

Between Policy Goals and Actual Outcome: An Assessment of the National Disaster Management Framework in Nigeria, 2010-2020

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ABSTRACT

In Nigeria, research on disaster management has witnessed tremendous attention in recent years. However, no known study has directly assessed the country's main disaster management policy framework. Introduced in 2010 to replace the National Disaster Response Plan, the National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) represents Nigeria's attempt to depart from a response-driven system to a proactive and comprehensive one within its federal political structure having three levels of government. In assessing the Framework, two sets of criteria were used. The first is in line with its pre-determined goals while the second set was drawn from the ecological context of the Framework. Data for the study were generated from both primary and secondary sources. In-depth interviews were conducted with two senior officials of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA); and General Managers of the State Emergency Management Agency of Oyo, Ekiti, Lagos, Osun, and Ogun States. Besides, the NDMF and other secondary materials were read and critically reviewed to generate secondary data. Findings show that despite over a decade since its introduction, the NDMF has not been able to engender the realization of a holistic disaster management system in the country. Rather, it generated rivalry among government agencies assigned to manage disasters. The perceived alienation of many stakeholders especially at the State level in its formulation process; poor funding and lack of political will to execute the provisions of the Framework are notable causes. Knowing the importance of a policy framework in actualizing the goals of disaster management, the paper recommends that stakeholders in the country, especially those at the state and local government levels should be repositioned to play more active roles in the operationalization and implementation of the NDMF.

Keywords: Policy goals, policy assessment, policy outcome/performance, disaster management policy framework.

INTRODUCTION

The National Disaster Management Framework is the blueprint for disaster/emergency management in Nigeria. The Framework was introduced in 2010 to replace the National Disaster Response Plan, which had hitherto existed since 2001 as a major national document that attempted to capture disaster management processes. As its name suggests, the NDRP was limited to disaster response, which is just a phase in the overall process of disaster management. However, due to this shortfall, and the need for a more comprehensive policy document that would cater for other phases of disaster management, which are preparedness, mitigation, and recovery, the idea of a more robust national policy on disaster management (the NDMF) was conceived.

Therefore, the NDMF was designed among other reasons, to serve as a legal instrument upon which all policies, plans, programmes, and procedures for disaster management could be created, developed, and

sustained (NDMF, 2010). Besides, as part of its objectives, the NDMF was expected to provide a transparent and inclusive system, comprising the broad spectrum of disaster management including, institutional capacity, coordination, disaster risk assessment, and response among others (NDMF, 2010).

However, over a decade since its introduction, the National Disaster Management Framework in Nigeria is yet to engender the actualization of a holistic disaster management system in the country. This shortcoming is manifested in all eight thematic areas of the NDMF; the fall-out of which is evident in poor inter-agency coordination/collaboration, unhealthy rivalry, poor institutional arrangement, epileptic and erratic disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery plans and practices. The causes of this misnomer are inherent in the Framework (NDMF) itself and certain abnormalities within the ecological context of the Framework. For instance, the NDMF was designed with the notion that States in the Federation would be major players in the domestication of the Framework. Besides, the local government was positioned by the Framework to play pivotal roles in disaster management in line with global best practices in disaster management, as it obtains in many developed countries. It is important to note that the local government is identified as the first responder and the immediate service provider in the event of any disaster (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, 2010). But the commitment of many States and the posture of the local government is far from being desired.

In reality, only 31 States (including the Federal Capital Territory) have established statutorily-recognized State Emergency Management Agency as prescribed by the NDMF while 6 States (Ogun, Ondo, Edo, Rivers, Cross River, and Kano) were yet to comply (Adefisoye, 2018). Ironically, in States where SEMA has been established, the capacity of such institutions in terms of availability of modern equipment, trained manpower, and knowledge/skills is still missing. Besides, it is underfunded. This trend as argued by Fagbemi (2011) has impeded the standardization of procedures; it has affected collaboration and the coordination of resources when disasters occur. To a very large extent, this development has hindered the implementation of the NDMF and thus brings to the fore the concerns for policy implementation, which is often the graveyard of many good policies in the country.

