Mainstreaming Disaster Management Education in Basic and Secondary Schools' Curriculum for human security and Sustainable Development in Nigeria in the 21st century

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Abstract – The paper examines the evolution and development of disaster management programmes in Nigeria. It also examines achievements and success stories of the activities of the National Emergency Management Agency NEMA, since inception. However, the paper identifies among other things, that neither the Agency nor the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction has adequately recognized the imperatives of disaster management education in schools curriculum in building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters, as envisaged in the Hyogo Framework for Action. Consequently, despite more than a century of disaster management in Nigeria, the nation has not been able to build a culture of safety and resilience to disaster among its citizens. Many man-made and natural disasters such as flooding, desertification, deforestation, epidemics, roads and air accidents, building collapse, insurgency, militancy, political crises, ethnic violence, etc continue to repeat themselves like annual rites in Nigeria. The paper, in the final analysis, have argues that, for Nigeria to succeed in building a culture of safety and resilience to hazards, and strengthen institutions and mechanism for disaster management in the country, there is the need to systematically include disaster management education in Basic and Secondary Schools Curriculum.

Keywords: Disaster, Management, Education, Schools' Curriculum, human security and Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Disasters, both natural and man-made had been part and parcel of human experiences. It is the result of disruption and malfunction of elements in the process of man's interaction with physical and social environment. Technological progress and environmental complexities of the 21st century significantly increased the rate of disasters worldwide. The closing decade of the 20th century witnessed renewed and vigorous commitment on disaster management, leading to a global plan of action on disaster risk reduction called the '1990 – 1999 International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR)'. In 2000, the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) was launched. The (ISDR) secretariat was established to coordinate disaster reduction strategies and programmes. Its mission is to help people withstand disasters by making them aware of the importance of disaster reduction measures and providing support to help reduce human, economic and social losses.(NEMA,June 2004:7) and (NEMA:UN/ISDR Africa Educational Series,2004). Since its establishment, the UN/ISDR Secretariat continue to initiate policies and programmes aimed at coordinating Disaster management worldwide. Moreover, in January 2005, over 4000 representatives of governments, non-governmental organisations(NGOs), academic institutes and the private sector gathered in Kobe, Japan, at the Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction(WCDR) and concluded Negotiations leading to Hyogo Framework for Action2005-2015:Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters(HFA). The Hyogo Framework for Action was adopted by 168 states, sets a clear expected outcome; the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives as well as the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries (UN/ISDR,2008:69).

The Goals of Hyogo Framework for Action

The three strategic Goals of Hyogo Framework for Action are:

i) The integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies and planning;
ii) The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capabilities to build resilience to hazards;
iii) The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the implementation of emergency preparedness and recovery programmes.

In order to actualize these goals, the Hyogo Framework outlines five priorities Action. They are:

1) Ensure that disaster risk reduction(DRR) is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation;
2) Identify,assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning;
3) Use knowledge,innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels;
4) Reduce the underlying risk factors; and
5) Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.(UN/ISDR,2007: 96).

In Nigeria, several efforts were made towards enhancing National resilience for Disaster Risk Reduction. Although the decade covered by Hyogo framework of Action,2005-2015 has ended last year, Nigeria has not adequately applied and exhausted the strategies identified for building resilience of nations to natural disasters. In particular, the third strategy of: using knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels, have not adequately been implemented. This paper, seeks to suggest measures through which disaster management Education could be properly mainstreamed in Basic and Secondary Schools' curriculum, for the promotion of human security and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

Disaster is a serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing widespread human material or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using only its own resources (UNDP in Muhammad, 2010: 1). **Disaster Risk Reduction**(DRR) on the other hand, is the systematic development and application of policies, strategies and practices to minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risk in a society; to avoid or to limit adverse impacts of hazards, within the broader context of sustainable development.(Aisueni,2010: 1)

Disaster management on the other hand, involves:

- Establishing comprehensive and coordinated plans, structures and arrangements by countries, states, communities and a range of agencies to deal with disaster related emergencies;
- Improving the safety and well-being of individuals and reduce risks to life, property and the environment.
- Prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery from all types of disasters.(Aisueni,2010: 1). **Disaster management** is also defined to be the systematic observation and analysis of disasters to improve measures relating to prevention, mitigation, preparedness, emergency response and recovery.(Nuhu,2010: 1) .

