

Report



**Understanding the Operations,
Capacities and Coordination
Mechanisms of the Disaster
Management Committee(DMC)
in Northwestern Zone of Bangladesh**

Understanding the operations, capacities and coordination mechanisms of the Disaster Management committee (DMC) in Northwestern Bangladesh

Actions to Climate Change Ensuring Sustainable Solutions (ACCESS) Project

Water, Food and Climate Domain

DATE OF PUBLICATION

April 2025

PUBLISHED BY

Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Bangladesh

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RECOMMENDED CITATION

Helvetas Bangladesh (2025). Understanding the operations, capacities and coordination mechanisms of the Disaster Management committee (DMC) in Northwestern Bangladesh. Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, Dhaka, 1212 Dhaka, Bangladesh.

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Executive Summary

The northwestern regions of Bangladesh, particularly the Kurigram district, are highly prone to frequent and severe disasters, including floods and riverbank erosion. Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) play a vital role in mitigating the impacts of these disasters through preparedness, response, and recovery measures. However, concerns regarding the operational effectiveness of DMCs necessitated an in-depth exploration of their roles, resources, and capacities. This study sought to critically evaluate the systemic challenges hindering the operational efficiency of DMCs and their ability to implement Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategies effectively.

This study sought to address critical gaps in disaster management mechanisms that disproportionately impact vulnerable populations in the Kurigram district. It focused on assessing the operational effectiveness of Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) by identifying key challenges such as resource limitations, coordination issues, and varying levels of awareness among committee members. The research explored three primary questions: the operational challenges DMCs face in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery; the extent of awareness among DMC members and stakeholders regarding their roles and responsibilities; and strategies to improve the efficiency and inclusivity of DMC operations. The findings aim to inform targeted improvements in disaster management practices for better community resilience.

This study adopted a blended PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal) and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) framework for evaluation, ensuring a holistic approach to examining DMCs' operational effectiveness. The PESTEL framework provided a macro-level analysis of external factors influencing DMC activities, while the SWOT framework identified internal challenges and opportunities. This integrated approach allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of both systemic and organisational aspects of disaster management.

The study employed a mixed-method approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies for robust analysis. Data were collected from six unions in Kurigram district: Holokhana, Bhogdanga, Panchgachi, Buraburi, Dhamsreni, and Dharanibari. A purposive sampling method was used to select DMC members, local stakeholders, and community representatives. Tools included structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and key informant interviews (KIIs), supplemented by quantitative surveys. Thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data, while quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics.

Key Findings

Awareness Gaps:

- A significant portion of DMC members were only "Somewhat Aware" of their roles and responsibilities before (58.8%), during (68.2%), and after (68.2%) disasters, highlighting critical knowledge gaps that impede effective decision-making and action.
- Alarming, 16.5% of respondents indicated being entirely unaware of their responsibilities during and after disasters.

Resource Deficiencies:

- DMCs face acute shortages of essential tools and materials, including boats, tarpaulins, first aid kits, and communication tools, severely limiting their capacity to respond effectively to emergencies.

- The absence of dedicated disaster management funds exacerbates resource constraints, particularly in unions such as Panchgachi, Buraburi, and Dharanibari.

Training Deficiencies:

- Over 54% of DMC members lack proper training in DRR strategies, recovery planning, and the implementation of Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD), resulting in inefficiencies and delays in disaster response.
- Practical simulation exercises and drills are almost entirely absent, further weakening preparedness levels.

Coordination Weaknesses:

- Poor collaboration between DMCs, NGOs, and other stakeholders leads to delays, duplication of efforts, and inefficient resource utilization.
- Stakeholder alignment is particularly weak in Panchgachi and Dharanibari, where limited coordination frameworks hinder effective disaster management.

Limited Community Engagement:

- Community participation in disaster planning is alarmingly low, with marginalized groups such as women, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities being significantly underrepresented in DRR initiatives.
- The absence of consistent awareness campaigns leaves communities ill-prepared for disasters.

Infrastructure and Logistical Barriers:

- Poorly maintained flood shelters, inadequate transportation, and a lack of alternative power sources create significant logistical challenges during disaster response.
- Panchgachi and Buraburi unions are particularly disadvantaged due to limited shelter upgrades and logistical resources.

Members' Rating

- DMC members reported dissatisfaction with the timeliness and effectiveness of DMC support, particularly in Buraburi and Dharanibari, where response mechanisms were perceived as inadequate.
- The findings reveal systemic gaps in DMC operations that compromise disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. These gaps have far-reaching implications for policy formulation, community resilience, and disaster management practices. Addressing these challenges is crucial for building a more inclusive and efficient disaster management framework.

Recommendations

Capacity Building:

- Develop and implement comprehensive training programs for DMC members, focusing on DRR strategies, recovery planning, and SOD implementation.
- Conduct regular simulation exercises to improve preparedness.

Resource Mobilisation:

- Establish dedicated disaster funds at the union level and ensure equitable distribution of essential resources.
- Strengthen partnerships with NGOs and the private sector for resource allocation.

Enhanced EWS:

- Implement inclusive and technologically advanced Early Warning Systems (EWS) tailored to union-specific risks.

Improved Coordination:

- Foster stronger collaboration between DMCs, local governments, NGOs, and private stakeholders to streamline disaster response and resource allocation.

Community Engagement:

- Conduct regular awareness campaigns to educate communities about disaster preparedness.
- Ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups in disaster planning processes.

Policy and Infrastructure Development:

- Integrate climate adaptation strategies into disaster management plans.
- Upgrade flood shelters and improve transportation and communication infrastructure.

This study provides a comprehensive evaluation of the operational challenges faced by DMCs in Kurigram district. By addressing gaps in awareness, training, resources, and coordination, DMCs can significantly improve their effectiveness in mitigating disaster impacts and enhancing community resilience. The findings and recommendations outlined in this report serve as a roadmap for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers committed to strengthening disaster management frameworks in Bangladesh.

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Abbreviations

CC	: Climate Change
CCA	: Climate Change Adaptation
DAE	: Department of Agriculture Extension
DMC	: Disaster Management Committee
DRM	: Disaster Risk Management
DRR	: Disaster Risk Reduction
DRRO	: District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer
GO	: Government Organization
HCTT	: Humanitarian Coordination Task Team
IASC	: Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IGD	: Interactive Group Discussion
INGO	: International Non-Government Organization
KII	: Key Informant Interview
L/NAs	: Local/National Actors
LTWG	: Localisation Technical Working Group
MoDMR	: Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
NDMC	: National Disaster Management Council
NGO	: Non-Government Organization
NPDM	: National Disaster Management Plans
PIO	: Project Implementation Officer
SOD	: Standing Orders on Disaster
SOP	: Standard Operational Procedure
UDMC	: Union Disaster Management Committee
UzDMC	: Upazila Disaster Management Committee
WDMC	: Ward Disaster Management Committee

1. Introduction

1.1 Context and Background

There have been significant changes in the discourse of disaster management in Bangladesh over decades, and the formulation of relevant policy, planning, and strategies in a whole-of-society approach generated remarkable outcomes in reducing the loss of lives and livelihood caused by natural disasters in comparison to the pre-2000s. Even so, the unique geographic setting of Bangladesh as well as its climatic features, socioeconomic context, and climate-induced future risks necessitate serious consideration in synergizing risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and nature-based solutions with its disaster management efforts.

The overall disaster management activities of Bangladesh are primarily guided by a number of policy documents. The Disaster Management Act 2012 emphasized the formulation and implementation of the National Disaster Management Policy, National and Local Disaster Management Plan, and Standing Orders on Disaster. The National Disaster Management Council acts as the supreme body in directing disaster management activities, while the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief regulates the national disaster management efforts. The implementation of plans and policies at the local level are administered by the local level Disaster Management Committees. They are also accountable for providing an enabling ground for the community to engage in risk reduction activities.

The idea of increased local capacity has been brought to the fore by the Grand Bargain launched at the World Humanitarian Summit 2016. Under this discussion, there has to be increased support for strengthening leadership and decision-making of the local level actors and communities. The Government of Bangladesh recognized the cluster coordination mechanism aligning with Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) global standards in SOD 2019. The cluster coordination mechanism assists in coordinating humanitarian actions with the international community. The Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) acts as a platform to facilitate coordination between the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) being the national level focal and the office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator being the international humanitarian community focal.

The study, title “Understanding the Operations, Capacities and Coordination Mechanisms of the Disaster Management Committee (DMC) in North-western Zone of Bangladesh” at North-western Zone of Bangladesh,” focuses on evaluating the roles, skills, resources and operational effectiveness of local DMCs in managing and responding to natural disasters such as floods, riverbank erosion, and droughts, which frequently affect the region. North-western Bangladesh is highly exposed to these extreme weather events, and climate change has exacerbated the frequency and intensity of these disasters. This vulnerability has led to widespread displacement, loss of livelihoods, and significant socio-economic challenges for the local population.

At the local level, DMCs, formed at Ward, Union, and Upazila levels, play a critical role in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. However, the effectiveness of these committees may vary significantly due to limited access to resources, training, and coordination mechanisms. These shortcomings reduce their ability to effectively manage disasters and attain community resilience. The study aims to assess the existing capacity of these DMCs, identify gaps, and propose targeted interventions to enhance their performance and operational effectiveness along with developing a training program. This evaluation is crucial for improving disaster management and ensuring that local communities are better equipped to withstand and recover from natural disasters. By addressing gaps in training, resources, and coordination, the study seeks to strengthen the disaster management functions of DMCs and contribute to a more resilient Bangladesh.

Dream Consultancy Ltd. (DCL) conducted the assessment using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The assessment process begun with a thorough review of secondary literature and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with stakeholders like the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Department of Disaster Management (DDM). This was followed by developing detailed tools for data collection which was used in Survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and further KIIs conducted in the field. Data collection took place over several weeks in northwestern zones mainly and was managed by trained enumerators under the guidance of the DCL team. After the fieldwork, the collected data were cleaned, analyzed, and presented in a report with actionable

1.1.1 Study Objectives

Dream Consultancy Ltd. (DCL) aims to assess how well Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) in the northwestern part of Bangladesh are functioning. The DMCs are responsible for helping communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters like floods and droughts. The study will focus on evaluating the skills, resources, and overall effectiveness of these committees. Additionally, it will identify any gaps in their training or resources and provide recommendations on how to improve their ability to manage disasters. In more specific way the study aims to:

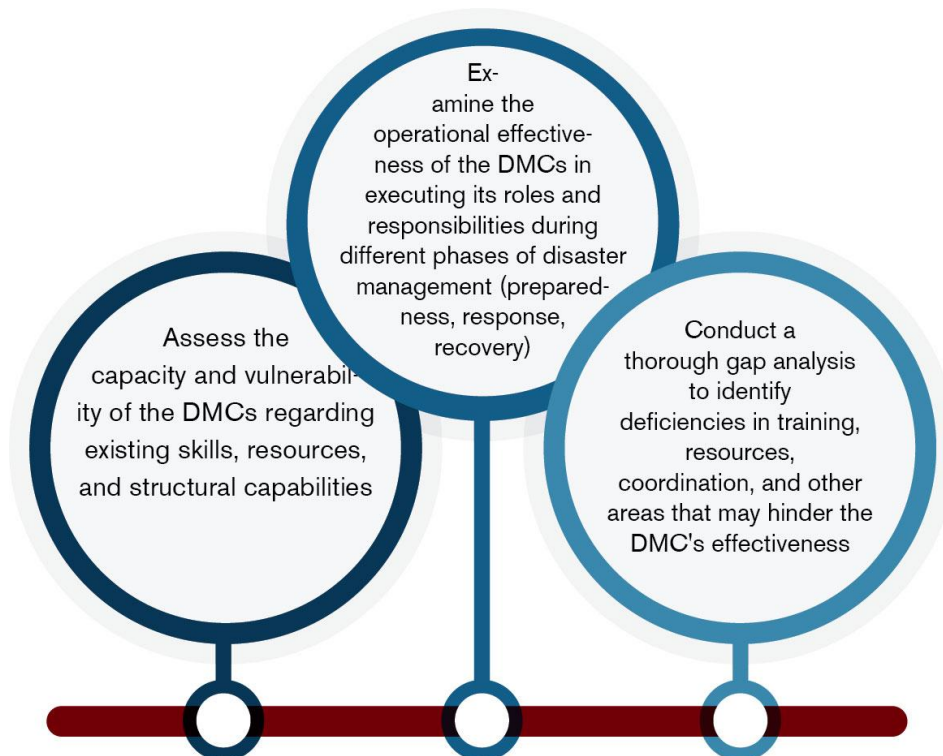


Figure 1: Study Objectives

By addressing these mentioned objectives, the study provided valuable information for decision-makers to implement policies and strategies to enable the DMCs functioning.

1.1.2 Research Questions

1. What are the existing skills, resources, and structural capabilities of the DMCs, and how do they influence their capacity and vulnerability?
2. How effective are the DMCs in performing their roles and responsibilities during the preparedness, response, and recovery phases of disaster management?

3. What gaps in training, resources, coordination, or other areas impact the operational effectiveness of the DMCs?

1.1.3 Literature Review

Natural disasters like floods pose significant threats to people living in low-lying and flood-prone areas. The state of infrastructure and capacity to respond often determines the severity of these disasters. The international community should prioritize capacity building in developing nations like Bangladesh, which often lacks adequate services and infrastructure to mitigate flood impacts (Miyan MA, 2009). Floods greatly affect agricultural activities and rural infrastructure, including housing, sanitation, drinking water, power, and transportation. It destroys not only livelihoods but also essential infrastructure such as rural roads, dams, embankments, and farm structures (Hossain, M. Z., 2008). Bangladesh is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, and floods are especially devastating due to the country's high population density in flood-prone areas (Choudhury, 2007). Its geographic position makes it prone to floods, flash floods, riverbank erosion, and other water-related hazards (MoEF, 2005; Hossain, 2008). Among these disasters, floods are regarded as one of the most impactful in Bangladesh (Ahamed S., 2012). To mitigate the impact of natural disaster GoB has formulated a regulatory framework for disaster management.

Regulatory Framework of Bangladesh for Disaster Management provides the relevant legislative, policy and best practice under which the actions of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Disaster Management in Bangladesh will be managed and implemented. The framework includes:

- National Policy Structure
- Disaster Management Act 2012
- National Disaster Management Policy 2015
- National Plan for Disaster Management 2021-2025
- Inter-Coordination between National Policies and International Frameworks

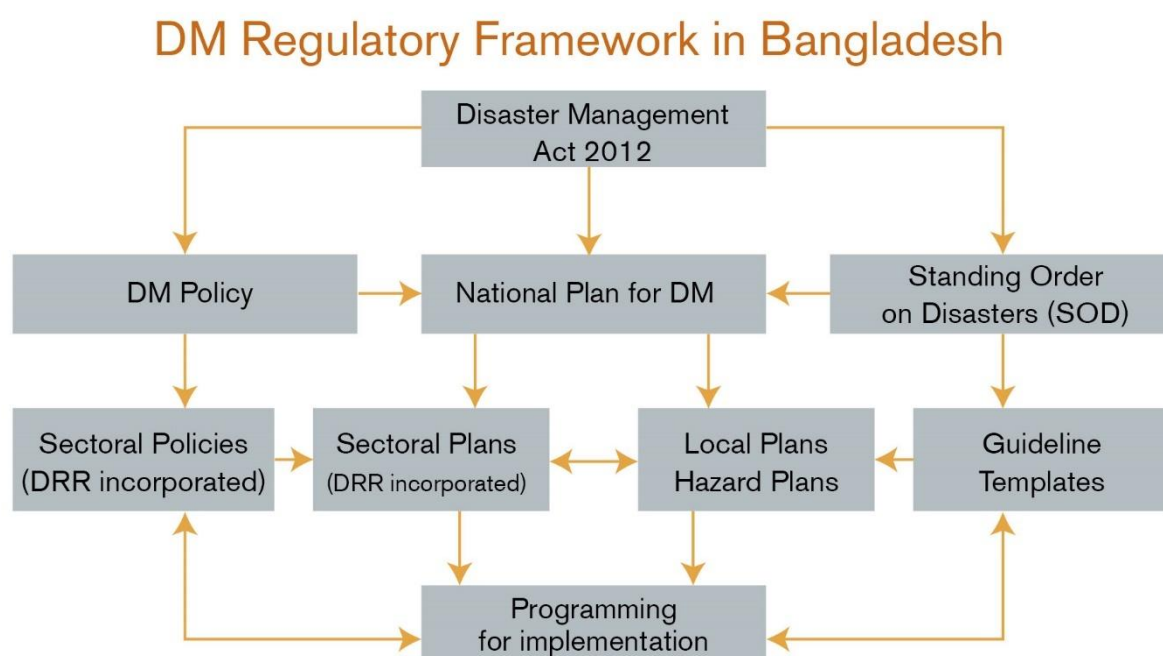


Figure 2: Bangladesh Disaster Management Regulatory Framework

Disaster Management Act 2012: The Disaster Management Act, 2012 (Law no. 34 of 2012) was enacted with a view to make disaster-related activities coordinated, target-oriented and strong; and making rules for an effective disaster risk management framework for all types of disasters.

National Disaster Management Policy 2015: The National Disaster Management Policy 2015 was formulated as per section 19 of the Disaster Management Act, 2012. Through this, initiatives are taken to ensure good governance for disaster risk management, participation and accountability of all concerned stakeholders. The main purpose of this policy is to formulate and implement hazard-specific strategies based on assessments of major disaster risks in Bangladesh.