Objective and Methodology

To this end, this paper assesses the NDMF in Nigeria between 2010 and 2020. To achieve this objective, the survey research design with the qualitative approach was adopted to generate primary non-metric through the conduct of In-depth Interviews. In particular, six (7) KIIs were done with the Head of Operation, and the Head of Relief and Rehabilitation at the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Ekiti Operations Office; and the General Managers of the State Emergency Management Agency of Oyo, Ekiti, Lagos, Osun, and Ogun States. On the other hand, secondary data were obtained through an extensive review of the literature, especially the National Disaster Management Framework, NEMA's Formulation Act, and other relevant policy frameworks on related areas of Disaster Management in Nigeria. Data obtained were content-analyzed and descriptively.

POLICY FRAMEWORK AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT: A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Policies are typically plans of action or broad strategies made to pursue a purpose with regard to a specific problem or in order to achieve a target, whether they be in the public or private sphere. Agagu (2010) argued that public policy specifically refers to a purpose, statement, broad plan, or action taken by a government to address a social issue, neutralize a threat, handle a particular situation, or pursue a certain goal in a particular state. In a similar spirit, Bolaji, Gray & Campbell-Evans (2015) argued that realizing a policy's intended aim is its defining characteristic.

In terms of disaster management strategy, it is crucial to keep in mind that both natural and human-induced disasters take place inside geopolitical boundaries and frequently have negative consequences on human,

economic, social, and political activities. These incidences frequently put a heavy load on government spending, damage public utilities, and imperil efforts to further development (Adefisoye, 2015; Adefisoye, 2017; Adefisoye & Arum, 2021). As a result, in response to this and in accordance with the philosophy guiding governance, the government, as an institution of the state, is expected to establish policies that would effectively and efficiently manage disasters and ultimately reduce the negative effects they cause on the human population, among others.

Former head of the Italian Civil Protection Agency Guido Bertolaso proposed that the government should take the lead in disaster management both directly by effectively allocating public resources and indirectly by educating the populace on how to ward off disaster occurrences (Arrow, Becker, Ostrom, Schelling, Sen, and Solow, 2010). Sentra (2013) noted that the creation of public policies and laws is the first significant step in achieving this. These laws and policies will then establish disaster management institutions and agencies, tasked with the responsibility of coordinating and integrating all activities required to develop, maintain, and improve the capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, and recover from potential or actual natural or human-induced disasters. Therefore, establishing guidelines, processes, and procedures for their operations is just as vital as having disaster management structures (Adefisoye & Arum, 2021; Adefisoye & Agagu, 2021). As a result, a policy framework is required.

In order to address the effects of major disasters declared in a nation, region, or locality under the appropriate national, regional, or local legislation, a policy framework for disaster management must be established (Adefisoye, 2015; Adefisoye, 2017; Adefisoye & Arum, 2021). Carter succinctly explained:

A clear definition of national disaster management policy is essential if a country is to establish and maintain adequate arrangements to deal with all aspects of its disaster threat. This applies to all levels of the national structure and organization—that is, from the national government to the local government or community level. If such a policy does not exist, arrangements to deal with disaster will be ill-defined and inadequate. Consequently, a loss of material and human resources will arise; the nation, as a whole, will suffer (Carter, 2008, p. 25).

However, Carter advises that a strong and clear disaster management policy should offer the majority, if not all, of the following benefits: demonstrated leadership from the government in disaster-related matters; the foundation for suitable legislation and associated regulations; a basis for sound organization and clear allocation of responsibilities; overall direction for ensuring the best use of resources against a carefully assessed threat; and national competence and national competence and self-reliance that is likely to engender optimum international assistance when the need arises.

From the foregoing, it is important to state that beyond the convention of setting up institutions and structures to manage hazards and disasters, it is equally important to ensure that those structures work optimally. Failure to ensure this would impede the processes in the implementation stage of policies, and affect the execution of programmes and projects. So, the effectiveness of a policy depends on how well it is carried out. Anderson (2011, p. 21) puts it that “if implementation fails, [then] all that came before was for naught”. Unfortunately, this has been the reality of many good policies in Nigeria, especially as those policies concern disaster management.

OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK, 2010

With a view to addressing some of the shortfalls of the National Disaster Response Plan, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) set up an in-house committee. The Committee was saddled with

the sole responsibility to develop a ‘zero document’ that would be holistic in nature and reflect global best practices in disaster management (NDMF, 2010). The document generated at the completion of the assignment formed the basis and acted as the baseline for inputs from stakeholders across Nigeria to ensure participation, ownership, and sustainability (NDMF, 2010). The zero documents sought to provide answers to the following questions: Over what duties does someone bear responsibility? Who has the power to decide what? Who will perform which task? Who is responsible for what? How will the jurisdictions operate? Whom will they collaborate with? How will they cooperate? What is the governing law? What does resource base mean? ...as well as other new issues (NDMF, 2010).

NEMA convened roundtable discussions on the zero papers in each of the geopolitical zones and at the national level to address these problems. Federal, state, and local governments; Ministries/Departments and Agencies (MDAs); and the military, police, and paramilitary were said to have been represented at the roundtable. Others include the commercial sector, foreign NGOs, partners in development, and civil society organizations (NDMF, 2010). Recommendations from the roundtable and other earlier inputs culminated in the NDMF. The Framework consists of eight (8) sections with seven (7) focus areas and criteria for assessment. These areas are:

- i. Institutional Capacity
- ii. Coordination
- iii. Disaster Risk Assessment
- iv. Disaster Risk Reduction
- v. Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation
- vi. Disaster Response
- vii. Disaster Recovery
- viii. Facilitators and Enabler

Institutional Capacity

Institutional capacity focuses on the establishment of necessary institutional arrangements for implementing disaster management plans within the Federal, State, and Local governments. As a thematic area, it mandates the establishment of disaster management structures at all levels of governance (NDMF, 2010: 8). The NDMF is founded on the principles of shared responsibility and the need to ensure proper integration and collaboration among stakeholders (NDMF, 2010, p. 8). The Framework stipulates that:

There shall be National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) at the Federal level; State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) at the State level; and the Local Emergency Management Authority (LEMA) at the local level.... Every tier of government shall build the capacity of its emergency management institution to prepare for, prevent against, respond to, and recover from disaster events. Federal, State, and Local governments, relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), the Military, Police, Paramilitary, and Civil Society Organizations shall develop their capacities in disaster management (NDMF, 2010, p. 8).

Aside from the involvement of governmental institutions, the NDMF acknowledges the importance of community involvement in disaster management. It, therefore, states that “community institutions shall acquire disaster management capacities as first responders and Emergency Management Volunteers (EMVs) shall be established to complement the organized structures (NDMF, 2010, p. 8). On the involvement of military and paramilitary involvement, the Framework states that “Disaster Response Units (DRUS), shall be established in the different military formations across the country to provide assistance to civil authority during emergencies” (NDMF, 2010, p. 8).

Coordination

Coordination as a thematic area in the National Disaster Management Framework establishes the module for coordinating the different stakeholders involved in disaster management in Nigeria. It describes the process of “harmonizing and synergizing diverse activities to achieve the goals and objectives of disaster management” (NDMF, 2010, p. 18). Specifically, the objectives of coordination under the NDMF are to “develop horizontal and vertical coordination strategies to take care of synergy at the three tiers of government and among stakeholders; and enhance efficient and effective administration of disaster management activities and operations” (NDMF, 2010, p. 18).

Sequel to the first objective, the Framework specifies that vertical coordination shall be the relationship among NEMA, SEMA, LEMA, and community structures. Under such a situation, NEMA’s Zonal Office shall coordinate the activities and operation of SEMA, LEMA, and community structures; while SEMA shall coordinate the activities of LEMA and community structures. At the local level, LEMA shall coordinate the activities and operations of the community and report to SEMA (NDMF, 2010, p. 18).

On the other hand, the interaction between disaster management stakeholders at various levels of government is referred to as horizontal coordination under the NDMF. This shall mean that “NEMA will take the initiative to organize and work with pertinent federal Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAS); DRUs; police; paramilitary; international; and local NGOs” (NDMF, 2010, p. 18). On the other hand, SEMA was given the task of coordinating the efforts of pertinent stakeholders at the state level.