According to Cambridge International Dictionary of English, **Development** is a state of growing into a more advanced and effective form, while **sustainable** means to keep something into existence, i.eto continue in its present form (Procter, 1995: 377 and 1472). Brundtland Commission on the other hand, defines **sustainable Development**, as the development that meets the present need without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs.(Brundtland report,2009:1-2). **Hazard** means a potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity, which may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation. **Vulnerability** is a set of conditions and processes resulting from physical,social,economic and environmental factors, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards. **Risk** on the other hand, is the probability of harmful consequences, or expected loss (of lives, people injured, property, livelihoods, economic activity disrupted or environmental damage) resulting from interactions between natural or human induced hazards and vulnerable/capable conditions. **Preparedness**: Activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of disasters, including the

issuance of timely and effective early warnings and the temporary removal of people and property from a threatened location. **Mitigation**: Structural and non-structural measures undertaken to limit the adverse impact of natural hazards, environmental degradation and technological hazards. (UN/ISDR, 2004:47-50).

Disaster Management in Nigeria

The first recorded attempt to manage disaster by Nigerian government was in1906 when fire Brigade was established by the federal government. Fire Brigade (later, Fire Service) was charged with the responsibilities of saving lives and properties, as well as providing humanitarian services during emergencies among others. However, the1972/1973 drought which resulted to huge losses of lives and properties in the country clearly exposed the inadequacy of Fire Service in managing disaster in Nigeria, thus leading to the formulation of Act No 48 of 1976, and eventual establishment of National Emergency Relief Agency (NERA) in 1990. NERA, in addition to saving lives and properties during disasters, was equally charged with the responsibility of collecting and distributing relief materials to disaster victims.(Akujobi,2010:2) and (Nuhu,2010: 8) The establishment of NERA in Nigeria coincided with the United Nations International Decade for Disasters Reduction(UNIDDR) which started in 1990. Haven realised the paradigm shift on Disaster management in the global arena as envisaged in the International Decade for Disasters Reduction, the federal government elevated the status of NERA to an independent body charged, in addition to its existing functions, with the task of formulating policies and guidelines relating to disaster management in Nigeria, through the Decree No. 119of 1993. Interestingly, reoccurrence of man-made and natural disasters in the country, including air crashes and other related disasters, further revealed the need for coordinated disaster management involving relevant stakeholders in the country. In 1997, the management of NERA conveyed a National Stakeholders Workshop to deliberate on the need to re-structure and repositioned NERA for an effective disaster management system in the country. Accordingly, the workshop among other things agreed to; expand the functions of NERA; amend the Decree setting up NERA; and change its name to National Emergency Management Agency(NEMA).(Akujobi,2010:2). The processes of re-organising NERA coincided with the return of civilian administration in 1999. That year, the National Emergency Management Agency(NEMA) Act No.12 was enacted, and by 2001, the Act was amended leading to the formulation of Act No 50 in 2001, further perfecting the emergence of NEMA as a coordinating body for disaster management in Nigeria.(UN/ISDR,2008:42-43) and (NEMA,2008:1).

One of the significant aspects of the emergence of NEMA was the conceptual shift, from response to disasters when they occur to mitigate building resilience to disasters and Disasters Risk Reduction. Immediately after the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe Japan, in January 2005, which led to the Hyogo Framework for Action, NEMA Governing Council inaugurated an Interim Committee for the coordination of efforts towards the formulation of National platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management in Nigeria. Accordingly, in March 2005, the committee and NEMA organised a roundtable discussion of stakeholders in Abuja, with a theme: 'Towards an Effective National Stakeholders' platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria'. Various stakeholders, such as building professionals, media, NGO's, National Assembly, academia, National Planning Commission, and relevant Government departments etc, were represented during the meeting. Resulting from the outcome of the meeting and the series of advocacy campaigns, in October 2005, the then President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, represented by the Minister of Environment, Professor Iyocha Ayu, formally launched the "National platform for Disaster Risk Reduction" in Nigeria. (Ojo, 2008:1 – 3). The National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction presented a position paper which was adopted in early 2006,as the guiding principle, by the committee established by NEMA Governing Council, to coordinate the Drafting of an overarching National Policy for Disaster Management for Nigeria. Through the participating exchange of experience, discussions and contributions of diverse stakeholders drawn from the six geopolitical zones, the committee came up with 'National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction' in July 2006,as the guiding principle of Disaster management in Nigeria, and an instrument for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) in Nigeria (Audu-Bida, 2006:1-7).