National Plan for Disaster Management 2021-2025: The National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) was formulated for the period of 2010- 2015 in the light of the government's vision, mission and national and international approaches on disaster risk management. The subsequent National Plan for Disaster Management, 2016- 2020 was formulated considering the achievements of the previous plan's implementation, learnings and challenges to ensure disaster risk management through the coordinated and effective efforts of relevant stakeholders. This plan has considered the principles of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and national policies and strategies (such as the Seventh Five Year Plan). Later on the National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) 2021-2025 was prepared under the leadership of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR). It is aligned with the 8th FYP and aims to guide national efforts to achieve key disaster management priorities.

Inter-Coordination between National Policies and International Frameworks: Building synergies between the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Paris Agreement on Climate Change, National Five-Year Plan and Delta Plan 2100 is highly essential.

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR): Taking into account the experiences gained through the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, SFDRR 2015-2030 was developed to achieve the "Disaster causes huge damage and loss to life, livelihood & health and economy, physical, social, cultural & environmental resources. Therefore, the main objective of this framework is to reduce the risk and damage substantially at personal, community and national levels." For achieving expected results and goals, activities at local, national, regional and global levels based on the four priorities of action set by SFDRR need to be initiated. The priorities are:

- I. Understanding disaster risk by all;
- II. Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk;
- III. Increasing investment in disaster risk reduction for ensuring disaster resilience;
- IV. Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to 'build back better' in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

8th Five-Year Plan: The 8th Five Year Plan (FYP) of Bangladesh (2020-2025) includes several initiatives to improve disaster management, including:

- **Integrating disaster management into planning:** The plan encourages integrating disaster management concerns into planning and budgeting to achieve sustainable development.
- **Improving health and sanitation:** The plan encourages sustainable improvements in the health sector and the availability of safe drinking water and sanitation.
- **Preserving the environment:** The plan encourages the preservation of the natural environment and the prevention of degradation.
- **Improving waste management:** The plan encourages improved waste management, including proper collection, segregation, recycling, and environmentally sound disposal.

Institutional Framework of Disaster Management: Disaster management in Bangladesh is guided by various national policies, encompassing plans, and directives. The National Disaster Management Plans

(NPDMs) assess the risks and repercussions of disasters, emphasizing community participation and the incorporation of both structural and non- structural measures. The Disaster Management (DM) Policy of 2015 underscores the significance of financial resources for disaster management activities across all levels. The DM Act of 2012 supports the Standing Orders on Disaster (SoD), updated in 2019, providing a legal foundation. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) is entrusted with coordinating national disaster management endeavors, while the National Disaster Management Council (NDMC) serves as the supreme body providing overall direction. This direction is translated into the National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM 2021-2025). To comply with the legal framework, Disaster Management Committees (DMC) have been established at both national and local levels across all administrative tiers.

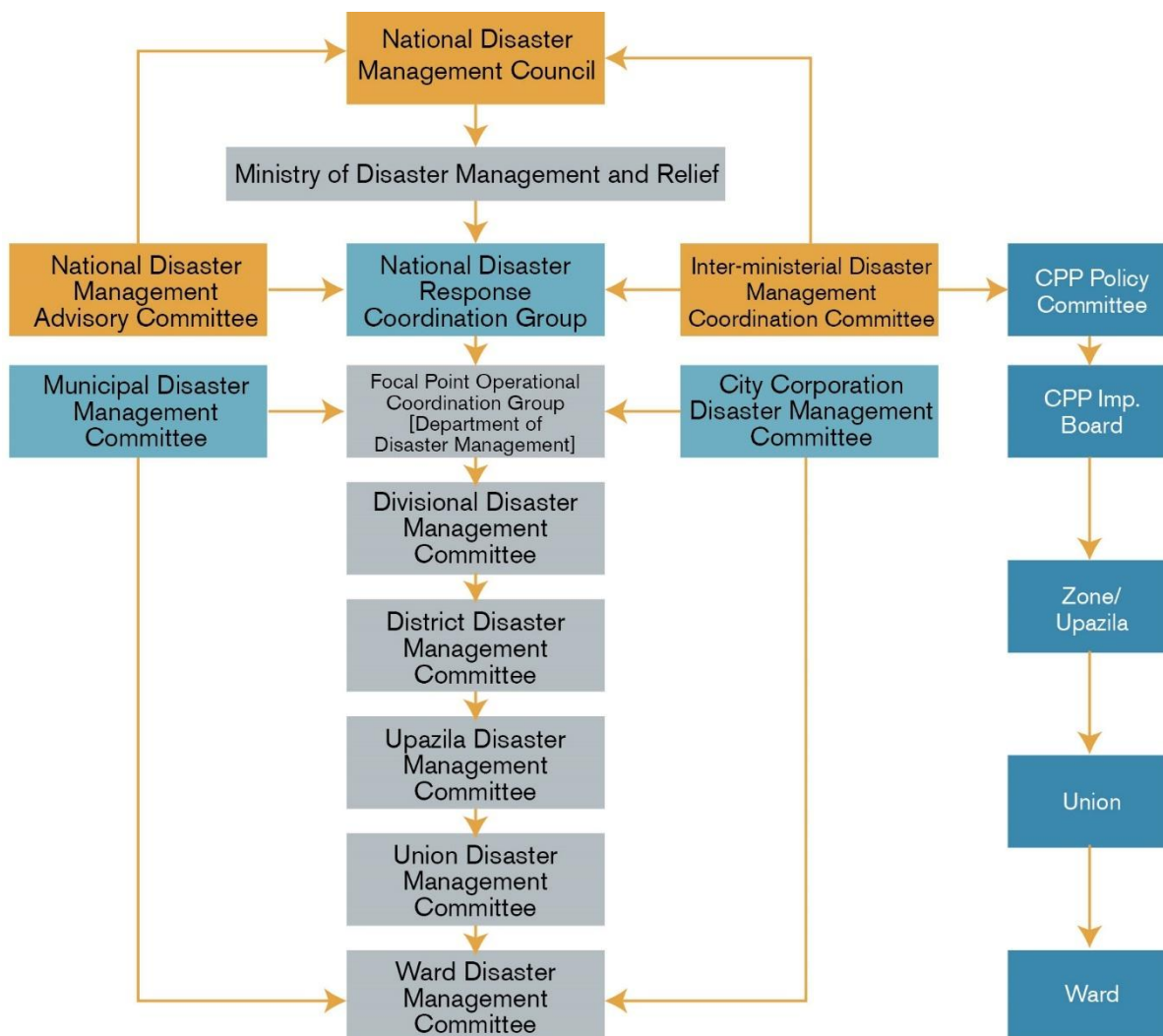


Figure 3: Co-ordinational Architecture for Disaster Management in Bangladesh

In the face of a heightened vulnerability to climate-related and other disasters, Bangladesh has established a resilient institutional framework for disaster risk management (DRM). The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) plays a central role in coordinating national DRM efforts across various agencies. Chaired by the Prime Minister, the National Disaster Management Council (NDMC) provides comprehensive guidance for all aspects of DRM, encompassing mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

The foundational pillars guiding and streamlining DRM activities in Bangladesh are the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD)- 2019 and the Disaster Management (DM) Act of 2012. Both documents meticulously outline the roles and responsibilities of the MoDMR and its affiliated entities. Actively engaging with

sectoral ministries, departments, the United Nations, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), local and national agencies (L/NAs), the Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, as well as donors and multilateral development banks, MoDMR fosters collaborative efforts to enhance the effectiveness of DRM initiatives.

Floods exacerbate Bangladesh's vulnerability, affecting over 20 million people annually, with much of the population residing in low-lying flood-prone areas. The unplanned growth of settlements in these areas has made community adaptation strategies more challenging (Miyan, M., 2005). However, Bangladesh has transitioned from a reactive relief-based approach to a more proactive, strategic arrangement. Early Warning Systems (EWS) have been instrumental in reducing flood-related fatalities. For example, the catastrophic flood of 1998 caused immense destruction, yet improved preparedness has since significantly mitigated the loss of life. Even during major floods like those in 2004 and 2017, the number of casualties was substantially lower compared to earlier events. The northwestern zone of Bangladesh specially kurigram is highly exposed to flash flood and river bank erosions. To mitigate flood impacts, it is needed to implement the plans, revise the policies, and catalyze the local level committees in order to improve the mechanisms in term pre disaster phase, during disaster phase and post disaster phase.

Research Gaps

- 1) **Data Systematization and Accessibility:** In many regions, including Bangladesh and Zambia, a key challenge is the limited availability of digitized and systematized data for monitoring and evaluating disaster management interventions. Efforts are often hindered by fragmented reporting systems and poor information sharing
- 2) **Localized Risk Assessments:** While national frameworks exist, localized risk assessments and data on the specific effectiveness of grassroots DMCs are often lacking, leaving gaps in understanding community-specific vulnerabilities and capacities
- 3) **Integration of Emerging Technologies:** There is a growing need to assess how technology, such as early warning systems and real-time data sharing, can be effectively scaled and integrated into DMC operations
- 4) **Private Sector Involvement:** The role of private sector engagement in disaster management is underexplored, despite its inclusion as a strategic direction in some national policies, such as Bangladesh's NPDM

1.1.4 Conceptual Framework

To meet the assessment objectives, the study team has adopted a holistic framework customizing the SWOT and PESTEL model/framework.

SWOT analysis: The capacity of Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) will be evaluated by employing the SWOT analysis framework. This approach enables an in-depth understanding of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats faced by DMCs.

PESTEL Model: The PESTEL Model is a strategic tool used to analyze the external macro-environmental factors affecting the performance and operations of organizations, institutions, or committees. Originally used in business strategy, it has been widely adapted to assess social and community-based organizations. For Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) in Bangladesh, the PESTEL model helps explore the influence of Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal factors on their operations and effectiveness.

Adopting customized SWOT and PESTEL model: To adopt and customize both frameworks, the study team blended and integrated key components from both frameworks. The following matrix shows how political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal factors will be inquired under the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats components of the SWOT analysis. Through this

framework Internal and external factors of Disaster Management Committees at Local Level were analyzed in term of Political, Economic, Technological, Legal and Environmental aspects. The study considered Union Disaster Management Committee (UDMC) and Ward Disaster Committee (WDMC) for assessment.

Table 1: Conceptual Framework

SWOT PESTEL Holistic Framework		
Internal Factors		
	Strengths (current internal strengths of DMCs, as per the SOD and DM policies) Existing skills and expertise of DMCs; Availability of resources (e.g., facilities, finances, technology); Access to training programs. Following Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal (PESTEL) strengths will be assessed under the S-Strength component:	Weaknesses (existing internal gaps and weakness in aligning and implementing DM policies and SOD 2019) Gaps in training and skill development; Shortage of critical resources; Inefficiency in internal coordination and implementation. Gaps and weaknesses in implementing SOD 2029 and other government policies and orders. Following Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal (PESTEL) weaknesses and gaps will be assessed under the W-Weakness component:
PESTEL Elements	Strengths	Weakness
Political	➤ Alignment with national DM policies, SOD 2019. ➤ Support from local government and institutions. ➤ Strong coordination with other stakeholders ➤ Democratic and transparent practice in DMCs	➤ Inconsistent alignment with SOD 2019 and national DM policies. ➤ Challenges in navigating political interference. ➤ Gaps in implementing SOD policies ➤ Not having adequate coordination with the stakeholders
Economic	➤ Effective budget allocation and utilization. ➤ Diverse funding sources and effective resource mobilization including GO and NGO	➤ Underutilized or misallocated budgets. ➤ Limited funding sources and resource mobilization.

	➤ Having a chain for requisition and demand	➤ Not having any requisition or demand chain
Social	➤ Active community engagement and awareness programs. ➤ Inclusivity, particularly for women, PWDs and marginalized groups. ➤ Engage Community people in the response and post disaster activities	➤ Insufficient engagement with communities. ➤ Lack of inclusivity for marginalized groups
Technological	➤ Deployment of early warning systems and tools. ➤ Access to communication infrastructure and technical training. ➤ Having tools for emergency Response during and after a disaster	➤ Limited use of early warning systems and tools. ➤ Gaps in technical capacity and training ➤ Not having access to technological equipment
Environmental	➤ Integration of climate risks into disaster preparedness plans. ➤ Identifying risk of the community and community at risk ➤ Adoption of environmentally sustainable practices.	➤ Ineffective incorporation of climate risks into plans. ➤ Not identifying local risk and hazards ➤ Lack of sustainability measures in preparedness activities.
Legal	➤ Compliance with disaster-related laws. ➤ Clear role definitions within DMCs. ➤ Teaching about policies at local level by citizen charters ➤ Liability of the DMC members	➤ Ambiguities in role clarity and compliance frameworks. ➤ Gaps in adherence to disaster-related laws. •
External Factors		
	Opportunities (identifying future collaboration opportunities and support mechanisms from external agencies) Availability of external funding; Training opportunities provided by government bodies, Potential for collaboration with external organizations. Following external Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal (PASTEL) support mechanisms and collaboration opportunities will be assessed under the O-Opportunities component:	Threats (external barriers/threats that affect the effectiveness and functioning of DMC) Political instability; Lack of long-term funding; and Natural disasters impacting coordination efforts. Following external Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal (PASTEL) threats/barriers will be assessed under the T-Threats component:

	Opportunities	Threats
Political	➤ Collaboration Opportunities and support mechanisms in Alignment with national DM policies orders, SOD 2019, and implementation accordingly. ➤ Future support mechanisms and collaboration opportunities to cope with political interference, ➤ Future support mechanisms and collaboration opportunities in obtaining support from the local government and other agencies and institutions.	➤ External interference in policy alignment and implementation. ➤ Insufficient support from local government. ➤ Political Instability ➤ Local power exercise
Economic	➤ Strengthening financial resource mobilization. ➤ Access to grants and donor funding. Such as CSR fund.	➤ Funding uncertainty and limited resource mobilization. ➤ Less importance on DRR activities
Social	➤ Expanding awareness programs. ➤ Enhancing gender and marginalized group inclusivity.	
Technological	➤ Advancing the use of technology in disaster management. ➤ Increasing access to EWS tools ➤ Increasing access to training programs on communication tools and systems.	➤ Technological barriers in using early warning systems. ➤ Limited accessibility to technical resources and training.
Environmental	➤ Promoting environmentally sustainable practices. ➤ Strengthening resilience against climate risks. ➤ Integrating CCA measures in activates	➤ Disruptions from natural disasters. ➤ Geographical location ➤ Limited environmental sustainability measures.
Legal	➤ Enhancing compliance with disaster-related regulations. ➤ Defining roles clearly to avoid duplication of efforts.	➤ Ambiguities in role clarity and regulatory compliance. ➤ Not being updated of SOD ➤ Challenges in adhering to disaster laws

1.1.5 Research Matrix

Table 2: Research Matrix

Indicators/Key Issues/Area of Inquiries	Data Sources	Data Collection Method/Tools	Data Analysis Method	Framework (if applicable)
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Objective 1: Assess the capacity and vulnerability of the DMCs regarding existing skills, resources, and structural capabilities				
Political: Alignment with DM policies, political support/interference, local governance collaboration - Alignment with national DM policies, SOD 2019. - Support from local government and institutions. Strong coordination with other stakeholders - Democratic and transparent practice in DMCs	DMC members, MoDMR, DDM officials, relevant CBOs/NGOs	Mixed Method (Survey, KII, FGD)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT and PESTEL
Economic: Budget allocation/utilization, resource mobilization, funding gaps	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD, IDI)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT and PESTEL
Social: Inclusivity (gender, marginalized groups), community participation, awareness programs	DMC member secretaries, DRRO/PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, KII, FGD, IDI)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT and PESTEL
Technological: Early warning systems, communication tools, technical training	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD, IDI, KII)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT and PESTEL
Environmental: Climate risks, environmental sustainability, disaster preparedness plans	DRRO, PIO	Qualitative (KII, IDI, FGD)	Qualitative Analysis (thematic)	SWOT and PESTEL
Legal: Adherence to disaster-related laws, role clarity, regulatory compliance	DRRO, PIO	Qualitative (KII, IDI)	Qualitative Analysis (thematic)	SWOT and PESTEL

Objective 2: Examine the operational effectiveness of the DMCs in executing its roles and responsibilities during different phases of disaster management (preparedness, response, recovery).				
Preparedness: Risk assessments, disaster plans, community awareness, resilience infrastructure	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT
Response: Trained teams, emergency supplies, evacuation drills	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD, IDI)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT
Disaster Phase: Relief distribution, rescue operations, stakeholder coordination	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD, IDI)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT
Recovery: Rehabilitation plans, reconstruction strategies	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT
Objective 3: Conduct a thorough gap analysis to identify deficiencies				
Strengths: Existing skills, access to training, available resources	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD, IDI)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT
Weaknesses: Gaps in training, internal coordination, critical resource shortages	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD, IDI)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT
Opportunities: Training programs, external funding, collaboration potential	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD, IDI)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT
Threats: Political instability, funding uncertainties, natural disaster risks	DMC members, DRRO, PIO	Mixed Method (Survey, FGD, IDI)	Quantitative Analysis (statistical); Thematic	SWOT

1.2 Study Methodology

The assessment followed a multi-faceted approach to address the study's objectives effectively, as outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR). The first step was a thorough review of relevant documents, such as peer-reviewed articles and government reports. This helped identify the hotspots, research gaps, and tentative models to adopt. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used for data collection,

including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and In-depth Interviews. DCL designed the tools for data collection and trained enumerators to ensure accuracy. After collecting the data, it was analyzed, and a report was created. The findings were then shared with stakeholders for feedback before finalizing the report.