The Framework further states that NEMA shall be the coordinating body at the national level while SEMA and LEMA shall be the coordinating bodies at the state and local government levels respectively (NDMF, 2010, p. 18). It further states that coordination shall be time-bound, participatory, impartial, and transparent in order to make the process effective. It is important to add that effective coordination in disaster management shall be multi-sectoral, multi-resource, and multi-disciplinary (NDMF, 2010, p. 18).

Disaster Risk Assessment

According to the NDMF, the disaster risk assessment is the first step in creating a successful disaster management strategy. It was developed to serve as a manual for all federal, state, and local activities for disaster risk reduction, preparedness, prevention, and mitigation (NDMF, 2010). DRA is also intended to investigate the likelihood of impending catastrophic events and their effects on vulnerable people across the country. In principle, DRA must, in accordance with the Framework, i. plan ahead for known hazards or catastrophes to reduce losses; and ii. make sure that development programs optimize the results of vulnerability reduction.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Disaster risk reduction is the NDMF’s fourth thematic area. Disaster risk reduction, or DRR as it is frequently referred to, aims to reduce the potential effects of disaster on people, socioeconomic activities, and the environment. It is the result of the incorporation of comprehensive disaster management methodologies into the creation of policy to address a variety of social, economic, and environmental issues (NDMF, 2010). In terms of DRR, the Framework mandates cooperation between the three tiers of government represented by NEMA, SEMA, and LEMA in order to achieve the objectives of DRR. In accordance with the Framework, “NEMA, SEMA, and LEMA shall collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure that coherent and relevant disaster risk reduction planning is undertaken at all levels, including the community” (NDMF, 2010, p. 36). Accordingly, this arrangement was to ensure that the State and Local

Government disaster risk management plans are consistent with the National disaster risk reduction management plan (NDMF, 2010).

It is vital to note that DRR, as outlined by the NDMF, is intended to be incorporated into government plans for development and education at all levels. Regarding the former, disaster risk mitigation is a component of short-, medium-, and long-term development plans. Similarly, the Framework anticipated that DRR would be mainstreamed into the curricula of primary, secondary, and university schools and institutions.

Disaster Preparedness / Prevention /Mitigation

There are complementing goals for the components of the sixth thematic area(s) under the NDMF. The principles and measurements that will aid in the design, execution, supervision, and evaluation of actions and programs for disaster prevention, preparedness, and mitigation at all levels are the NDMF's stated objectives. Disaster preparedness is a strategy that includes actions made ahead of time to enable an effective reaction to catastrophes, timely and effective early warning, and the evacuation of people and property from vulnerable areas. On the other hand, disaster mitigation refers to "measures for minimizing the destructive and disruptive effects of hazards and reducing their magnitude" (NDMF, 2010, p. 43–44). Disaster prevention, on the other hand, involves all actions that provide "outright avoidance of the adverse impact of natural and humans" (NDMF, 2010, p. 44).

Disaster Response

According to the NDMF, disaster reaction refers to the quick responses given in the wake of a disaster. It necessitates constant contact and coordination between numerous government departments, emergency response teams, and community support services. Given the variety of disasters, disaster response is also a multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary, and multi-resource obligation within the NDMF. It is important to remember that the NDMF required the three government agencies—NEMA, SEMA, and LEMA—to work together, particularly when it comes to disaster response planning and the creation of disaster response plans. The latter is addressed by the NDMF, which emphasizes that "NEMA, SEMA, and LEMA shall collaborate with relevant stakeholders to develop Disaster Response Plans (DRPs) at federal, state, and local government level, respectively" (NDMF, 2010, p. 47–48).

Disaster Recovery

All programs, actions, and interventions that are carried out to assist catastrophe survivors and the impacted communities in getting back to their daily lives while reducing the risk of future disasters are referred to as disaster recovery. Rehabilitating survivors, reintegrating displaced people and vulnerable groups, rebuilding infrastructures, and cleaning up the environment damaged by the disaster are all covered (NDMF, 2010).

Facilitators and Enablers

'Facilitators and Enablers' is the name of the eighth and final thematic area of the NDMF of 2010. This shall represent the individuals, organizations, institutions, systems, and procedures required for effective and efficient integration and coordination in disaster management, in accordance with the Framework. Specific roles, responsibilities, and obligations must be followed by the facilitators in order for them to cooperate well. The systems for funding, educating, communicating, and exchanging information, on the other hand, support disaster management efforts at all levels (NDMF, 2010).