A Critical look at NEMA and the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Since inception,NEMA has embarked on laudable programmesand activities aimed at Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and overall disaster management in Nigeria. In addition to zonal offices at the Six-geopolitical Zones, additional zonal offices were opened in some States of the Federation for successful coordination of disaster

management in Nigeria. NEMA governing council headed by the Vice President of the federal Republic of Nigeria has an elaborate membership of relevant Government Departments and Stakeholders. For instance, apart from the representatives of the federal ministries of Aviation; Health, Water Resources, Works, Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs, Environment, Transportation, etc., other stakeholders such as the Red Cross, Security Agencies, NGOs, etc., were all represented in the Governing Council of the National Emergency Management Agency(Akujobi, 2010:3).

In addition to the office of the Director General, six functional Departments were established in NEMA, to enable it perform its functions. They are: Department of Planning, Research and Forecasting; Department of Search and Rescue; Department of Training; Department of Finance and Accounts; Department of Administration and Supplies; and Department of Relief and Rehabilitation. Although all the Departments are working round the clock to help the Agency actualize its goals, it is evident that the bulk of the Agency's activities are still inform of response to Disasters than building resilience and raising the level of nation's preparedness to effectively mitigate and manage Disasters in Nigeria. This problem can be noticed in continued re-occurrence of disasters, both natural and man-made, such as annual flooding, building collapse, erosion, Desertification, Breakdown of Social Order, Road Accident, and diseases, among others. More so, most States and local governments are yet to adequately legislate and establish complementary functional Emergency Management Agencies as well as Streamlined Disaster Management Strategies in educational and development plans (Ojo,2007:004 – 006).

It is important to note that NEMA in partnership with relevant stakeholders was conducting a lot of public awareness campaigns in order to mitigate and increase the level of nation's preparedness in disaster management. Ironically, most of these public awareness campaigns could not effectively reach the average citizens in the rural and semi-urban areas. Similarly, the training programmes and capacity building is mostly restricted to the staff of NEMA. Although post-graduate Diploma and Degrees on Disaster management are being run in six universities across the nation, disaster management Education is not yet mainstreamed in Basic and Secondary Schools Curriculum.(Adikwu, 2010:1 -6) and (Aisueni, 2010:1 – 4).

The National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction, (2006 – 2015) outlined elaborate policies and plan of actions targeted at Disaster RR and overall management in Nigeria. Ironically, the Action Plan fails to adequately appreciate the role Nigeria's education programme can play towards Disaster Risk Reduction in the country. Beyond passing comments on the need to include disaster management education in schools curriculum, the Action Plan fails to include the review of schools curriculum or any concerted effort towards introducing disaster management Education in schools' curriculum in its chain of activities in the past one decade after the Hyoho Framework for Action.(2005 – 2015), or A Decade of National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2006 – 2015(Audu – Bida, 2006:1 – 30), and (Adikwu,2010:6).

Importance of inclusion of Disaster Management Education in Basic and Secondary School Curriculum

Education has long been identified as the best medium through which any meaningful change can be effected in society. Although sensitization campaigns through the media and other relevant advocacy programmes can go a long way in increasing awareness on disaster management, there is the need to adequately mainstreamed Disaster Risk Reduction and management Education in schools curriculum, so that children can grow well informed about different man-made and natural hazards, which if not adequately managed, can grow into serious disasters in the society, as well as the best ways they can respond and manage disasters.

Moreover, hazards that are potential disasters are many, cutting across both social and physical environment. There are Biological Hazards, Social Hazards, Natural (Environmental) Hazards, Technological Hazards, and other man-made Hazards such as Air and Road Accidents, fire disasters, building collapse etc. For effective disaster management Education, no single school subject can adequately educate the young on DRR and management education. What the nations requires is systematic review of curriculum to capture various Hazards and disaster management skills in relevant school subjects. For instance, Biological Hazards such as Human and animal diseases, like: HIV/AIDS, Tuberculoses, Maleria, Zika Virus, Lassa Fever, Ebola Virus, Avian Influenza, Jiggors, etc., as well as epidemics, can be adequately taken care of, in Health and integrated sciences curriculum in our Basic Education Curriculum. Similarly, History and Social Studies Curriculum can be re-structured to

complement the Health and Biological Sciences in educating children on the effects of migration and overcrowding in the spread of Epidemics and how best communities can respond to them (Ojo, 2004).

Along the same line, Technological Education Curriculum in league with Arts and Social Sciences curriculum need to be structured in such a way that the young can be educated on challenges of global warming, damage to the ozone layer, pollution, and other hazards associated with technological development.

Quite a lot of man-made disasters, such as road accident and fire disasters can be mitigated through proper education packages in our school curriculum. More so, a proper review of Geography and Agricultural Science curriculums can help complement land use planning programmes in Nigeria, as well as deforestation and other related problems associated with the misuse of land and social mineral resources.