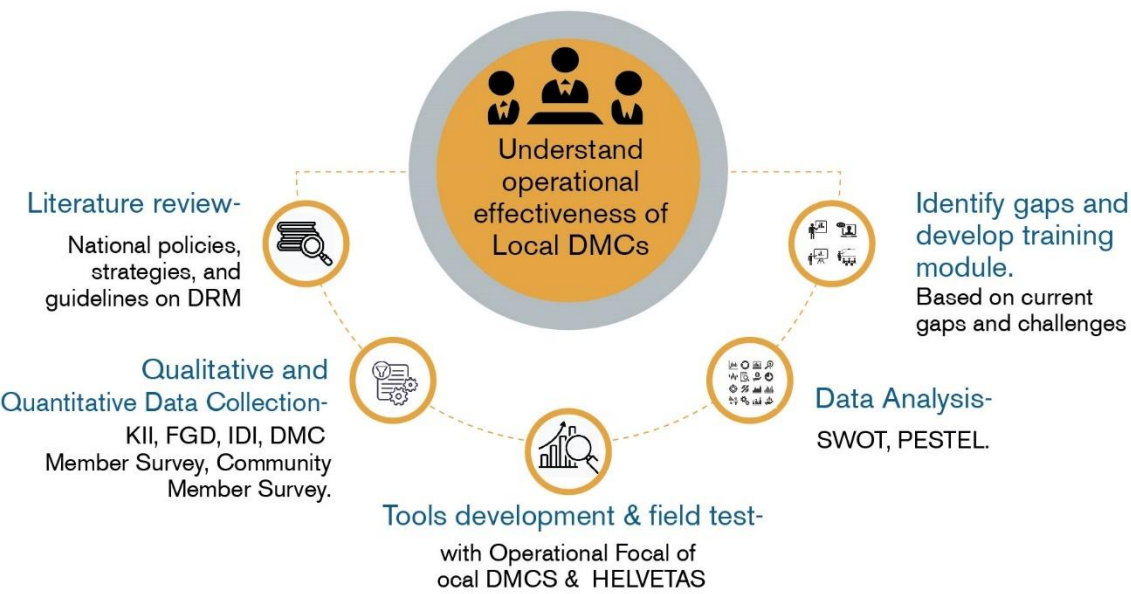


Table 3: Technical approach of this study

1.2.1 Data collection methods

A combination of surveys, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, Key Informant Interviews and field visits was used to gather qualitative and quantitative data on each component of SWOT and PESTEL model (e.g., level of holding meetings, level of warning response activities, level of risk reduction activities, level of activities during disasters, perception of DMC members and service receivers about DMC activities, and level of awareness about SOD). Dream Consultancy Ltd. utilized a multi-stage cluster sampling approach for quantitative data collection from the north-western zone of Bangladesh. The sampling process involved selecting primary clusters within these districts and then systematically choosing households for data collection. Enumerators were trained on data collection tools and protocols, including Kobo Toolbox. Both quantitative surveys and qualitative methods (FGDs and KIIs) were employed to gather comprehensive data. A refined survey plan and training schedule supported high-quality data collection and analysis.

1.2.2 Study areas

The study area covers northwestern zone of Bangladesh to assess the capacity and of DMCs at Ward, Union, and Upazila levels. These regions face frequent hazards, including flooding, riverbank erosion and drought. This study will focus on Kurigram district. More specific way it will be conducted in Ulipur and Sadar Upazila. Union of Kurigram Sadar includes Holokhana, Bhogdanga, and Panchgachi as well as Ulipur unions are Buraburi, Dharanibari, and Dhamsreni.

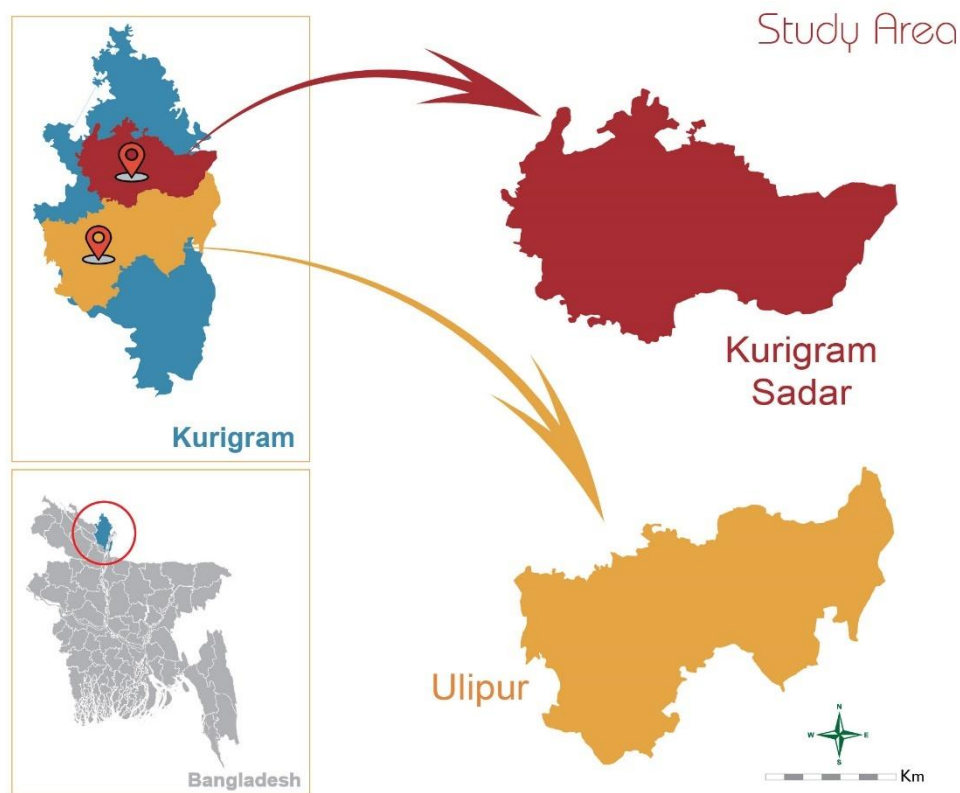


Figure 4: Study Area

1.2.3 Sampling techniques,

For quantitative data, cluster-wise purposive random sampling was used. The study area was divided into clusters, and specific sub-areas were purposively selected based on relevance to the research objectives, such as socio-economic characteristics or disaster risk levels. Households within these sub-areas were then randomly sampled to ensure representativeness.

For qualitative data, purposive sampling was applied. Participants, including Disaster Management Committee members, and other key stakeholders, were selected based on their knowledge and involvement in the study topics. This ensured the collection of in-depth insights and diverse perspectives.

1.2.4 Sample distribution

Data collection was conducted using five tools. Two separate structured surveys were carried out with 428 participants, including 258 dwellers from the Northwestern region (Kurigram) and 170 members of UDMC and WDMC. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) involved 18 participants, including 6 members from both WDMC and UDMC, and 6 community members. In-depth Interviews (IDI) were conducted with 30 individuals, including key figures such as the Chairperson of Upazila Parishad, Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Union Parishad members, and DMC members (female and PWD). Lastly, Key Informant Interviews (KII) were held with 13 key informants, including officials from MoDMR and DDM, DRR experts, academicians, local government officials, and CSO representatives.

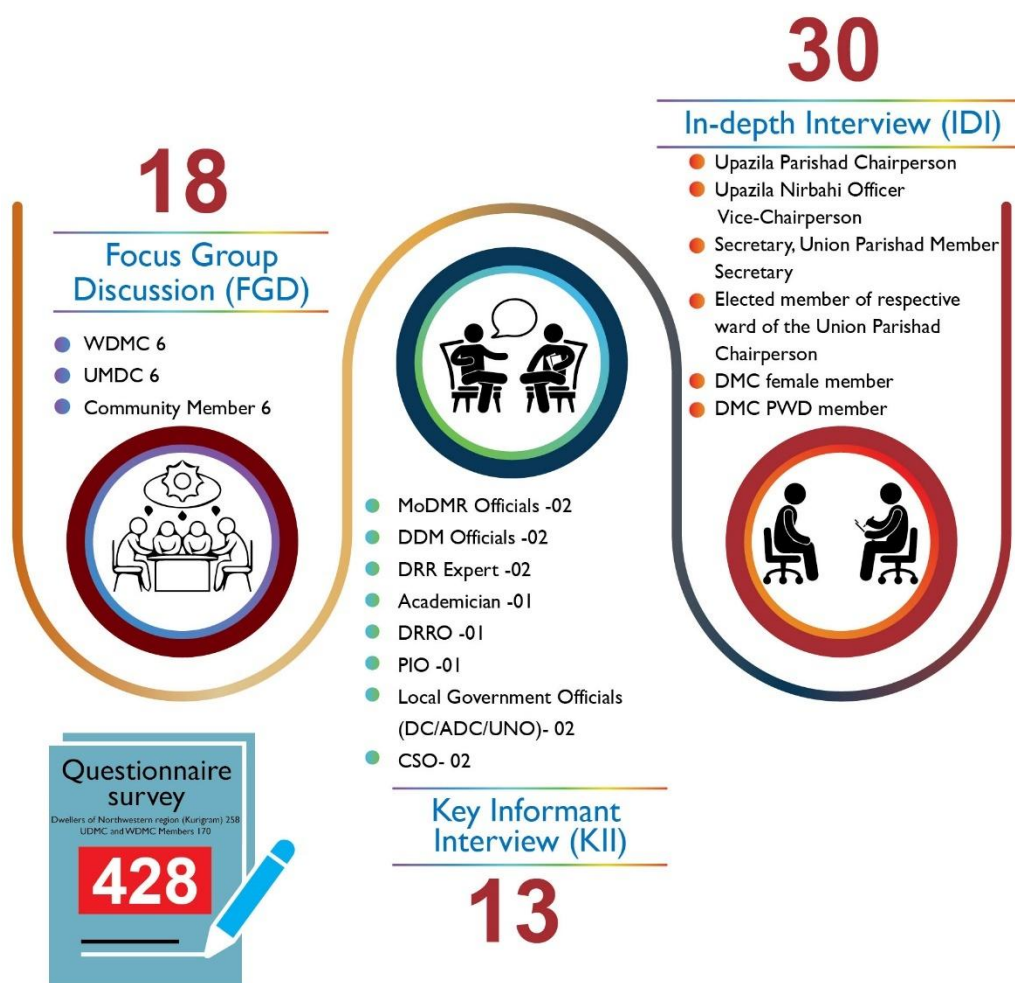


Figure 5: Sample Distribution

1.2.5 Data Analysis Methods

The quantitative data collected using KoBo Toolbox was transferred and converted into Excel and SPSS formats, known as .xlsx and .sav files. After conversion, descriptive analysis was conducted for the variables. A feedback session with the HELVETAS Bangladesh team was organized following the data analysis, which was then followed by the drafting of the report.

During the survey, FGD, IDI, case study, and KII data collection, the data was documented in field notes and analyzed by identifying codes within a coding framework. Results were presented in the final report, with qualitative data analysed using thematic analysis technique. The findings were shared with participants in a review session, where feedback was gathered to validate the results and address any unexpected findings. The feedback was incorporated into the final report, with transcription and guidelines provided through checklists.

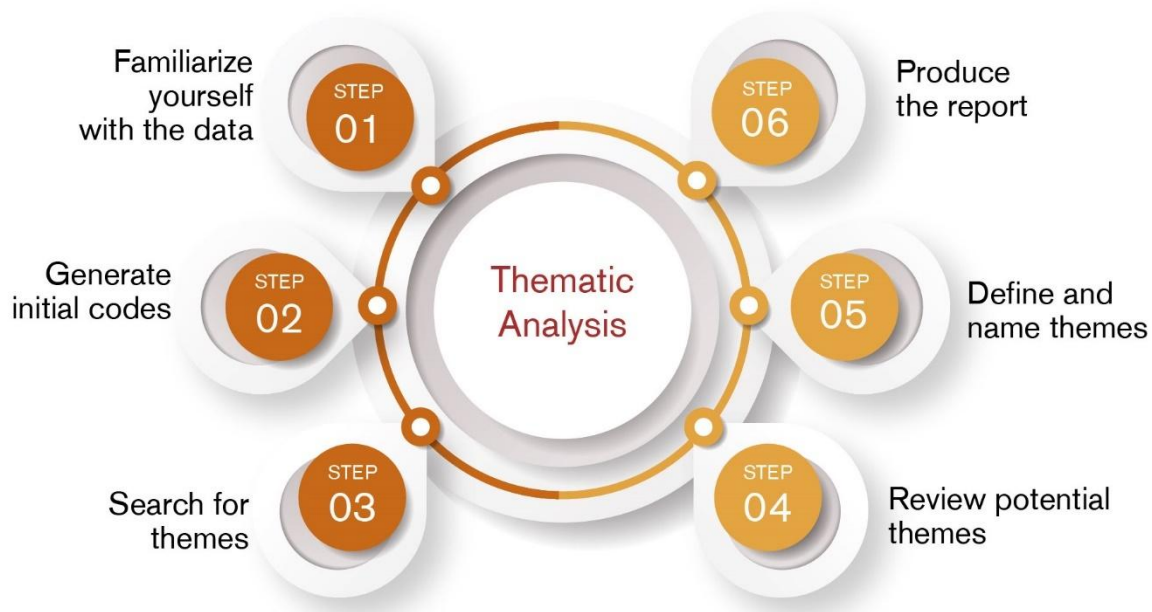


Figure 6: Qualitative Data Analysis Procedure

1.3 Challenges and limitations

The lack of functionality in most WMDCs (Ward Disaster Management Committees) posed a significant challenge. Many committees were inactive, which limited their capacity to effectively manage disaster preparedness and response efforts. This issue was further compounded by the unavailability of several committee members for interviews, making it difficult to gather critical insights about their roles and operations.

A key limitation was the inability to assess the perspectives and experiences of all WMDC members due to their absence during data collection. This restricted the depth of understanding regarding the committees' challenges, resource utilization, and overall effectiveness in disaster management, leaving potential gaps in the study's findings.

Chapter: 02



Findings, discussion and analysis

“Understanding the Operations, Capacities
and Coordination Mechanisms of the Disaster Management
Committee (DMC) in Northwestern Zone of Bangladesh”

2. Findings, discussion, and analysis

2.1 Demographic information

2.1.1 Gender of the respondent

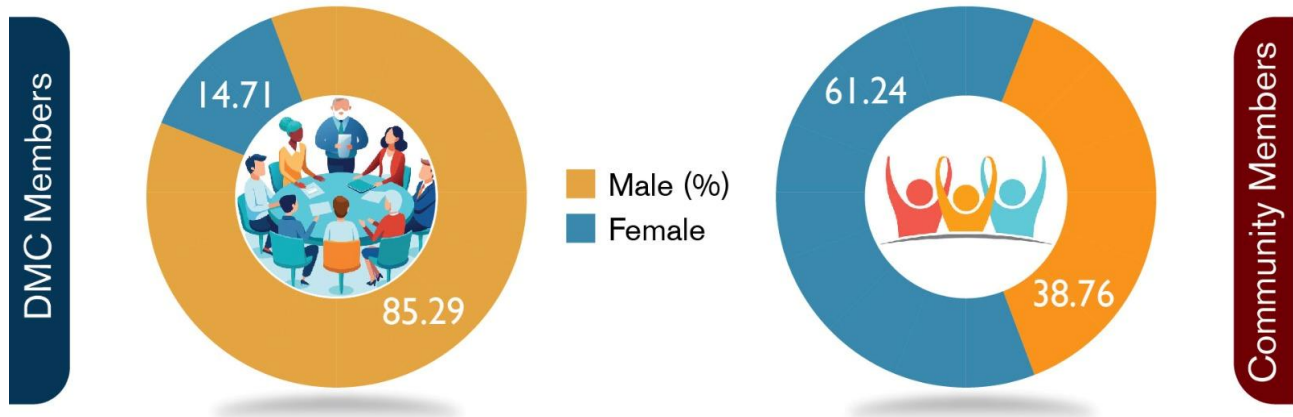


Figure 7: Gender Distribution of the Respondents

The chart compares the gender distribution between DMC Members and Community Members. Among the DMC Members, males comprise the vast majority at 85.29%, while females account for only 14.71%. This indicates that leadership and decision-making roles in the DMC are heavily dominated by men, with very limited female representation. In contrast, the gender distribution among Community Members shows a different picture. Females make up the majority at 61.24%, while males represent 38.76%. This highlights that women play a more significant role in the general community compared to their presence in leadership positions.

Overall, the data reveals a clear gender imbalance in leadership roles, where men are dominant in the DMC. Despite women being more active and forming a larger part of the community, their representation in decision-making bodies remains disproportionately low. This points to a gap in opportunities for women to participate in leadership or formal decision-making processes.