The development of a participatory monitoring and evaluation structure that will direct every step of the disaster management process is specifically anticipated of facilitators. They must specify the type, sources, and distribution of money for disaster management at the federal, state, and local levels of government.

Similar to this, the NDMF's enablers include "the funding sources, the methods for improving knowledge and skills in disaster management at all levels of government, and the financing sources themselves" (NDMF, 2010, p. 60).

ASSESSING THE NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The assessment of Nigeria's disaster management policy guide – NDMF is done having in mind and taking into consideration two sets of criteria. The first set contains important pre-determined goals of the Framework while the second set was drawn from within the ecological context of the Framework and includes popular participation and involvement of stakeholders during the formulation stage.

The First Set of Criteria

It is clearly stated in the second and third paragraphs on page one of the NDMF that the Framework provides the regulatory guide for the operations of stakeholders and actors in Nigeria's disaster management sector. The Framework states further that:

The involvement of different actors and stakeholders in disaster management requires the existence of a coordination and collaboration mechanism. The National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) provides this mechanism that serves as a regulatory guideline for effective and efficient disaster management in Nigeria. The framework defines measurable, flexible, and adaptable coordinating structures, and aligns key roles and responsibilities of disaster management stakeholders across the nation. It describes specific authorities and best practices for managing disasters and explains a paradigm shift in disaster management beyond mere response and recovery. The NDMF offers a holistic approach to disaster management. It serves as a legal instrument to address the need for consistency among multiple stakeholders (NDMF, 2010, p. 1).

From the foregoing, "engendering the development of institutional capacity" and "provision of a coordination and collaboration mechanism for the operation of stakeholders and actors" are the two criteria adopted. Although each thematic area of the NDMF has its spelled-out objectives, all can be said to be offshoots of the two identified goals.

Criterion One: Engendering the Development of Institutional Capacity

The place of governmental agencies and bureaus in the implementation and sustainability of public policies cannot be over-emphasized (Adefisoye & Arum, 2021; Adefisoye, 2020a). Agagu (2010) has argued that governmental institutions as variables in the public policy process provide the framework and the arena for the ebbs and flow of public policy. He further argues that bureaucracies are governance structures created to facilitate political, economic, and social interactions (2010, p. 19).

Corroborating the foregoing, Bolaji, Gray & Campbell-Evans (2015) posited that governmental structures play significant roles in policy implementation and in achieving the desired outcome in policy studies. In the same vein, Keiser (2011) claims that bureaucratic alignment in policy realization positively or negatively affects policy decisions. Therefore, bureaucracies play a central role in implementing public policy by applying programme rules to individual cases (Bolaji, Gray & Campbell-Evans, 2015: 59). Particularly in a multi-sectoral policy environment, inter-agency collaboration is key to policy implementation. So, there is a need to ensure the viability of governmental agencies.

As highlighted under the thematic areas, institutional capacity under the NDMF is founded on the principles of shared responsibility and the need to ensure proper integration and collaboration among stakeholders especially governmental structures (NDMF, 2010:8). Principally, the federal, state, and local governments

were mandated to establish NEMA, SEMA, and LEMA/C at their various domains respectively. Besides, military and paramilitary organizations in the country are expected to strengthen their Disaster Reduction Units, while CSOs, NGOs, and INGOs were also expected to build capacities.

Firstly, at the federal level, NEMA as the lead agency in Nigeria's disaster management system is plagued by inadequate manpower, the absence of modern equipment, and poor funding among other challenges (Fagbemi, 2011; Sadiq, 2012; Onwubiko, 2012; Sani-Sidi, 2014 cited in PM News; Adefisoye, 2019; Adefisoye & Agagu, 2021). In the area of funding, it is worthy of note that just one percent (1%) of Nigeria's national budget is allocated to the Ecological Fund in which twenty (20%) of this is allocated to NEMA (National Capacity Assessment Report, 2012, p.10). The remaining 80% of the Ecological Fund is utilized by federal ministries such as Environment, Health, and others that contribute to disaster risk reduction and mitigation, as well as states and local governments. This by implication leaves NEMA to seek funds independently for its activities. The fall-out of poor funding or underfunding as lamented by the Head of Operation, NEMA Operational Office in Ado-Ekiti in an interview, has also prevented NEMA from procuring modern equipment like helicopters, disaster monitoring gadgets, and so on. The H.O.P explained that the Agency (NEMA) could only boast of two helicopters while each State in a country like Egypt owns at least six helicopters.

