pertinent to examine the role of environmental factors, such as climate change as a key driver of change. In particular, how it is going to impact the strategic planning and development at national, state, and local level in the short (next 5 years) and the long term (next 10 years).

We are aware that there are different kinds of environmental factors that impact our society; pollution, degradation of ecosystem, and depletion of resources; and reduction in the supply of fresh water. Among these the climate change can be considered as the major environmental factor which the emergency management community in the United States should be concerned about. The impact of these changes is expected to rise in frequency, severity, or scale. They are expected to manifest in terms of extreme weather events such as, floods, drought, and rise in sea-level, precipitation patterns, and life-threatening diseases. Among these the most visible impact will be the increase in frequency and magnitude of natural disasters. This will result in the increased stress on the local communities in terms of increased operational demand on the emergency management system of the local communities.

The major ways in which the changes in climate include; effect on the mitigation, response, preparedness, and recovery operations; the ability of critical infrastructure to withstand stress; and subsequent indirect impacts, such as displacement of population, public health risk, migration etc.

Background

Let us examine how the coastal communities can plan and adapt to risk posed to them due to climate change. The organization believes that planning for climate change is not only about having sustainable environment, but also about managing risk. In this regard, they published a guidebook, which served as a road map to actions that were to be taken at national, regional, and local level. This will enable them to question and analyze the local climate, and this will help them in undertaking priority planning and initiating a climate resiliency effort. This work came out to be an effective tool for the municipalities in their effort to figure out how to manage and mitigate the risk. This approach helped them in analyzing and thinking through the process from their community perspective.

This is all the more important in the light of the fact that climate is many parts of the country are expected to be significantly warmer. According to one of the report cited, many areas in the U. S. are susceptible to flooding, drought, coastal erosion, heat waves, intense hurricanes, and subsequent health impact. Citing an example of King County, which is twice as large as an average county in the U. S., which is vulnerable to many kinds of climate changes.

Further, this idea of a guidebook came out of the conference on climate change, which was sponsored by the county itself. This generated considerable enthusiasm, as this was an opportunity to learn and act in the context of the county. Therefore, the team wrote that guidebook with the understanding of the potential impact of the climate change and the realization that the issues in their county would be unique compared to the

rest of the country. Therefore, they didn’t create a set guideline that can be applied to other counties, but a framework which can be replicated in the context of the other counties.

As the framework in the guidebook had the instructions on creating climate change preparedness team; identifying community vulnerabilities; and identifying, selecting, and implementing adaption options. Further, guidance has been provided on where and how to find and evaluate the information related to climate change. As a step in this direction, they’ve created a checklist “ How to Prepare for Climate Change”. The guidebook also included information on implementing the resultant climate change plan and keeping track of the progress. Therefore, this step by step approach helped in answering most of the important questions about what the leadership of the county needs to do.

The key element of the guidebook was the understanding that planning for the climate change was no different than planning for the current stresses in the environment and the community. All that was required was looking at those issues from a different perspective. It dispelled the notion that there was no need to learn a whole set of vocabulary or how to use a new set of tools. Say for example, if the managers are updating the coastal management plans, they will come across issue that they are currently dealing with. Therefore, the crux of the issue lay in looking at how the climate change was likely to affect these stresses. The underlying philosophy is that is no one-size-fits-all approach to mitigate all the issues pertaining to climate change.

Taking a European example, we found a comprehensive concept of hazard

risk management that included a systemic process of using administrative decisions, organization, operational skills and capacities to implement policies, strategies, and coping capacities of society and communities to lessen the impact of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters.

In this study, the analysis of hazard risk management in the countries of South East Europe took stock of the status of decentralization of disaster risk management, community participation, legislative frameworks, training and education, international cooperation, emergency response planning etc. Their finding shared many common elements with another previous study done in 2004 on how to manage risk posed by disasters. The salient features should be as follows

The concept of environment risk management should be fully institutionalized. In this regard, regulatory framework should be in place so as to allow for the formulation and execution of comprehensive disaster risk program. At a more system level, it is necessary that the coordination between the various authorities is streamlined. This would involve both the horizontal coordination between various government agencies and also vertical coordination between the central and the local authorities.

Conclusion

Environmental risk management is critical aspect of overall disaster risk management. This entails creating framework which can be customizable to the local conditions. This will give great confidence to the users as they would be involved in its development. At the same time, there is need for

some specific organizational and technological steps to complete the implementation.

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