2.1.2 Education Level

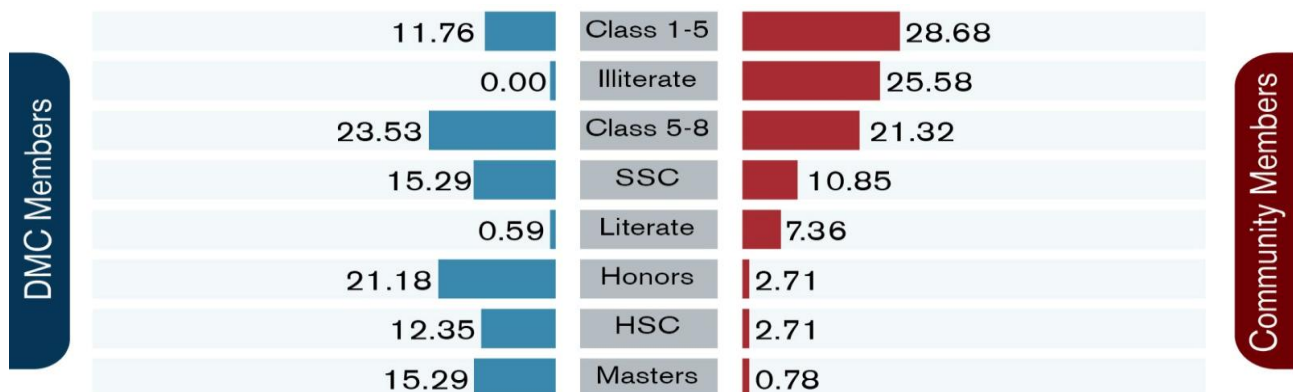


Figure 8: Education Level of the Respondents

Figure 8 shows a comparison of education levels between DMC Members and Community Members. It is clear that DMC Members are more educated overall compared to Community Members.

Among Community Members, 25.58% are illiterate, while all DMC Members can at least read and write. Most Community Members (28.68%) studied up to Class 1-5, which is much higher than the 11.76% of DMC Members. For middle-level education, like Class 5-8 and SSC (Secondary School Certificate), DMC Members have slightly higher percentages than Community Members. For example, 23.53% of DMC Members studied up to Class 5-8, compared to 21.32% of Community Members. Similarly, 15.29% of DMC Members reached the SSC level, while only 10.85% of Community Members did.

The biggest difference is seen in higher education. DMC Members have a much larger percentage who completed Honors, HSC (Higher Secondary Certificate), and Masters. For example, 21.18% of DMC Members completed Honors, compared to only 2.71% of Community Members. Similarly, 12.35% of DMC Members studied up to HSC, while only 2.71% of Community Members did. For Masters, 15.29% of DMC Members achieved this level, compared to just 0.78% of Community Members.

2.1.3 Age Group

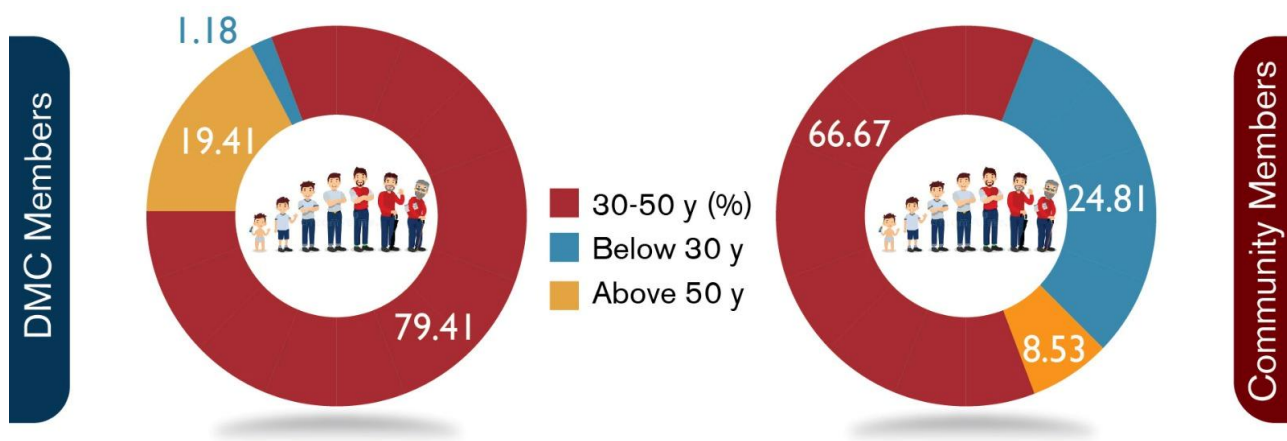


Figure 9: Age Groups of the respondents

The chart 9 compares the age distribution of DMC Members and Community Members across three age groups: 30-50 years, below 30 years, and above 50 years. Among DMC Members, the majority belong to the 30-50 years age group, making up a significant 79.41%. This clearly indicates that middle-aged individuals dominate participation in leadership and decision-making roles within the DMC. The second-largest group is those above 50 years, accounting for 19.41%, while the youngest group, below 30 years, has the smallest representation at just 1.18%. For Community Members, the 30-50 years age group is still the largest but at a lower proportion of 66.67%. Interestingly, the below 30 years group makes up 24.81%, showing greater youth participation in the community compared to the DMC. The above 50 years group is smaller, representing 8.53% of the community members. Overall, the data highlights that the 30-50 years age group is the most active and dominant in both groups, particularly in the DMC, where they make up nearly 80%. However, the younger generation (below 30 years) has minimal representation in the DMC despite their more noticeable presence within the community. Similarly, individuals above 50 years have slightly higher participation in the DMC than in the community. This suggests that leadership roles in the DMC are primarily held by middle-aged individuals, with limited involvement from younger and older age groups, reflecting a potential gap in youth representation and engagement in decision-making processes.

2.1.4 Occupation of the respondent

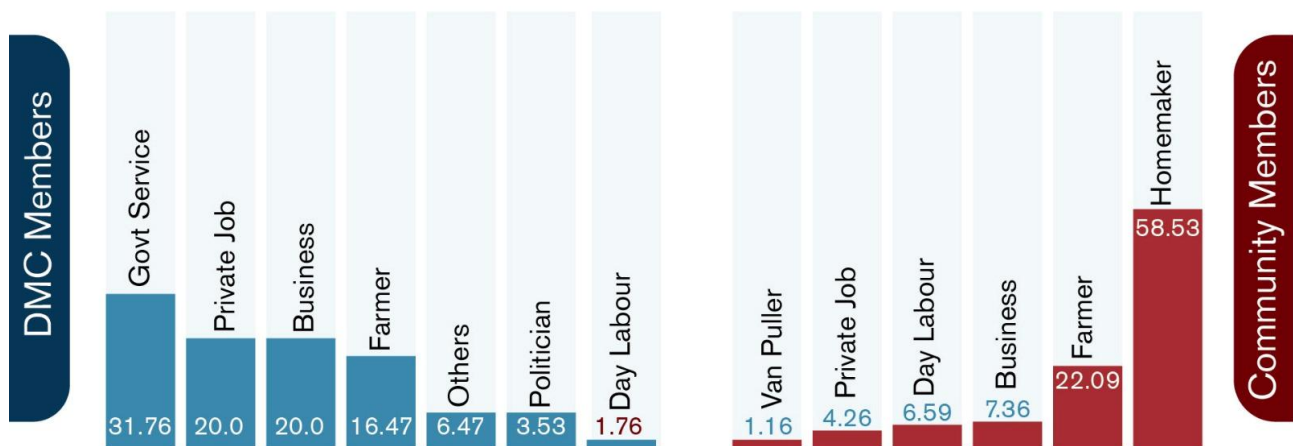


Figure 10: Occupation of the Respondents

The chart 10 compares the occupations of DMC Members and Community Members. Among the DMC Members, the largest group consists of people working in government service, making up 31.76% of the total. This is followed by private jobs and businesses, which each account for 20%. Farmers make up 16.47%, while a smaller portion, 6.47%, falls into the "Others" category. Politicians represent 3.53% of DMC Members, and Day Labourers have the smallest share, with only 1.76%.

On the other hand, the majority of Community Members are homemakers, who make up a significant 58.53%. Farmers are the next largest group, accounting for 22.09%, showing that a large portion of the community is involved in agriculture. A smaller share of community members works in business (7.36%) and as day labourers (6.59%). Private jobs represent just 4.26% of the community, while the smallest group, Van Pullers, accounts for only 1.16%.

Overall, the data shows a clear difference in occupation types between the two groups. DMC Members tend to have more formal jobs, such as government positions and business roles, while Community Members are mostly homemakers and farmers. This highlights the contrast between paid, formal employment in the DMC group and unpaid or informal work in the community, especially with the large number of homemakers.

2.2 Capacity Gaps and Challenges of DMCs

The data highlights key challenges affecting the operational effectiveness of Disaster Management Committees (DMCs). The most significant challenge is insufficient resources (fund, rescue operation materials, and reconstruction material), reported by 58.82% of respondents, followed closely by a lack of training, which affects 54.12%. Additionally, limited community participation (35.88%) and poor coordination with stakeholders (34.71%) are notable obstacles. Other challenges, grouped under "Others," account for 30.00%. These gaps underscore critical areas for improvement, particularly in resource allocation, capacity-building through training, and fostering stronger community engagement and coordination mechanisms. Addressing these issues could significantly enhance the effectiveness of DMCs in disaster management and response.

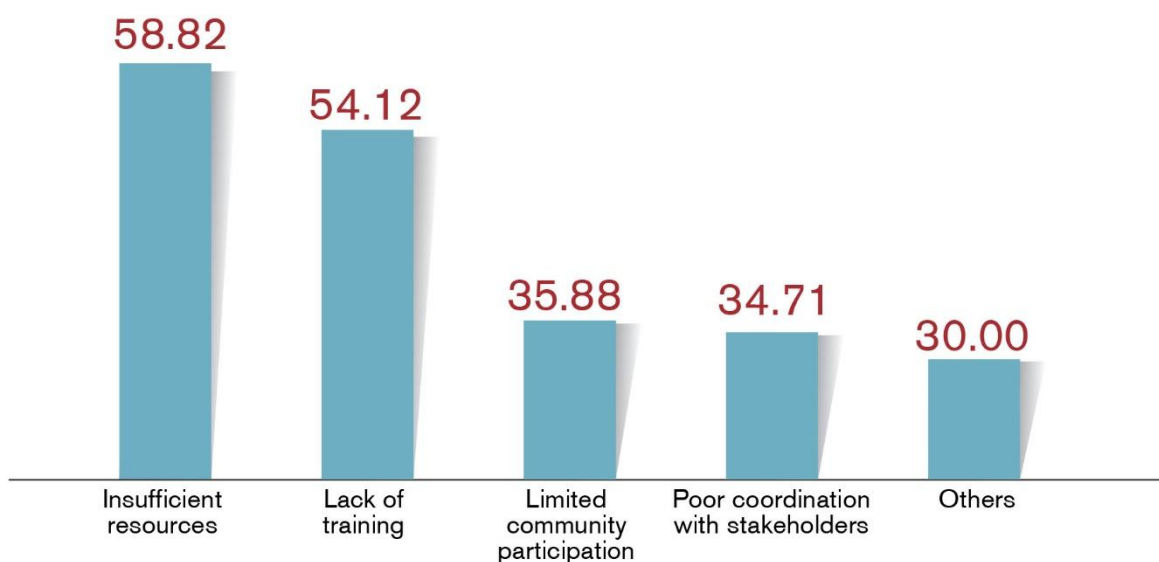


Figure 11: Challenges faced by DMC members in Disaster Management

Table 4: Gap and Challenges

Areas	Identified Gaps and Challenges
Early Warning and Early Action	➤ Inadequate risk communication strategies to reach hard-to-reach communities with timely and appropriate early warning messages. ➤ The existing early warning system is yet to be designed more inclusively so that forecast and early warning messages reach women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities and are comprehensible to them to take necessary actions. ➤ Absence of Early warning early action protocol having a clearly identified budget. ➤ Absence of innovative technology for housing and dwelling areas management.
Preparedness and Contingency Planning	➤ Weak link with monitoring risks to the Humanitarian data to facilitate analysis of impacts if threats emerge. ➤ Understanding gaps exist on minimum humanitarian standards to address the vulnerable people's priorities. ➤ Lack of investment in emergency preparedness to reduce loss of lives and assets. ➤ Although the contingency plans include direction on inclusion, engagement of all relevant stakeholders, damage, loss and needs assessment, information management, etc., there is a need for enhanced efforts to make sure that the plan is fully implemented. ➤ Lack of interventions for enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience, and reducing the risk of disasters and climate change.
Evacuation Planning and Management	➤ Inadequate provision for transportation support for the IDPs to access the shelter. ➤ Inadequate provision for alternative power and basic service supports in the flood shelters. ➤ Lack of initiatives on protection and integration of cross-cutting issues, e.g. gender, age and disability.

Areas	Identified Gaps and Challenges
	➤ Inadequate provision for ensuring separate accommodation for evacuated people, particularly for pregnant women and lactating mothers, women and children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. ➤ Lack of awareness among the shelter management committee members regarding minimum standards of the humanitarian entitlements of the IDPs. ➤ Inadequate provision for regular maintenance of the flood shelters.
Prepositioning and Logistics	➤ Inadequate arrangements to transport and distribute humanitarian aid in hard-to-reach areas. ➤ Lack of a common system of logistics operations incurs high transaction costs in logistics management. ➤ Lack of comprehensive lists of relief items, equipment and services including quantities required for various scenarios. ➤ Lack of awareness of the suppliers and service providers on their respective roles during large-scale emergencies as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy.
Training and Capacity	➤ UDMCs are not aware of CAA and DRR integration ➤ Inadequate provision for institutional capacity development on SOD implementation. ➤ Very limited or no capacity development initiatives for the Shelter Management Committees. ➤ Lack of provision for arranging necessary capacity development initiatives including simulations and mock drills to test the effectiveness of evacuation plans, response plans, recovery plans, and contingency plans.

2.3 Strengths of DMCs

2.3.1 UDMCs Maintain Communication with UzDMC and DDMC

During intermediate time of Flood Union Disaster Management Committee (UDMC) and Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC) communicate with Upazila Disaster Management Committee (UzDMC), District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) for reaching them out with flood situation and requisition. As per updates from WDMC and UDMC, District control room led by Kurigram District Commissioner is maintained. This control room looks after early warning message dissemination, evacuation, flood shelter management, and post flood rescue through UDMC and WDMCs.

"We communicate with the Upazila Disaster Management Committee (UzDMC) and District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) during the mid-flood period in our area and provide them with water level updates based on readings from the Local Service Provider (LSP)."

Ershadul
UP Chairman, Dharanibari UDMC FGD 1

2.3.2 Less Political Interference at Local Level

Disaster Management Committee at Union and ward level is the last organ of government to respond to disasters. This study found there are very minimal level political interference in the committee. For not having any financial benefits and or gain directly people are less interested to involve in this committee. Moreover, according to SOD no one cannot be member directly of DMCs as it is specified on SOD. Apart from this Union Parishad Chairman and Ward Member are top of the committee and they have control over the committee and their community as a result there are no further political interference is observed in Kurigram. In this context one of DMC Members said:

“ There no notable political interference in our DMC and its activities.”

Shamsul Haque
FGD UDMC Buraburi (P3)

”

2.3.3 Democratic Practice

Democratic practices are being effectively implemented in the Union Disaster Management Committees (UDMCs) of Kurigram. Decision-making within these committees is carried out through an inclusive approach, ensuring that the opinions of all members are considered. UDMCs actively engage representatives from various community groups, including women, marginalized populations, and persons with disabilities, to foster participatory discussions. By encouraging open dialogue and consensus-building, the committees promote transparency and collective responsibility in disaster management planning and response. This inclusive decision-making process helps to enhance community ownership and ensures that disaster preparedness strategies address the diverse needs of the population.

“ Here in our UDMC, we give prioritize all of our UDMC mebers and take any decision by taking everyone's' opinions into account.”

Abu Saleh
FGD Dhoronibari, (P6)

”

2.3.4 Compassionate Attitude of DMC Members towards Community

Despite facing significant challenges such as inadequate funding, limited resources, and insufficient training, the Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) have demonstrated a strong sense of compassion and dedication towards their communities. Their commitment to disaster response and preparedness efforts highlights their organizational capabilities and deep-rooted sense of responsibility. Although they lack the necessary financial and logistical support, DMC members actively engage with the community, utilizing local knowledge and social networks to coordinate response efforts effectively. Their ability to mobilize resources informally and collaborate with community members showcases a remarkable level of resilience and adaptability.

Furthermore, the community also plays a crucial role in supporting the DMCs by contributing their time, effort, and locally available resources to fill existing gaps. This collective spirit of cooperation and empathy strengthens the disaster response mechanisms and ensures a more inclusive approach to disaster management. The willingness of both DMC members and community stakeholders to work together, despite resource constraints, reflects their shared commitment to safeguarding lives and livelihoods. However, to sustain and enhance these efforts, targeted investments in capacity-building, resource allocation, and technical training are essential.

“We try to address the immediate needs with our own initiative & personal fund. We disseminate Early warning message with our own initiative by visiting vulnerable households.”

Elina Begum
FGD Holokhana (p3)

2.3.5 Inclusivity of DMCs

According to SOD DMCs at different level are supposed to form the committee with the representation of Person with Disabilities (PWD), Women, Ethnic Community Representation, Marginalized group representation (SOD, 2019).

The data from six unions indicate varying levels of inclusivity within the committees. There are five representatives of vulnerable women, nominated by the reserved female ward members, reflecting a relatively higher level of gender representation. Additionally, two representatives are farmers, nominated by the chairperson, highlighting the recognition of agricultural stakeholders in disaster management efforts. However, representation from other vulnerable groups appears to be limited, with only one representative from associations of persons with disabilities and one representative from tribal or ethnic communities. This suggests that while progress has been made in incorporating women's voices, the inclusion of other marginalized groups remains minimal. The low representation of PWDs and ethnic communities may pose challenges in addressing their specific needs and ensuring an equitable disaster response. Strengthening the representation of these groups is crucial to achieving the SOD's objective of inclusive disaster management that effectively addresses the vulnerabilities of all community members.