Fagbemi (2011) and Sadiq (2012) have separately observed that poor funding has also prevented NEMA from implementing the Vulnerability Assessment Analysis (VAA). The VAA is a risk reduction strategy designed to identify certain hazards that are peculiar to every community across the country. Besides, the H.O.P of NEMA Ado Ekiti Office added that the Agency has only managed to carry out the assessment in only six states in the federation; a situation that has affected Contingency Planning in other thematic areas. In addition, NEMA, in two decades since its establishment (1999-2020) can only boast 16 offices across the country, including zonal and operational offices; an arrangement that emergency management practitioners have described as inadequate for a country like Nigeria. It is important to note that it was at the aftermath of the episodic flood deluge of 2011/2012 that the Ekiti Operation Office was created. Hitherto, NEMA had six offices, each sited in every six geo-political zones of Nigeria, and the headquarters office in Abuja.

At the State level, the situation appears more precarious as records show that a total of 31 states (including the Federal Capital Territory) have established statutorily-recognized SEMAs while 6 States (Ogun, Ondo, Edo, Rivers, Cross River, and Kano) are yet to comply (Adefisoye, 2018). In the case of Ogun, all necessary documentation has been made but the Chief Executive of the State was yet to make his final approval; ostensibly because of the financial implication such approval may have on the finances of the State (KII, 2018). More pathetic is the situation in Ekiti State SEMA between 2014 and 2018. The interview conducted with the General Manager of the Agency revealed that the Agency only received the meager sum of 60,000 Naira as its monthly grant; a situation that made it to depend on NEMA for its operations. In addition, Ekiti SEMA was housed by the Ministry of Local Government in the old governor's office where its 20 staff operate from four office rooms. The General Manager of the Agency lamented that the Agency could not boast of its own equipment, and save an old Hilux van; a situation that has incapacitated the Agency from carrying out its duties. The case in Oyo and Kogi States were similar, as the SEMAs in the two States got between 60,000 and 75,000 naira respectively as their monthly running cost (Fieldwork, 2019).

Fagbemi (2011) has argued that in states where the old emergency management system-Emergency Relief Agency-or ad hoc emergency management system is still in operation, it is more difficult to standardize procedures, collaborate, and coordinate resources when disasters occur. In his words, the HOP, NEMA, Ado-Ekiti Office, added that even in States where SEMA has been established, the capacity of the institutions in terms of availability of modern equipment, trained manpower, and knowledge/skills is still missing; besides, these institutions are underfunded.

Stemming from the foregoing, Onwubiko explained that in 2012, June 12 precisely when the 50-year-old

Abakpa-Nile Bridge in Enugu State collapsed under the heavy weight of rainfall: an incident that made commuters to remain stranded for several hours before the Enugu State Government mobilized a private company to the site (Onwubiko, 2012). This incident revealed that there was no functional government-owned structure to manage disasters in the state. In the same vein, the effects of the 2011 flood on Ibadan, the capital of Oyo state, and other areas within the State would have been minimal in terms of recorded casualties and property loss if there were functional emergency management agencies on the ground. Damages suffered by the University of Ibadan alone were estimated to be over N10 Billion, including the washing away of its Fish Farm with different species of fish valued at about N300 million; the flooding of the Zoological Garden, leading to the death of animals, extensive damage of the Teaching and Research Farm; and the destruction of books estimated at about N2 billion. (Onwubiko, 2012; UI Report, 2013). Worthy of note is that Oyo state, as at the time of the flood in 2011 did not have a State Emergency Management Agency but only relied on the State's Ministry of Environment.

The case at the local government level is more pathetic as only 54 of the 774 local governments have a resemblance of NEMA (Sani-Sidi, 2014). Whereas local governments play very important roles in disaster management, as they represent the first responders and the immediate service providers at any disaster event (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, 2010).