Another critical aspect of disasters in Nigeria is the regular breakdown of social order, in the form of ethno-religious crises, election violence, and militant's activities. It is only through the review of History and Social Sciences curriculum, to include topics capable of inculcating understanding, mutual respect and tolerance in the mind of citizens, that Nigeria can achieve peace and successful integration of its diverse ethno-religious groups (Sifawa and Shehu, 2009:170 – 175). Similarly, whereas history and social studies curriculum could help inject patriotism, discipline, moral and other related lofty values Nigerian citizens needed in order to minimize the problem of theft, armed robbery, murder, kidnappings, etc., Business (entrepreneurial) and vocational education capable of improving entrepreneurial abilities of Nigerian youth and generating employment is equally necessary to complement history and social studies, in providing lasting solutions to some of these social vices (Kwaire, 2009).

In recent times, religious fundamentalism was the major factor that led to the emergence of extremist **BokoHaram** insurgent group in Nigeria, particularly in the North-east. Since after the 30 month, Nigerian Civil War, **Boko Haram** insurgency is the major disaster that befalls Nigeria. Many hundreds of thousands of lives were lost and millions rendered homeless. It is only through the sound teaching of Islamic Studies that misconception of Islamic principles and ideology can be effectively remedied. There is therefore the need to properly review Islamic Studies curriculum, particularly at Basic and Secondary education levels, so that children can grow with sound understanding of religion in order to avoid being converted or indoctrinated by misguided elements. More so, successful rehabilitation and change in the mind set of some former members of the group can only be achieved through sound education, enlightenment and dialogue. There is therefore the need to review the curriculum taking into cognizance of these challenges (Sifawa and Kurah, 2012:3 – 4), and (Sifawa and Kura, 2009:1 – 12).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Since inception, NEMA has been doing a lot of efforts in disaster management in Nigeria. Quite a lot of achievements were recorded in terms of employing latest mechanism and strategies for disaster management by the Agency. However, the inability of the Agency and its brain child, the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006 – 2015), to develop and strengthen institutions and capabilities to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels, particularly in the use of knowledge, innovation and education, as envisaged in the Hygo Framework for Action, is one of the major drawback in effective disaster management in Nigeria.

Consequently, most of the Agency's activities are still within the confines of disaster response mechanisms. Neither has the nation through the Agency been able to develop resilience culture, nor institutionalized preventive mechanisms. It is hardly surprising therefore that many hazards/disasters in Nigeria are like annual rites. They continue to repeat themselves as a result of nation's inability to either prevent them from happening or develop capabilities of adequately responding to them when they occur.

This paper strongly argued that, for Nigeria to be able to develop and strengthen institutions, mechanism and capabilities to build resilience to hazards, the nation's Basic and Secondary schools curriculum needs to be reviewed in order to properly and appropriately include disaster management education. The fact that disasters can occur in virtually all fields of human endeavours; Biological, Social, Environmental, Technological; on the earth surface and in the Airspace; man-made and natural; it means that disaster management requires a holistic approach. School subjects needs to be re-structured and re-directed towards meeting the contemporary challenges

in Nigeria. For instance, whereas Health and Biological Sciences can take care of Biological Hazards and disasters, while history and social studies can provide education necessary to build resilience culture against social hazards, religious education is the best medium through which religious extremism and its brain child, terrorism, can be addressed. In fact, even our literature works in the Department of African and European Languages needs to be written with the contemporary societal challenges in mind. Rather than love, sexual promiscuity, drug trafficking, murder, theft, kidnappings, excess materialism and luxury living, our literature books in Nigeria supposed to upload and promote such lofty values as; adventurism, hard work, entrepreneurial endeavours, philanthropy, trust worthiness, equity, justice, patriotism, tolerance and peaceful co-existence.

This paper recommends a National Stakeholders Curriculum Conference that will carefully and diligently examine ad review the nation's curriculum in Basic and Secondary schools, with a view to adequately including disaster management education, so that the nation can develop a culture of safety and resilience to disaster at all levels. It is the position of this paper that if that is achieved, within two decades the country will succeed in building a culture of safety and resilience among its citizens. Thereafter, regular sensitization and advocacy campaigns can suffice to provide the necessary knowledge and information needed to consolidate such culture of safety and resilience to hazards in Nigeria. Unless that is achieved, disaster management will only remain to be an affair of few professionals and individuals associated with disaster management organizations, while the average citizens will remain ignorant of their expected roles in disaster management, thus depriving the nation of collective efforts in Risk Reduction and institutionalisation of resilience culture to disaster management.

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