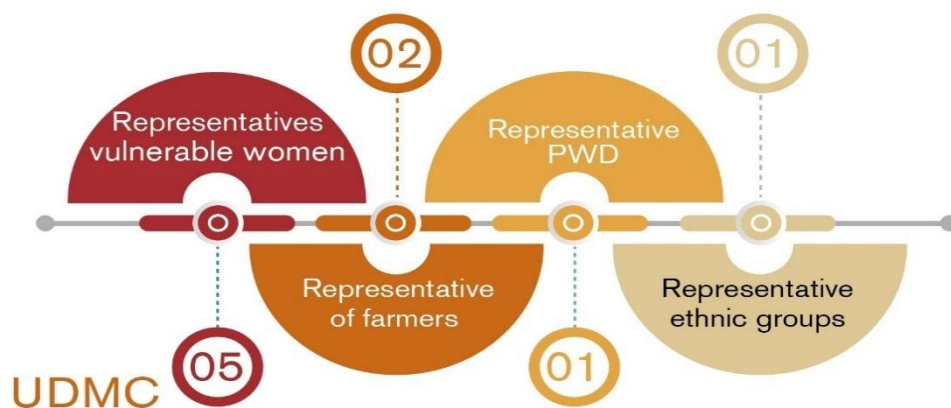


Figure 12: Inclusivity of UDMCs

DMCs Identified Local Hazard and Vulnerabilities

DMCs in Kurigram at union level have identified local hazards and vulnerabilities in their communities. The main hazards in Kurigram are Flood and River bank erosion. Due to the socio-economic and environmental vulnerabilities communities' exposure to flood and river bank erosion is higher. The data shows that 53.5% of communities have successfully identified and mapped local hazards and vulnerabilities, which is a promising step toward enhanced disaster preparedness and risk reduction. This demonstrates that a majority of communities are taking proactive measures to safeguard their populations and infrastructure. While 46.5% of communities are yet to complete this process, it presents a valuable opportunity for further engagement and support to help them build their capacity.

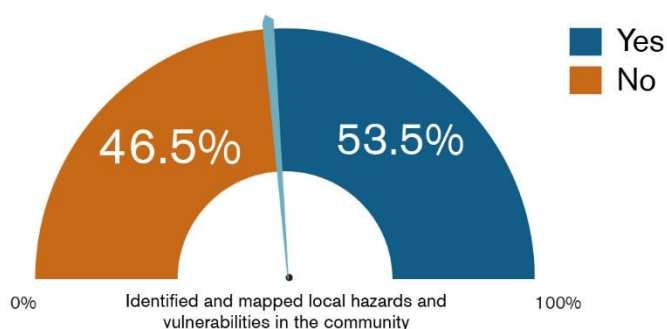


Figure 13: Identified local hazard and vulnerabilities by DMCs

Members of the WDMCs (Ward Disaster Management Committees) and UDMCs (Union Disaster Management Committees) possess critical knowledge of the highly exposed groups and flood-prone areas within their communities. This localized understanding plays a vital role in facilitating effective response efforts, including the dissemination of early warning messages and ensuring timely evacuation, thereby significantly enhancing community preparedness and resilience during flood events. In this context one of DMC member noted:

"When we hear about a flood alert, we go door to door, telling people to leave their homes and stay safe. We show them how to protect their things from the water. We also help disabled people and elders move to safer places. We even help those who take shelter on the Wapda embankment."

Md. Taiyub Ali
FGD UDMC Buraburi, (P6)

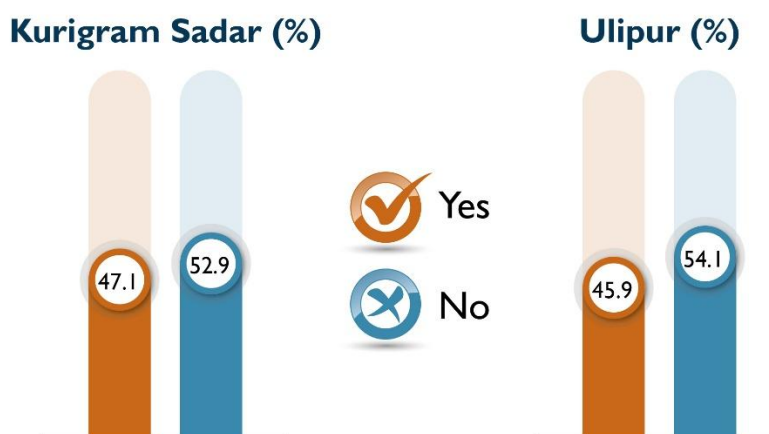


Table 5: Upazila disaggregated status in term of identifying local hazard and vulnerabilities by DMCs

Figure 14: Upazila disaggregated status in term of identifying local hazard and vulnerabilities by DMCs

2.3.6 Technological Strengths

In Kurigram, various flood forecasting and preparedness techniques are being used to enhance disaster resilience and minimize the impacts of recurring floods. Local Service Providers (LSPs) play a vital role in disseminating flood forecasts and early warnings within the community. They utilize their local knowledge and networks to ensure timely communication of flood alerts, enabling communities to take precautionary measures.

Anticipatory Action (AA) is also being implemented to proactively address potential flood impacts before they occur. This approach includes activities such as pre-positioning essential supplies, conducting community awareness campaigns, reinforcing embankments, and preparing evacuation plans. These measures aim to reduce the risks and losses associated with flooding by acting before the disaster strikes.

Another critical approach being used in Kurigram is Forecast-Based Financing (FbF), which ensures that financial resources are allocated in advance based on reliable flood forecasts. FbF enables local authorities and humanitarian organizations to implement timely interventions, such as distributing emergency cash assistance, securing food supplies, and mobilizing response teams before floods escalate. All of these techniques are being deployed with direct support of UDMCs in Kurigram Sadar and Ulipur Upazila.

“By combining these techniques- LSP, anticipatory action, and forecast-based financing- Kurigram is strengthening its flood preparedness efforts, ensuring a more effective and community-driven response to flooding events. We involve UDMCs for deploying these interventions”

Md. Sabbir Gazi
KII, DRR Expert, Care Bangladesh

2.3.7 Legal Strengths

Disaster Management Committee concept is derived from Standing Orders on Disasters (SOD) 2019. Moreover, SOD 2019 is formulated based on Disaster Management Act 2012. One of the main strengths of DMCs is that DMCs are supposed to implement disaster management plans at community level. Union Disaster Management Committee (UDMC) and Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC) are the last miles' community-based institution which is liable to contribute to disaster management strategies at different phases of disaster including pre-disaster, during disaster and post disaster phases according to DM Act 2012.

“The Standing Orders on Disaster (SoD) 2019 and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) are well aligned, which is why Bangladesh follows the SoD in its disaster management efforts. However, as Bangladesh is still a developing country, there are gaps and inconsistencies in implementation. For instance, while regulations may mandate the use of helmets for safety, compliance at the individual level remains a challenge.

DRRO Kurigram (KII)

SFDRR Target	SOD 2019 Contribution
Reduce disaster mortality	Improved early warning systems and evacuation planning.
Reduce number of affected people	Community preparedness, resilient infrastructure.
Reduce economic losses	Risk-informed development planning and DRR investment.
Reduce damage to critical infrastructure	Guidelines for climate-resilient infrastructure and recovery.
Increase DRR strategies	National and local DRR plans integrated into policies.
Enhance international cooperation	Partnerships with UN agencies, NGOs, and donor organizations.
Improve early warning and risk information	Nationwide dissemination strategies and awareness campaigns.

2.4 Gaps and Weaknesses of DMC

2.4.1 Irregularity in Institutional Activities

According to the SOD (Standing Orders on Disaster) 2019, Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) are required to hold meetings at least bi-monthly during normal periods and as needed during intermediate and disaster periods.

The bar chart highlights significant irregularity in the frequency of Disaster Management Committee (DMC) meetings, revealing a misalignment with the guidelines set forth in the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) 2019. The majority of respondents (31.8%) report that meetings are held annually, far less frequently than the bi-monthly requirement during normal periods. Additionally, 18.8% of respondents indicate that they never attend meetings, which points to challenges in communication, coordination, or engagement among members. Quarterly meetings are reported by 14.7% of respondents, which is slightly more frequent but still below the mandated bi-monthly schedule. Only 12.9% of respondents report bi-monthly meetings, aligning with the SOD guidelines but indicating inconsistency in implementation across different committees. Furthermore, the low percentages of monthly (8.8%) and as-needed meetings (8.8%) suggest inadequate responsiveness during disaster and intermediate periods. Finally, half-yearly meetings, reported by just 4.1% of respondents, further emphasize the irregularity in institutional activities. Overall, the data underscores the need for improved coordination, communication, and adherence to SOD 2019 to enhance disaster preparedness and management effectiveness.

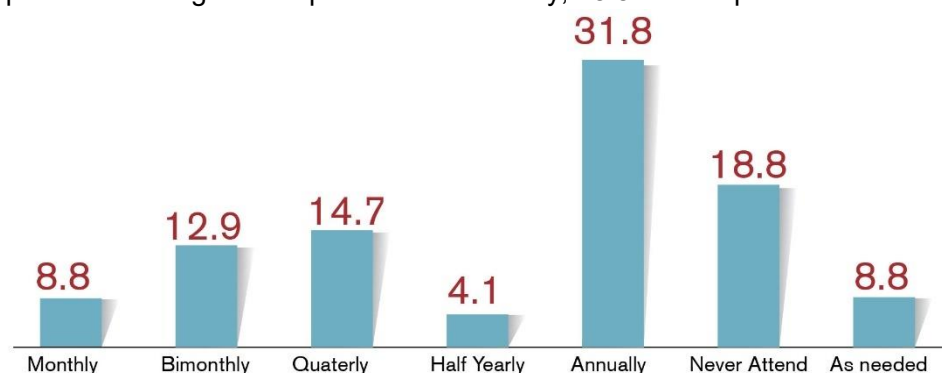


Figure 15: Meeting Frequency of DMCs

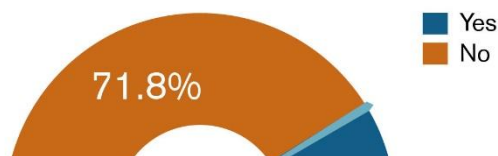
"We do not hold meetings regularly, even though we are willing to. However, we do participate in meetings whenever we receive a call for one from our DMC."

MD Saju Mia
FGD Dharanibari, (P3)

"We do not hold meetings regularly, even though we are willing to. However, we do participate in meetings whenever we receive a call for one from our DMC." - FGD Dharanibari, MD Saju Mia (P3)

2.4.2 DMC Members are Unaware of their Roles

The data reveals that 71.8% of respondents are unaware of the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD), while only 28.2% have heard of it, which serves as a critical framework for disaster preparedness and management. This low level of awareness indicates a major gap in the dissemination of information and training related to the SOD.



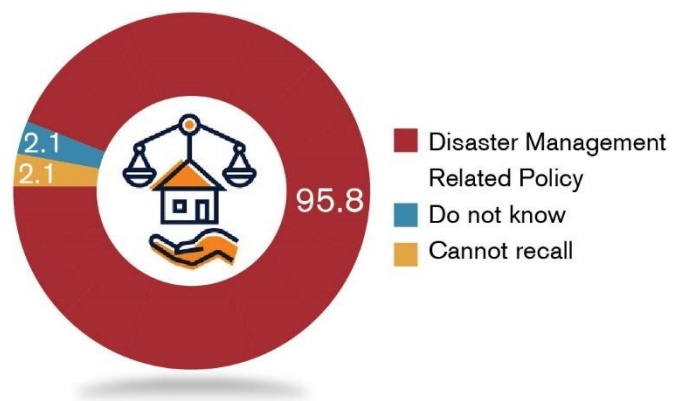
"To make members of DMCs, consent are not taken from anyone, some hold membership due to his/her position in ward or union."

Elina Begum
FGD UDMC Bhogdanga, (P3)

Figur

Among the 28.2% of respondents who are aware of the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD), 95.8% also demonstrate knowledge of disaster management-related policies, indicating a strong correlation between SOD awareness and familiarity with broader disaster management frameworks. However, a small proportion of this group (4.2%) either do not know about these policies (2.1%) or cannot recall them (2.1%). This highlights that, while most of the informed group has a solid understanding, there remains a need for ongoing engagement and capacity-building efforts to ensure complete comprehension and retention of disaster management policies.

Figure 17: Familiarity with SOD



Strengthening this knowledge base can enhance preparedness and implementation at the community level. **The main reason** behind this less awareness about roles and responsibility is limited knowledge building scope and training facilities as well as most of the DMC members are being involved in the committee with **presidents' choice** (SOD, 2019) and some members automatically due to their position at ward or union parishad. In this context one of the DMC members said,

2.4.3 Absence of Funding Support for DMCs

The lack of funding support for Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) is a major challenge that limits their ability to manage disasters effectively. Many committee members shared that they only have a few basic tools, such as flutes, boats, candles, lights, and first aid boxes, but these are far from enough to handle large-scale disasters like floods. After the 2019 flood, for example, they noticed a strong need for materials like canvas for post-flood reconstruction, which they couldn't provide due to funding shortages. There no allocated budget for operating DMCs at local level.

Without proper funding, DMCs struggle to carry out essential activities like training community members, stocking emergency supplies, or setting aside money for immediate disaster response. They often have to rely on outside help, which isn't always available when needed. To improve their ability to prepare for and respond to disasters, it's clear that DMCs need consistent and adequate financial support. In the context one of UP chairman said:

“ There is no allocated budget for operating UDMC activities, as a result we cannot get access into emergency needs and procure emergency equipment. Even snacks during UDMC meeting are provided from Union Parishad fund. We get only 1% of our requisition, if we demand for 4 ton rice we only get 100 kg.”

Ershadul
FGD Dharanibari UDMC, (P1)

2.4.4 Not aware of roles and responsibilities before a disaster takes place

The data highlights a significant weakness in the awareness of roles and responsibilities among Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) and stakeholders before a disaster occurs. A majority (58.8%) are only "Somewhat Aware," reflecting partial understanding, which can lead to confusion and delays during disaster response. Only 23.5% report being "Fully Aware," indicating limited preparedness and insufficient training or communication on responsibilities. Alarming, 17.6% are "Not Aware" at all, showing critical gaps in orientation and capacity building. This lack of clarity undermines proactive disaster risk reduction efforts and increases the vulnerability of communities, emphasizing the need for structured training, simulation exercises, and clear dissemination of roles to ensure effective disaster preparedness and response.

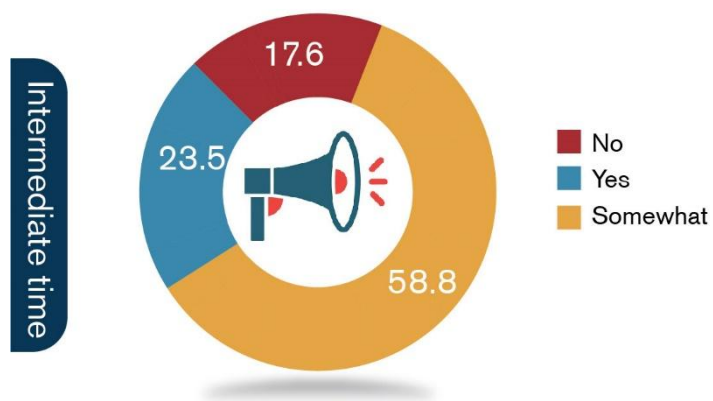


Figure 18: DMC members who are not aware of roles and responsibilities before a disaster takes place

2.4.5 Not aware of roles and responsibilities during a disaster takes place

The data illustrates a significant gap in the awareness of roles and responsibilities among Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) and stakeholders during a disaster. A majority (68.2%) of respondents are only "Somewhat Aware," indicating partial understanding that could lead to delays and inefficiencies in response efforts. Only 15.3% report being "Fully Aware," reflecting limited preparedness and proper training among key stakeholders. Alarming, 16.5% are "Not Aware," which implies a critical lack of knowledge and capacity to act during emergencies. This lack of clarity and preparedness poses significant challenges to effective disaster response, emphasizing the urgent need for targeted training, clear communication of responsibilities, and practice through simulations to ensure a coordinated and timely response during disasters.



Figure 19: DMC members who are not aware of roles and responsibilities during a disaster takes place

2.4.6 Inadequate Resources

The data reveals a critical deficiency in the resources available to Disaster Management Committees (DMCs), with 60% of respondents indicating a complete lack of resources. This substantial gap significantly compromises the committees' capacity to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Among the available resources, hand mikes (21.18%) and torches (20.59%) are the most frequently reported, suggesting a reliance on basic tools for communication and visibility. Traditional signaling devices, such as flutes, are available to 15.88% of committees, whereas modern communication tools, such as radios, are accessible to only 8.24%. This limited availability of advanced

communication equipment highlights a significant barrier to effective disaster coordination. Additionally, only 7.65% of committees have access to boats, which are critical for flood response in vulnerable areas. Furthermore, emergency funds, construction materials for rehabilitation, and trained personnel for recovery planning are each reported by only 6.47% of committees, reflecting significant financial and human resource constraints. First aid boxes, an essential component of medical preparedness, are available to only 4.12% of committees. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted investments and capacity-building initiatives to adequately equip DMCs, thereby enhancing their operational effectiveness and resilience in disaster management.