Criterion Two: Coordination of Inter-Agency Activities

On paper, the NDMF made provision for two kinds of coordination; vertical and horizontal. Vertical coordination describes the relationship between NEMA, SEMA, and LEMA while horizontal coordination defines the relationship among different stakeholders at different levels of government (NDMF, 2010). However, one of the most visible challenges of the NDMF is that of collaboration and coordination among stakeholders, particularly government agencies –NEMA, SEMA, and LEMA. Generally, coordination is “a management function that involves the pulling together of an organization's physical and human resources towards the attainment of organizational goals” (Olaoye, 2005, p. 39). As a coordinator, management is seen as a form of liaison officer among the various departments, divisions and units. Under the NDMF, coordination describes “the process of harmonizing and synergizing diverse activities in order to achieve the goals and objectives of disaster management” (NDMF, 2010, p. 18).

Describing emergency management coordination in Nigeria, the H.O.P, NEMA, Ekiti Operation Office, expressed that although there is a level of cordiality among agencies of disaster management, such relation, has been hampered by unhealthy rivalry among other factors. By unhealthy rivalry, he explains that “every agency of government wants to take the credit, wants to be seen, wants to make press statements and wants to ‘display their jerseys’ at the event of a disaster”. This according to him has affected a significant level of inter-agency collaboration.

The situation is worse at the state-local government due to the absence of Local Emergency Management Authority in many States of the federation. Under the NDMF, LEMAs are to monitor the level of preparedness at the community level and provide feedback to SEMA. Besides, the local government is meant to respond to disaster events. However, in an event where LEMA is totally absent (as is the case in many states which agency carry-out these duties)?

The realities of poor coordination of disaster management activities particularly prevention, mitigation, and preparedness were manifested before, during, and after the 2012 flood incidents. It is important to note that the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET) had sounded the alarm warning in February of that year of the impending deluge but such warning was not taken seriously. The second danger signal sounded again in August, this time by the authorities of the Lagdo dam in Cameroun on its intention to release water from the dam.

Despite these warnings, the flood affected an estimated 256 local government areas in 33 out of 36 states of the Federation (NEMA, 2013). So devastating was the scale of the disaster that 7,705,378 people were affected out of which 2,157,419 were registered as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) at some point; more than 618,800 houses were damaged or destroyed and 363 persons lost their lives. The problem of coordination also manifests in the disaster recovery process that includes IDP management, disbursement, and monitoring of relief materials to end-users. It was widely reported in the media (during the period in view), that relief materials were hoarded, divested and in many extreme cases, distribution of those items was politicized (Reliefweb, 2016; *Vanguard*, 4 May 2017; *Daily Post*, June 15, 2017; and *Guardian*, 22 June 2017).

In addition to the foregoing and to further attest to the poor coordination, poor monitoring, stealing, and diversion of relief materials, it was reported on 4 May 2017 that a local government Supervisory Councilor from Mafa LGA of Borno state, North-east Nigeria, Mr. Umar Ibrahim alongside an accomplice Mr. Bulama Ali Zangebe were convicted for stealing and diverting 245 bags of rice which were donated by the Danish Refugee Council to IDPs in the State (*Vanguard*, 4 May 2017).

The Second Set of Criteria

The second set of criteria was drawn from the ecological context of the NDMF. These criteria include popular participation and inclusiveness during the policy formulation stage; and feasibility of implementation and sustainability.

Criterion Three: Popular Participation and Inclusiveness during the policy formulation stage

Nigeria is a federal state, so policies especially at the implementation stage often assume inter-government and inter-bureaucratic dimensions (Adefisoye & Agagu, 2021; Adefisoye & Arum, 2021). As observed by Agagu (2010) many public policies in Nigeria are inter-governmental in nature given the fact that many of the policies are often initiated by the federal government. The implication of this is that certain peculiarities associated with individual states are often misrepresented, underestimated, and in some cases, overlooked. Another implication of the inter-governmental dimension of public policies in Nigeria as argued by Osaghe (1992) is that it gives room for poor policy coordination. This according to him has prevented the harmonization of policy goals.

With respect to the NDMF of 2010, the policy framework can best be described as the initiative of the federal government. Although, NEMA claimed to have involved stakeholders across the six geo-political zones in the formulation process, such may not have been representative enough. This is perhaps due to the fact that only six out of the thirty-six states of the federation had fully established their SEMA with ten others in the process of registration (IDI, 2018).