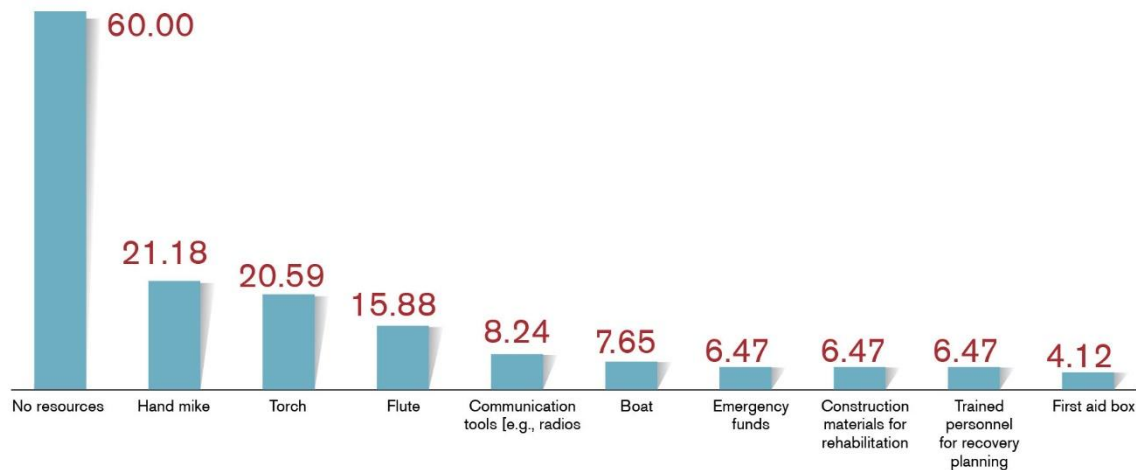
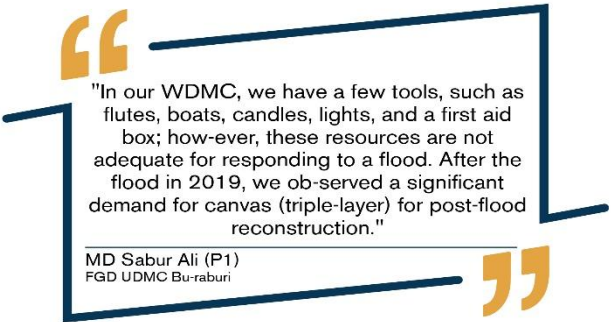


Figure 20: List of resources to UDMCs

Moreover, the existing resources are provided by NGOs working in Kurigram and governments hardly support them with funds and logistics. Some logistics are crucial in during flood phase including canvas (triple), boats, and first aid box and basic medicines. In this context a WDMC members in Buraburi union mentioned:



2.4.7 Least Engagement with Community Members

DMCs at local level at Kuirgam Sadar and Ulipur barely know about DMCs and its roles and activities in term of disaster management. Quantitative data reveals that community members in Kurigram do not know about the Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) in their area. Out of 258 respondents, 91.09% stated that they are not aware of the existence of DMCs, while only 8.91% mentioned that they know about them.

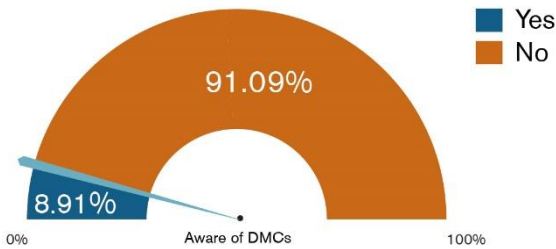


Figure 21: Community members awareness about DMCs

This highlights a significant gap in the dissemination of information regarding the presence and role of DMCs. During FGD with community member one of them said,

“ We the community members barely know about Disaster Management Committee (DMCs), but we are totally unaware about its role and activities.”

Shetali Begum
FGD Community Member Holokhan, (P4)

2.4.8 Inadequate response of DMCs in Post Disaster Phase

Post disaster response is always difficult to conduct due to lack of transportation and higher expenses but it is crucial for the flood affected people in Kurigram.

The table shows that 100% of respondents from both locations reported no actions or initiatives undertaken by the DMCs for preparedness, highlighting a complete absence of visible efforts by these committees to support the community in the post-disaster phase. On the contrary, some respondents shared that DMC members conduct relief activities after flood but they cannot do it evenly. One of the community members complain that DMC members do nepotism in relief activity and she mentioned,

“ DMC members support with relief to their familiar persons only.”

Jhorna (pseudo name)
Community FGD, Bhogdanga, (P4)

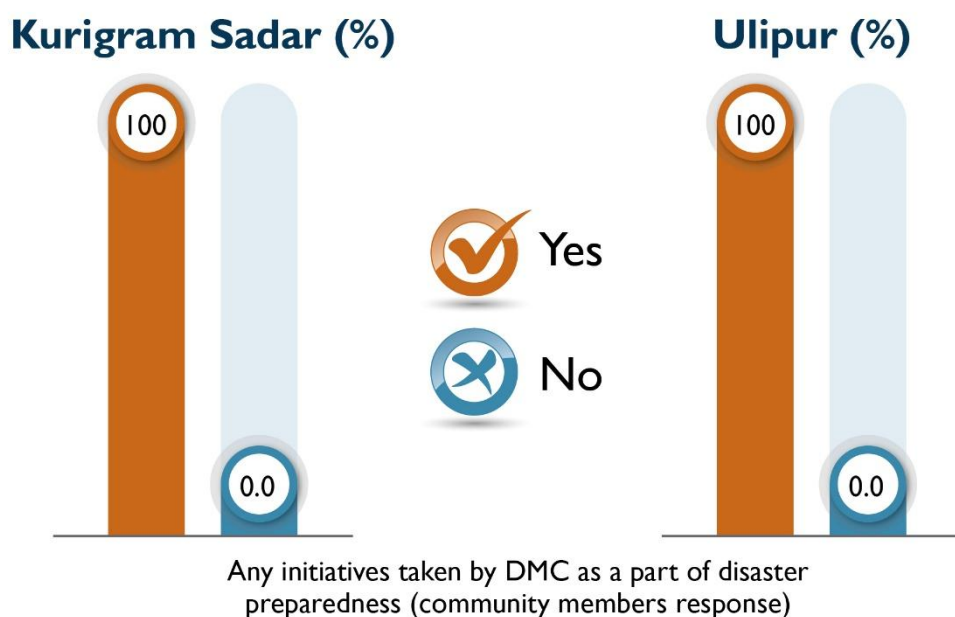


Figure 22: Any initiatives taken by DMC as a part of disaster preparedness (community members response)

Apart from this DMCs are unable to provide the flood affected people necessary response. In this context one of community members said,

“During last flood in 2022, we had needed Canvas (triple) but we did not get it from DMC.”

Aysa
Community FGD Bhogdanga, (P2)

2.4.9 Inadequate Training among DMC Members

To enable the DMCs at local level training on DRR, planning, roles and responsibilities is crucial. This study found that about 80% DMC members feel the training they've received isn't enough to help them handle disaster situations effectively. Only 20% believe the training was adequate. This highlights a clear need for better, more practical, and targeted training that prepares members to face real challenges during disasters. Improving the quality of training will not only boost their confidence but also ensure they can support their communities more effectively when disaster strikes. One of the respondents said,

“ We did not get adequate training for responding to disaster properly.”

Md Ershadul
FGD UDMC Buraburi (P1)



Figure 23: Adequacy of Training

The data reveals that Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) training is the most common type of training received by Disaster Management Committee (DMC) members, with 44.12% of participants trained in this area, emphasizing a focus on disaster prevention and preparedness. Disaster recovery planning training follows at 28.24%, highlighting efforts toward post-disaster rebuilding and rehabilitation. Communication and coordination training, essential for efficient disaster response, was provided to 17.06% of members, while only 10% received training in health and medical services. Community-based disaster management and other training types account for 7.65% each. However, critical areas such as relief distribution and emergency response, as well as field data collection, have seen minimal training, with only 4.12% of participants covered. This distribution points to an imbalance, with significant gaps in training for health services, emergency response, and data collection, underscoring the need for more comprehensive and diverse training programs to strengthen DMCs' overall disaster management capacity.

“ What I learnt from training is knowledge on how to purify water and make it potable during flood”

Momin
FGD UDMC Buraburi, (P1)

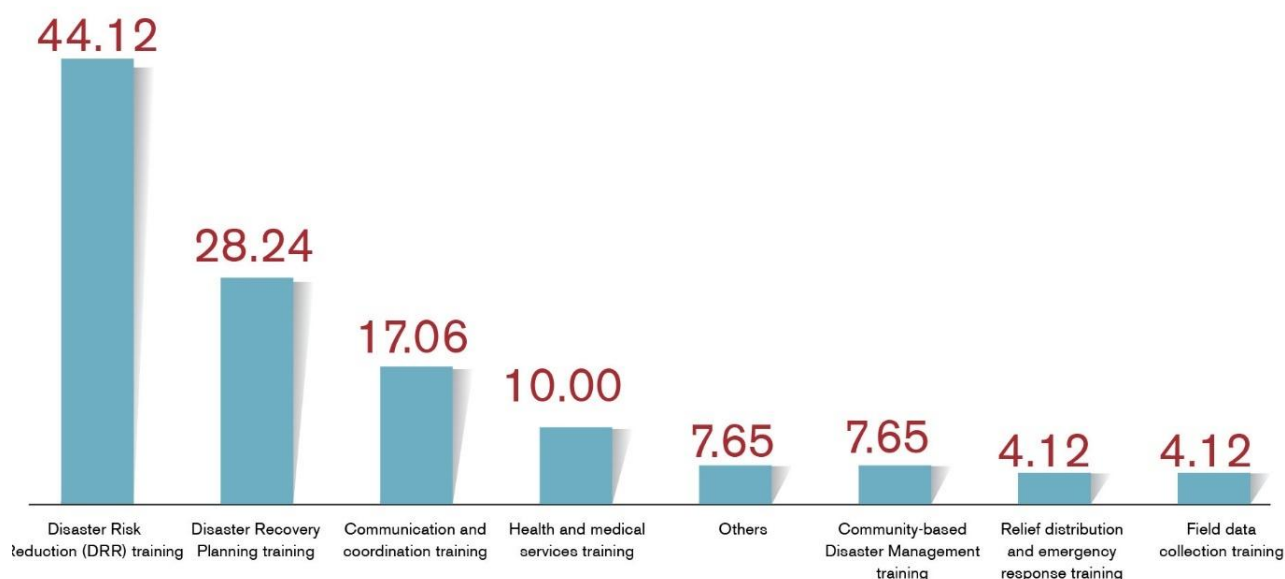


Figure 24: Types of training DMC Members Received

2.4.10 Ineffectiveness in Addressing the Needs of Vulnerable Community Members

The chart shows that 44.7% of respondents believe DMCs ineffectively address the needs of vulnerable community members, while only 11.8% think they are very effective, and 43.5% find them somewhat effective. This indicates a critical threat, as failing to meet the needs of at-risk groups—such as the elderly, children, and disabled individuals—leaves them highly vulnerable during disasters. It also weakens trust in DMCs and hinders recovery efforts. Urgent action is needed to ensure inclusive and effective support for vulnerable populations to reduce risks and improve disaster outcomes.

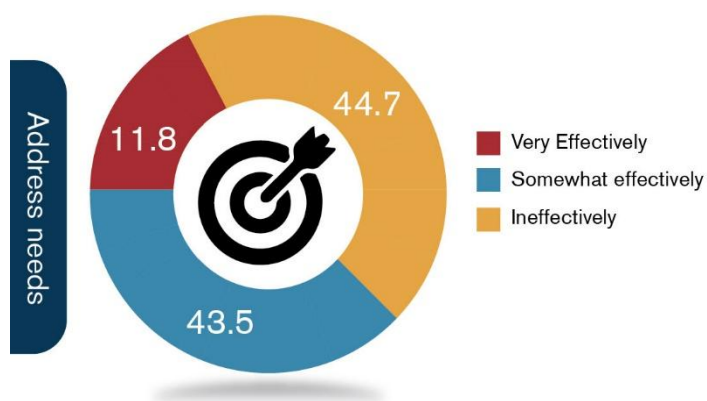


Figure 25: Ineffectiveness in Addressing the Needs of Vulnerable Community Members

2.5 External challenges and barriers for DMCs

2.6 Challenges that Hinder DMCs' DRR activities

The chart identifies four major challenges that hinder Disaster Management Committees' (DMCs') ability to effectively conduct Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) activities. These challenges, along with their respective percentages, highlight critical areas requiring intervention:

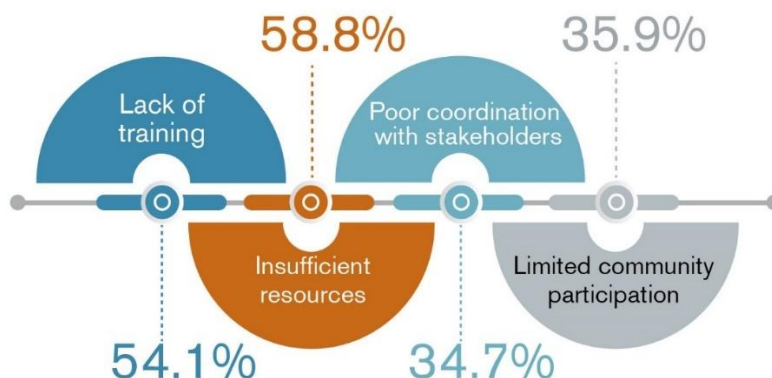


Figure 26:: Challenges that Hinder DMCs' DRR activities

Insufficient Resources (58.8%): The most significant challenge is the lack of resources, such as boats, first aid kits, tarpaulins, and construction materials, which are essential for disaster response and preparedness. It influences following aspects:

- Resource scarcity directly hampers emergency response capabilities, delaying relief efforts and recovery processes.
- The absence of adequate tools reduces the DMCs' ability to address immediate community needs during disasters.
- This issue disproportionately impacts vulnerable communities, particularly in remote and high-risk areas.

Lack of Training (54.1%): Over half of DMC members lack proper training in disaster response, recovery planning, and DRR strategies, limiting their capacity to manage disaster situations effectively which lead to:

- Poor decision-making and ineffective implementation of DRR measures.
- The inability to execute the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) weakens disaster preparedness and coordination.
- Inability to adapt to evolving disaster risks, such as those posed by climate change.

Poor Coordination with Stakeholders (34.7%): Ineffective communication and collaboration with local governments, NGOs, and other organizations result in delays, duplication of efforts, and resource mismanagement. Poor collaboration arises a few threats including:

- Weak stakeholder alignment reduces the efficiency of disaster response and recovery efforts.
- The lack of clear coordination frameworks creates confusion during emergencies, increasing response times.
- Poor collaboration undermines opportunities for leveraging external expertise and funding from NGOs and private sectors.

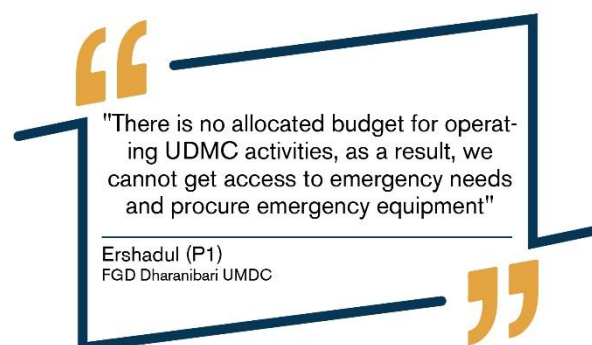
Limited Community Participation (35.9%): A significant portion of the population remains disengaged from disaster planning, making it difficult to implement localized and inclusive strategies.

- Limited participation prevents the inclusion of marginalized groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities, in disaster planning.
- Community disengagement reduces trust in DMCs, further isolating vulnerable populations during crises.

- Without active community involvement, DRR strategies fail to address localized risks effectively.

2.6.1 Inadequate Funding and Resources

The lack of financial support severely hampers the effectiveness of Disaster Management Committees (DMCs). Essential tools such as boats, tarpaulins, first aid kits, and canvas for shelter construction remain unavailable, limiting their ability to respond adequately to disasters. This shortage undermines emergency operations, delays relief efforts, and reduces the capacity to address the immediate needs of affected communities. Without proper funding, DMCs struggle to stock emergency supplies, organize training, and implement preparedness measures, leaving vulnerable populations at greater risk. For example, one UDMC member noted,



2.6.2 Inefficiency in Timeliness of Support after Flood

The chart illustrates the timeliness of support provided by Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) following a flood in Kurigram Sadar and Ulipur Upazila, revealing a mixed perception among respondents. While 40.5% indicated that support was "Sometimes" timely and 13.5% stated it was "Always" timely, together accounting for 54% of respondents who experienced at least some degree of timely support, a significant portion expressed dissatisfaction. Specifically, 29.5% reported that support was "Rarely" timely, and 16.5% stated it was "Never" timely. This inconsistency in timeliness poses a critical threat to disaster-affected communities, as delayed support can exacerbate suffering by limiting access to essential resources like food, shelter, medical care, and clean water. The lack of timely response increases the risk of secondary crises such as disease outbreaks, malnutrition, and prolonged economic instability. Furthermore, it can erode community trust in DMCs, reducing the effectiveness of future relief efforts and highlighting the urgent need for improved efficiency and responsiveness in disaster management systems to protect vulnerable populations and support recovery.

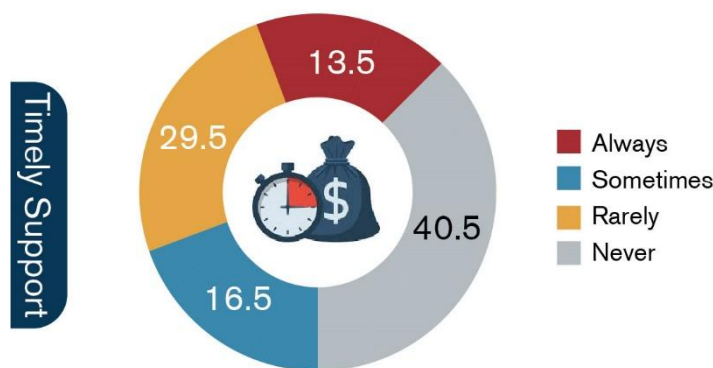
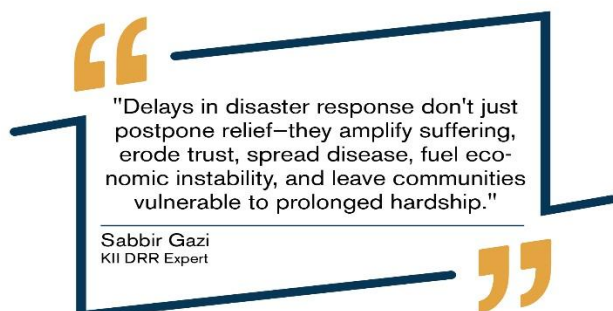
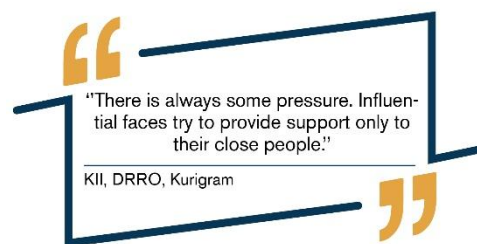


Figure 27: Inefficiency in Timeliness of Support after Flood



2.6.3 Minimize Political Interference

With minimal political interference, DMCs can focus solely on disaster preparedness and response. This creates a democratic and inclusive decision-making process, fostering ownership and transparency. There some political interference at DMCs at upazila level and district level.



2.6.4 Poor Coordination of DMCs

The chart showcases the level of coordination between multi-layer stakeholders and the Union/Ward Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) during recovery and risk reduction phases, categorized into four ratings: Excellent (3.5%), Good (20.0%), Average (30.0%), and Poor (46.5%). The overwhelmingly high percentage of "Poor" ratings (46.5%) signifies a critical lack of effective coordination among stakeholders.

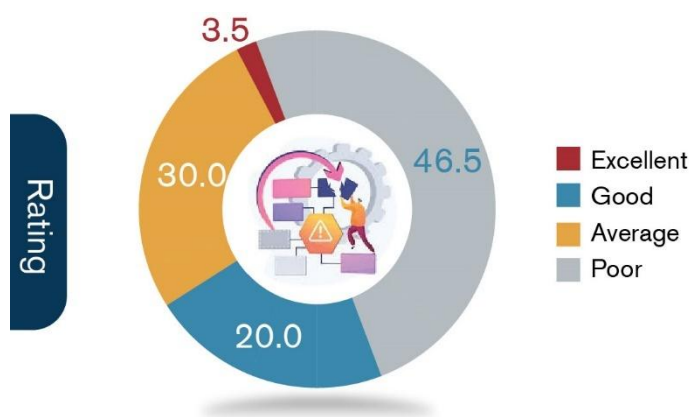
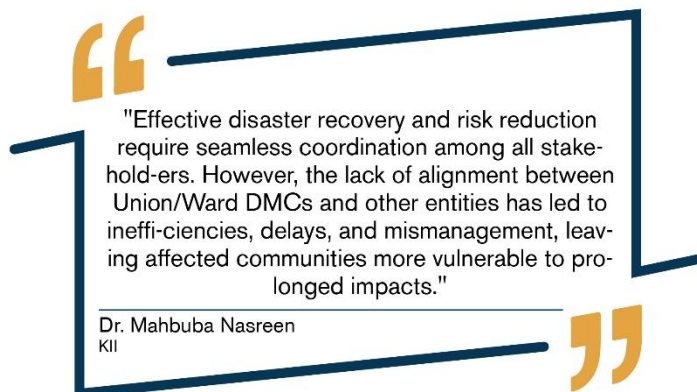


Figure 28: Coordination of DMCs

This poor coordination poses a severe threat to the DMCs for several reasons. Firstly, without strong stakeholder collaboration, recovery efforts risk inefficiency, duplication, and mismanagement, which can delay or hinder aid reaching affected populations. Secondly, poor coordination weakens the ability to collectively identify and address risks, making communities more vulnerable to future disasters. Furthermore, it undermines trust among stakeholders and beneficiaries, diminishing confidence in the DMCs' capability to lead effective recovery and risk reduction efforts. This lack of alignment jeopardizes the long-term resilience of communities and highlights the need for DMCs to prioritize building stronger, more structured partnerships with stakeholders to mitigate risks and improve disaster response outcomes.



2.6.5 Lack of Comprehensive Method in EWS

The table reflects the use of traditional methods in Early Warning Systems (EWS) by Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) across various unions, revealing significant variations in their implementation. Methods like using loudspeakers or public announcement systems are prominent in Holokhana (38.80%), Bhogdanga (31.80%), and Panchgachi (29.40%), but entirely absent in Buraburi, Dhamsreni, and Dharanibari, indicating gaps in deploying this accessible and effective tool. Similarly, the use of mobile phones or SMS is moderate in Holokhana and Bhogdanga (23.80%) but much lower in Panchgachi (11.10%), Buraburi (11.10%), Dhamsreni (17.50%), and Dharanibari (12.70%). Traditional

methods such as distributing posters and flyers and organizing community meetings show uneven application, with Dhamsreni leading in poster distribution (26.50%) and Holokhana and Panchgachi utilizing meetings more frequently (28.60%). However, Dharanibari shows no use of meetings, highlighting significant gaps in this union.

Personalized methods like direct contact (phone calls or visits) are used more in Buraburi and Dhamsreni (20.70%), while Panchgachi (6.90%) and Dharanibari (10.30%) show minimal reliance. Concerningly, a portion of respondents in Dharanibari (20.50%), Holokhana (20.50%), and Bhogdanga (20.50%) reported no action taken, exposing vulnerabilities in preparedness and resource allocation. Overall, while some unions like Holokhana employ a broader mix of methods, others like Dharanibari and Buraburi rely on a narrower range, reflecting uneven deployment of EWS tools. This highlights the need for DMCs to strengthen the use of traditional methods alongside modern approaches, ensuring a more reliable and inclusive system to enhance disaster preparedness and response.

Union	Holokhana	Bhogdanga	Panchgachi	Buraburi	Dhamsreni	Dharanibari
EW Dissemination Method (%)						
Miking	38.80	31.80	29.40	0.00	0.00	0.00
Through mobile phones or SMS	23.80	23.80	11.10	11.10	17.50	12.70
Through social me-dia	21.10	14.00	12.30	19.30	08.80	24.60
Distributing posters and flyers	18.40	22.40	10.20	14.30	26.50	08.20
Organizing commu-nity meetings or gatherings	28.60	14.30	28.60	14.30	14.30	0.00
Direct contact (phone calls/visits)	24.10	17.20	06.90	20.70	20.70	10.30
Did not do anything	20.50	20.50	10.30	12.80	15.40	20.50

Figure 29: Union wise Method of Dissemination Early Warning Message:

2.6.6 Gaps in Community Awareness

The chart illustrates the status of awareness programs conducted on disaster preparedness and risk reduction for communities. It reveals that 46.5% of the respondents reported that no awareness programs were conducted, while 40.6% confirmed the presence of such programs, and 12.9% stated that programs were conducted occasionally.

The high percentage (46.5%) of respondents reporting no awareness programs poses a significant threat to community preparedness and resilience against disasters. Without consistent awareness initiatives, communities lack critical knowledge about risk reduction strategies, early warning systems, and effective response measures. This gap increases their vulnerability to disasters, resulting in uncoordinated responses, higher casualty rates, and greater economic and social losses. Furthermore, the lack of awareness hinders the ability to foster a culture of preparedness, leaving communities reliant on external assistance instead of developing self-reliance and resilience. The occasional implementation of programs (12.9%) is insufficient to address these gaps, as sporadic efforts fail to provide sustained education and capacity building. Even the 40.6% reporting the presence of programs highlights that nearly half of the population remains unprepared. These findings underscore the urgency for Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) to implement regular, widespread, and community-inclusive awareness programs to mitigate risks and enhance disaster preparedness and resilience.

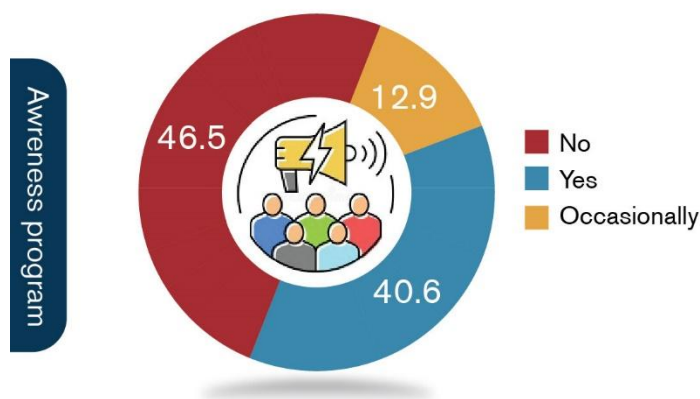


Figure 30: DMC roles in Community awareness for DRR and recovery

2.6.7 Environmental Hazards and Socioeconomic Vulnerabilities

Recurring floods and riverbank erosion, coupled with the socio-economic vulnerabilities of communities, pose significant threats to the effectiveness of Disaster Management Committees (DMCs). These environmental hazards increase the frequency and intensity of disasters, overwhelming the limited resources and capacities of DMCs. Socio-economic factors, such as poverty, low literacy rates, and lack of access to basic services, further exacerbate these challenges by limiting the community's ability to prepare for and recover from disasters.

As noted by Dr. Mahbuba Nasreen (*KII Participant*), a leading expert in disaster management, these vulnerabilities not only complicate disaster response efforts but also hinder the implementation of evidence-based policies and practices at the community level. She emphasized the importance of a participatory approach that addresses these socio-economic challenges while leveraging localized data to tailor disaster management interventions effectively. The interplay between environmental hazards and socio-economic constraints highlights the urgent need for DMCs to adopt inclusive, resource-intensive strategies to mitigate risks and strengthen community resilience.

2.6.8 Infrastructure and Logistical Challenges

The table reveals significant infrastructure and logistical challenges that pose serious threats to the effectiveness of Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) in disaster response. The lack of emergency funds in Panchgachi, Buraburi, and Dharanibari, coupled with minimal availability in Dhamsreni (9.10%), leaves these unions ill-prepared to address immediate disaster needs. Similarly, the absence of construction materials for rehabilitation in many unions, except Bhogdanga (45.50%) and Holokhana (27.30%), hinders post-disaster recovery efforts. The shortage of trained personnel for recovery planning,

particularly in Dharanibari and other unions, further exacerbates the inability to plan and implement effective recovery strategies.

Communication tools, such as radios, are critically lacking in Dhamsreni (7.10%) and entirely absent in Panchgachi, Buraburi, and Dharanibari, impairing disaster coordination. Essential resources like torches are scarce in Buraburi (2.90%) and Dhamsreni (8.60%), while the absence of boats in Holokhana and Dharanibari severely limits flood response capabilities. Even basic communication tools like hand mikes are unavailable in Panchgachi (0.00%) and sparsely distributed in Dharanibari (5.60%), further impeding effective emergency communication.

These gaps in resources and logistics represent a critical threat to disaster preparedness and response. The inequitable distribution of resources, coupled with inadequate infrastructure, leaves several unions vulnerable to the impacts of disasters, delaying relief efforts, and exacerbating the risks faced by affected communities. Without urgent intervention to address these challenges, the capacity of DMCs to protect lives and livelihoods during disasters will remain severely compromised.

Table 5: Union wise availability of resources at UDMC Level

Union	Holokhana	Bhogdanga	Panchgachi	Buraburi	Dhamsreni	Dharanibari
Resources for Disaster Response						
Emergency funds	45.50%	45.50%	0.00%	0.00%	9.10%	0.00%
Construction materials for rehabilitation	27.30%	45.50%	0.00%	0.00%	18.20%	9.10%
Trained personnel for recovery planning	9.10%	36.40%	18.20%	9.10%	18.20%	9.10%
Communication tools [e.g., radios]	35.70%	57.10%	0.00%	0.00%	7.10%	0.00%
Torch	45.70%	20.00%	11.40%	2.90%	8.60%	11.40%
Boat	0.00%	30.80%	15.40%	30.80%	23.10%	0.00%
Hand mike	36.10%	11.10%	0.00%	11.10%	36.10%	5.60%
Flute	18.50%	14.80%	11.10%	11.10%	37.00%	7.40%
First aid box	14.30%	42.90%	14.30%	0.00%	28.60%	0.00%

Union	Holokhana	Bhogdanga	Panchgachi	Buraburi	Dhamsreni	Dharanibari
Resources for Disaster Response						
Emergency funds	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Construction materials for rehabilitation	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
Trained personnel for recovery planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Communication tools	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Torch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boat	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Hand mike	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Flute	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
First aid box	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗

Figure 31: Status of resources at UDMC Level

2.7 Collaboration Opportunities with DMC

2.7.1 Bringing Robustness in EWS

The data shows that Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) utilize various methods to disseminate disaster-related information, with loudspeakers or public announcement systems being the most common (37.1%), followed by mobile phones or SMS (33.5%) and social media (28.8%). Direct contact, such as phone calls or visits (22.9%), and community meetings (17.1%) are also employed, while traditional methods like distributing posters and flyers are used less frequently (4.1%). However, 30% of respondents reported that no action was taken, indicating a significant gap in communication. This presents an opportunity for DMCs to strengthen their communication strategies by adopting a multi-channel approach. By combining traditional methods with modern tools like mobile communication and social media, DMCs can ensure broader and more inclusive outreach. Leveraging these platforms effectively can enhance community preparedness, build trust, and reduce risks during disasters.

“

Before disasters, we raise awareness, such as informing people about floods and advising them to move to safe places. During floods, we conduct relief activities. After floods, we assess damages.”

Md. Moslem Uddin (P3)
FGD UDMC Burauni

”

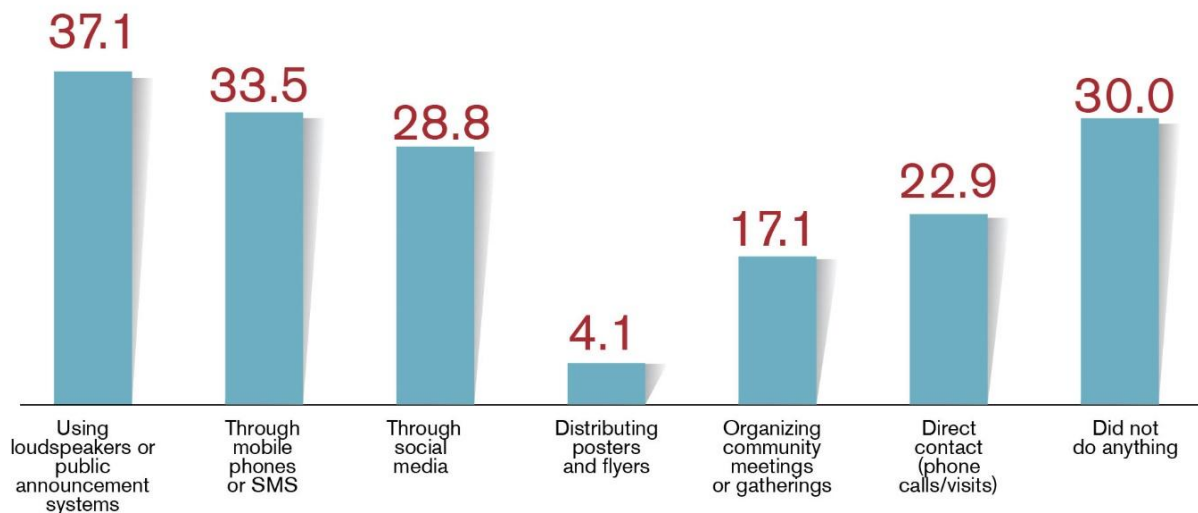


Figure 32: Early Warning Message Dissemination Method

2.7.2 Establish safe shelters, including facilities for livestock

In Kurigram, where livestock plays a critical role in the livelihoods of many families, the need for shelters that can accommodate both people and animals is paramount. During floods, families often face the difficult choice of evacuating without their livestock or risking their lives to stay behind and protect them. Integrating livestock facilities into disaster shelters would not only safeguard livelihoods but also encourage timely evacuation, reducing loss of life and property. Establishing such multi-purpose shelters is a vital step towards building resilience in vulnerable communities.

“In Kurigram, where many families depend on livestock for their livelihoods, shelters must include provisions for animals to ensure families do not lose their primary source of income during floods.”