Although the H.O.P, NEMA Ekiti argued that the NDMF was done in line with global best practices in disaster management and only represents a template for other agencies to work with, the Framework is still perceived as the brain-child of the federal government. This situation is ostensibly responsible for the lethargy exhibited by state governments towards the NDMF. The H.O.P further argued that many states governor lack the commitment and willpower to implement those provisions of the NDMF. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that consensus-building is an important requirement for securing popular acceptance of public policy. Olugbenga (2017, p. 82) explains that:

Although ‘successful’ public policies are rare in the strict sense of the word, policies often stand better chances of attaining specified ends if they appreciate the values of consultation, the bottom-up process, and the need for social diffusion and aggregation, rather than social differentiation and segregation. Above all ...

(they) must encourage gravitation towards ideas of the public interest, which... (includes) consensus, effectiveness, efficiency, and service delivery. This was obviously missing in the formulation process of the NDMF in 2010.

Criterion Four: Feasibility of Implementation and Sustainability

Considering the content, context, and intent of the NDMF, it can be deduced that the architects of the Framework premised it on idealness and perhaps did not put into consideration salient intervening variables that may constitute a cog in the wheel of a policy process. For instance, the Framework assumed that there would be an inter-agency collaboration between the federal and state governments in the execution of the provision of the NDMF; an assumption which various situations in Nigeria's policy arena have proven unrealistic and unattainable. Particularly, the NDMF assumed that state governments would in no doubt create enabling that would lead to the establishment of LEMA and the constitution of the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC).

Besides, the Framework assumed that the state government would in no doubt grant full financial and political autonomy to the local government. However, the local government in Nigeria has been enmeshed under the basement of the country's chaotic federal system (Agagu, 2011). Ideally, as advanced by the United Nations Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), the local government is essential in the management of disasters. Capturing the dilemma of the local government as an institution in Nigeria's disaster management system, Onwubiko laments that:

The problem of disaster management and response initiative in the country is worse at the local government level. The 774 LGAs have become dysfunctional majorly because of the undemocratic tendencies of state governors that have largely failed to respect Section 7 of the 1999 Constitution by ensuring that democratic structures are institutionalized in the grass root level (Onwubiko, 2012, p. 3).

In the area of sustainability, it is important to add that the architects of the NDMF did not provide a financial benchmark for each level of government in the development of disaster management in their various domains.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has assessed the National Disaster Management Framework; the blueprint for Nigeria's disaster management system. Although an improvement on the National Disaster Response Plan, the NDMF can best be described as paperwork with low commitment from those who are meant to implement it. Poor inter-agency collaboration, low institutional capacity, and inter-agency rivalry among other factors affected the implementation of the Framework. This has once again brought to the fore the issue of policy implementation in the country, which has severally been described as the graveyard of many good policies in Nigeria.

Although there are usually gaps between policy objectives and policy outcomes due to certain intervening variables and unanticipated factors, such gaps should be minimal and not totally mar the policy intentions. However, the NDMF was grossly marred as a result of the aforementioned factors. Despite this, the NDMF was able to at least create the needed roadmap for stakeholders and practitioners in Nigeria's disaster management arena to guide their efforts and actions. Also, it presented a veritable landscape for assessing plans and programmes in Nigeria's disaster management system. However, the Framework could be reworked to fast-track the actualization of the goals of disaster management in Nigeria. Having this in mind, the paper recommends that:

One, an urgent and all-inclusive inter-agency and stakeholders' conference/round-table should be convened

to re-structure the Framework. This time around, stakeholders at all levels should be involved to achieve consensus-building and ownership. Areas that needed urgent attention include but are not limited to disaster response, disaster recovery, and finance. Secondly, efforts should be directed toward the attainment of full autonomy at the local government. This is because the dream of having a dynamic, effective, and efficient disaster management system in Nigeria would be a mirage if the government at the local level is not positioned to play its stipulated roles. Thirdly, an urgent appeal should go to state governments particularly those for which States are yet to establish SEMA to see the need to commit their resources towards doing so. Besides establishing SEMA in their states, their commitment to the functioning of the agencies should be unwavering.

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