Md. Abul Kalam Azad
IDI, Panchgachi

2.7.3 NGO Partnerships and Financial Collaboration

The FGD with UDMC members in Dhamshreni, Ulipur highlights the crucial role of NGOs in supporting disaster management activities in Kurigram. Participants noted that NGOs often provide relief and other resources during disasters, ensuring much-needed assistance reaches affected communities. This collaboration complements the efforts of local Disaster Management Committees (DMCs), particularly in areas where government allocations are insufficient.

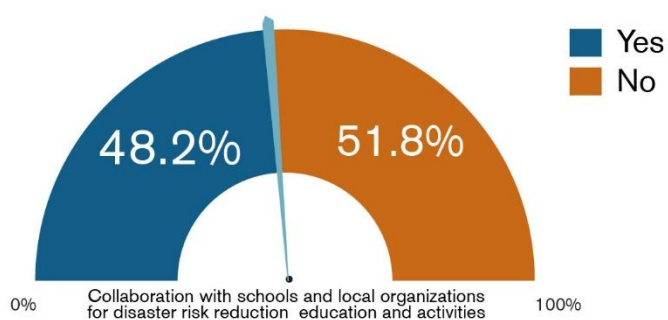


Figure 33: Collaboration with local org

Despite the support from NGOs, financial constraints remain a significant challenge for UDMCs. Participants expressed that disaster preparedness and response activities are heavily dependent on external funding, as local budgets are inadequate. For instance, allocations for meetings, equipment, and volunteer training are either unavailable or insufficient. Some members emphasized that contributions from various stakeholders, including NGOs and community members, could alleviate these financial gaps. Additionally, influential local leaders and community networks play a key role in coordinating resources and relief efforts, enhancing the overall impact of disaster response. At the same time 51.8% DMC members claimed that they do not have collaborative activities with local organization, NGOs and schools for DRR activities.

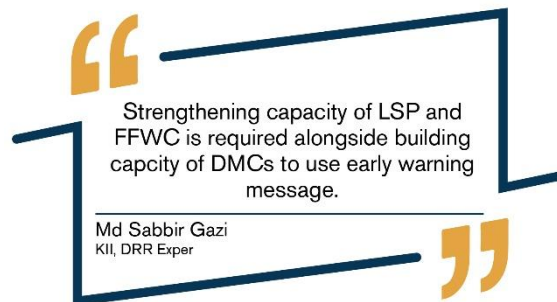
These findings suggest that strengthening partnerships with NGOs and fostering collaborative financial strategies can significantly improve the capacity of UDMCs. Encouraging broader financial contributions and integrating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives could address funding shortages and ensure sustainable disaster management practices in vulnerable areas like Kurigram. One of the UDMC members mentioned,

“In our committee, NGO and Teacher representation is not adequate though they help and support us a lot.”

Ershadul
FGD UDMC Dharanibari, (P1)

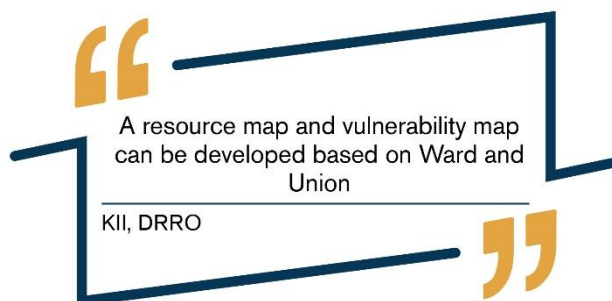
2.7.4 Utilizing Technological Advances

Emerging technological advancement may enhance response quality in preparedness phase and post disaster phase. Increasing intermediate time may lead to take earlier preparation for responding to flood. Hence joint river commission may play a crucial role to get real time data in term of cross border rivers in Kurigram. Moreover, by using satellite image and drone technology post flood damage might be assessed rapidly. It will be effective for remote areas like Saheber Alga.



2.7.5 Leveraging Localized Knowledge for Evacuation Planning

DMCs are deeply integrated into the local communities they serve, often having intimate knowledge of flood-prone areas, vulnerable groups, and infrastructure weaknesses. This knowledge can be leveraged to enhance evacuation planning. DMCs can collaborate with local authorities to identify safe evacuation routes, emergency shelter locations, and logistical needs for evacuating tourists and local residents alike.



2.7.6 Engaging Community Members in Disaster Risk Reduction Efforts

DMCs can play an important role in engaging local community members in disaster risk reduction activities. By offering workshops, training sessions, and community outreach programs, DMCs can raise awareness about flood risks and preparedness, helping local populations better understand how to protect themselves and their property.



2.7.7 Support with Logistics

A recurring issue highlighted in the qualitative interviews is the lack of adequate resources and logistics within Disaster Management Committees (DMCs). For instance, Shamsul Alam, the Union Parishad Chairman of Buraburi Union, emphasized several critical needs during an in-depth interview (IDI). He stated:

[OBJ]

These insights highlight the urgent need to strengthen the capacity of DMCs to ensure they can adequately support their communities during emergencies.

2.7.8 Capacity Building through Training

Mr Khalid Bin Masud stated that there is a critical need for comprehensive training and knowledge-building initiatives for Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) at both the Union and Ward levels in Kurigram Sadar and Ulipur Upazila. A lack of awareness regarding the Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) was consistently reported by respondents, which has hindered their understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the committees.



"

While some DMC members have participated in various training programs, such as those focused on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), health, and Early Warning Systems (EWS), these efforts were found to be fragmented and insufficient to build cohesive knowledge. The findings underscore the need for targeted and integrated training for both DMC members and NGO staff. Specifically, such training should include:

- An in-depth understanding of the SOD, including its purpose, background, and directives related to disaster preparedness and response.
- Practical guidance on how DMCs can operationalize the SOD to enhance disaster management outcomes.

This suggests that addressing these training gaps could significantly strengthen the capacity of DMCs to perform their designated functions effectively during disasters.

Chapter: 03



Recommendation

“Understanding the Operations, Capacities
and Coordination Mechanisms of the Disaster Management
Committee (DMC) in Northwestern Zone of Bangladesh”

3. Recommendations

3.1 Recommendations for Disaster Management Committees (DMCs)

This recommendation section is organized based on prioritized needs of DMCs at local level in Kurigram. In broader sense following gaps and suggestions are relevant for all of studied DMCs.

3.2 Enhancing Financial Resources

Finding: Lack of financial resources limits the ability of DMCs to respond effectively to disasters.

Recommendation: Establish dedicated disaster funds and leverage partnerships with NGOs and private corporations.

Union-Specific Needs:

- **Holokhana and Bhogdanga:** Already have some funding access; require expansion to ensure more comprehensive coverage.
- **Panchgachi, Buraburi, and Dharanibari:** Require prioritized fund allocation as they lack emergency funding entirely.
- **Dhamsreni:** Needs moderate funding for shelter upgrades and emergency preparedness.

3.3 Strengthening Early Warning Systems (EWS)

Finding: Communication tools for EWS, like loudspeakers and SMS, are inconsistently deployed across unions.

Recommendation: Develop inclusive EWS with multiple communication channels and adopt real-time forecasting tools.

Union-Specific Needs:

- **Holokhana, Bhogdanga, and Dhamsreni:** Require training for LSPs and the inclusion of women and vulnerable groups in EWS dissemination.
- **Panchgachi and Buraburi:** Need investment in loudspeakers and radios to reach underserved areas.
- **Dharanibari:** Requires deployment of modern tools, like drones and real-time flood forecasting systems, due to its higher vulnerability.

3.4 Improving Logistical Preparedness

Finding: Inadequate resources, such as boats and communication tools, create significant logistical challenges.

Recommendation: Ensure equitable distribution of resources, upgrade flood shelters, and train shelter committees.

Union-Specific Needs:

- **Holokhana and Bhogdanga:** Require additional boats and torches for flood response.
- **Panchgachi:** Needs both logistical tools and comprehensive training for shelter management committees.
- **Buraburi and Dhamsreni:** Require shelter upgrades, including sanitation facilities and alternative power sources.
- **Dharanibari:** Needs a comprehensive overhaul of logistical support, including communication tools and construction materials.

3.5 Capacity Building and Training

Finding: Most DMC members lack adequate training on DRR, SOD implementation, and recovery planning.

Recommendation: Provide targeted training programs and conduct regular simulations and drills.

Union-Specific Needs:

- **Holokhana and Bhogdanga:** Require training on advanced disaster recovery and risk reduction practices.
- **Panchgachi and Buraburi:** Need training on SOD awareness and basic disaster response strategies.
- **Dhamsreni:** Requires hands-on training in evacuation management and recovery planning.
- **Dharanibari:** Needs focused training on early warning systems and practical drills for disaster scenarios.

3.6 Community Engagement and Awareness

Finding: Lack of awareness programs leaves communities unprepared for disasters.

Recommendation: Conduct regular awareness campaigns and promote inclusivity in DMCs.

Union-Specific Needs:

- **Holokhana** and **Bhogdanga**: Require community-based disaster planning workshops to engage residents.
- **Panchgachi**: Needs targeted campaigns on flood preparedness due to low awareness levels.
- **Buraburi** and **Dhamsreni**: Require programs tailored to vulnerable groups, such as women and persons with disabilities.
- **Dharanibari**: Needs campaigns focused on building trust and collaboration with DMCs.

3.7 Policy and Institutional Strengthening

Finding: Irregular DMC meetings and poor coordination with stakeholders weaken disaster management.

Recommendation: Enforce regular DMC meetings, strengthen stakeholder coordination, and integrate climate adaptation strategies.

Union-Specific Needs:

- **Holokhana, Bhogdanga, and Dhamsreni**: Require improved stakeholder alignment and better meeting frequency.
- **Panchgachi** and **Buraburi**: Need assistance in integrating climate-resilient measures into disaster plans.
- **Dharanibari**: Needs robust oversight and alignment with regional and national disaster committees.

3.8 Leveraging Technological Advances

Finding: Limited use of modern technologies like GIS mapping and forecast-based financing reduces disaster response efficiency.

Recommendation: Implement digital resource mapping and forecast-based financing (FbF).

Union-Specific Needs:

- **Holokhana** and **Bhogdanga**: Require GIS-based resource mapping for better evacuation planning.
- **Panchgachi, Buraburi, and Dhamsreni**: Need FbF mechanisms to ensure proactive resource allocation.
- **Dharanibari**: Requires the adoption of advanced tools, like drones, for damage assessment and recovery planning.

Table 6: Summary of Union-Specific Needs

Union	Key Needs
Holokhana	Additional funding, boats, training on recovery planning, GIS-based resource mapping.
Bhogdanga	Stakeholder coordination, training on advanced DRR, improved logistics like torches and boats.
Panchgachi	Awareness programs, construction materials, shelter management training.
Buraburi	Shelter upgrades, targeted awareness programs, stakeholder collaboration.
Dhamsreni	Shelter improvements, EWS dissemination tools, evacuation management training.
Dharanibari	Modern technologies (drones, GIS), community trust building, comprehensive logistical overhaul.

Chapter: 04



Conclusion

“Understanding the Operations, Capacities
and Coordination Mechanisms of the Disaster Management
Committee (DMC) in Northwestern Zone of Bangladesh”

4. Conclusion

This study highlights critical operational weaknesses within Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) in the northwestern regions of Bangladesh, particularly focusing on the Kurigram district. Key findings reveal that DMCs suffer from a lack of awareness regarding roles and responsibilities during and after disasters, with a significant portion of members being only "Somewhat Aware" or entirely unaware. This lack of clarity hinders effective response and recovery efforts. Furthermore, insufficient resources, including boats, tarpaulins, first aid kits, and communication tools, severely limit the committees' capacity to address community needs during crises.

The challenges are compounded by inadequate training among DMC members, which leaves them ill-prepared to handle real-world disaster situations, and weak coordination with stakeholders, resulting in delayed responses and inefficient utilization of resources. Additionally, limited community engagement further isolates vulnerable populations, reducing trust and participation in disaster planning and response activities.

These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions, including capacity-building programs, improved resource allocation, stakeholder coordination frameworks, and increased community involvement. By addressing these gaps, DMCs can become more effective in mitigating disaster impacts and enhancing community resilience.

Chapter: 05



Bibliography

“Understanding the Operations, Capacities
and Coordination Mechanisms of the Disaster Management
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Chapter: 06



Annexure

“Understanding the Operations, Capacities
and Coordination Mechanisms of the Disaster Management
Committee (DMC) in Northwestern Zone of Bangladesh”

6.1 Sample distribution

Table 2.2: Household Survey Sample Distribution

District	Upazila	Union	Count Union	Count Upazila	Count District
Kurigram	Kurigram Sadar	Holokhana	43	129	258
		Bhogdanga	43		
		Panchgachi	43		
	Ulipur	Buraburi	43	129	
		Dharanibari	43		
		Dhamsreni	43		

Table 2.3: DMC Members Survey Sample Distribution

District	Upazila	Union	Count Union+Ward	Count Upazila+Union+Ward	Count District
Kurigram	Kurigram Sadar	Holokhana	25	75+10=85	170
		Bhogdanga	25		
		Panchgachi	25		
	Ulipur	Buraburi	25	75+10=85	
		Dharanibari	25		
		Dhamsreni	25		

Table 2.3: FGD Sample Distribution

Respondents	Area	Count
Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC)	Holokhana	1
	Bhogdanga	1
	Panchgachi	1

	Buraburi	1
	Dharanibari	1
	Dhamsreni	1
WDMC	Total	6
Union Disaster Management Committee (UDMC)	Holokhana	1
	Bhogdanga	1
	Panchgachi	1
	Buraburi	1
	Dharanibari	1
	Dhamsreni	1
UDMC	Total	6
Upazila Disaster Management Committee (UzDMC)	Kurigram Sadar	1
	Ulipur	1
Local Community	At 6 Unions	6
Total FGD		18

6.2 Analysed Data

Table: aware of your roles and responsibilities during intermediate time

Awareness Pre disaster activities	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
No	17.6%	17.6%
Yes	56.5%	61.2%
Somewhat	25.9%	21.2%

Table: aware of your roles and responsibilities during disaster period

Awareness Pre disaster activities	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
No	17.6%	16.5%
Yes	60.0%	63.5%
Somewhat	22.4%	20.0%

Table: aware of your roles and responsibilities postdisaster period

Awareness Pre disaster activities	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
No	17.6%	15.3%
Yes	64.7%	71.8%
Somewhat	17.6%	12.9%

Table: DMC memeber activities before disastera

DMC memeber activities before disaster ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Developing disaster preparedness plans	35.0%	26.8%
Conducting awareness-raising activities	58.8%	54.9%
Conducting training and drills	3.8%	4.9%
Preparing relief materials	30.0%	26.8%
Disaster risk assessment	32.5%	22.0%
Coordination with local communities	23.8%	8.5%
Establishing emergency communication systems	23.8%	9.8%
Do not do anything	28.8%	39.0%

Table: DMC member activities duiring a disaster^a

DMC member activities duiring a disaster ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Distribution of relief	34.2%	28.0%
Rescue operations	31.6%	23.2%
Providing health services	22.8%	12.2%
Managing shelters	19.0%	12.2%
Ensuring security measures	20.3%	12.2%
Data collection and situation reporting	19.0%	12.2%
Communication and coordination	35.4%	24.4%
Do not do anything	30.4%	42.7%

Table: DMC members activities after a disaster^a

DMC members activities after a disaster ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Distribution of relief	33.3%	28.0%
Rescue operations	24.7%	32.9%
Providing services to affected individuals	43.2%	28.0%

DMC members activities after a disaster ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Post-disaster situation assessment	22.2%	29.3%
Data collection and report preparation	16.0%	12.2%

Table: DMC members activity for EW message^a

DMC members activity for EW message ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Using loudspeakers or public announcement systems	46.8%	32.1%
Through mobile phones or SMS	34.2%	37.0%
Through social media	31.6%	29.6%
Distributing posters and flyers	6.3%	2.5%
Organizing community meetings or gatherings	17.7%	18.5%
Direct contact (phone calls/visits)	25.3%	23.5%
Did not do anything	24.1%	39.5%

Table: DMC members role for recovery^a

DMC members role for recovery ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Coordinating with local government and NGOs	60.9%	48.1%
Mobilizing community resources	15.2%	27.8%
Conducting needs assessments for affected households	47.8%	63.0%
Facilitating reconstruction efforts	34.8%	20.4%

Table: Training DMC members received

Training type ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) training	75.0%	75.6%
Disaster Recovery Planning training	60.0%	48.9%
Community-based Disaster Management training	20.0%	17.8%

Training type ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Health and medical services training	21.7%	15.6%
Communication and coordination training	41.7%	24.4%
Field data collection training	10.0%	8.9%
Relief distribution and emergency response training	15.0%	11.1%

Table: Available resource for DRR and recovery

available resource for DRR and recovery ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Emergency funds	21.7%	4.0%
Construction materials for rehabilitation	17.4%	12.0%
Trained personnel for recovery planning	15.2%	16.0%
Communication tools [e.g., radios	28.3%	4.0%
Torch	58.7%	32.0%
Boat	13.0%	28.0%
Flute	37.0%	76.0%
Hand mike	26.1%	60.0%
First aid box	10.9%	8.0%

Table: Primary challenges in DRRa

Primary challenges in DRR ^a	Kurigram Sadar	Ulipur
Lack of training	77.2%	77.4%
insufficient resources	84.2%	83.9%
Poor coordination with stakeholders	45.6%	53.2%
Limited community participation	57.9%	45.2%