

Disaster Management

Name:

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Disaster management

Disaster management is a complex process and it involves preparations, support systems and the aspect of rebuilding the society after the loss that commonly associated with the same. Sometimes the disasters will be manmade, while in some of the cases they will be natural. They tend to have negative impacts on the economy and associated social consequences that affect the population. They threaten the general welfare of the public warranting assistance from the government. The level of preparedness is however crucial to the effectiveness of mitigating the resultant aftermath. Disasters come with loss of life and property and a significant level of destruction. The level of preparedness and the actual implementation of the policies that are in place along with the relevant practices and the parties involved, there is always some element of compromise. Sometimes the compromises made tend to impact negatively the ability of the disaster preparedness programs to have positive impacts. There is a gap that exists between the level of preparedness that the public has and the relevant government agencies. The public may not respond to the news and the information offered in the expected manner causing some element to delay in the response times and efforts. At the same time, most of the emergency preparedness programs tend to have some element of bureaucratic processes (Bucci et al., 2013). This is relative to the responsibilities of the different agencies and the decision making processes. As such, considering the compromises made by the public and the bureaucratic process of the relevant agencies, the disaster management processes may end in failure or success. At issue is the role personal responsibility plays in the wake of a disaster with reference to the individual citizens and the role that government plays. The gap between the responses by the two factions, marks the success of any disaster management programs.

What were the challenges faced?

At an estimated \$65 billion dollars Hurricane sandy is the second most expensive and the largest Atlantic hurricane (Ladislaw, 2014). An estimated 24 states along the eastern seaboard experienced the impacts of the storm in a devastating avalanche of events. The main issue that relates to the fact that the hurricane response efforts from the government were flawed in significantly, is the level of bureaucracy that was involved. This was a crucial challenge and one that cost the lives of several hundreds and property worth billions. In one of the incidences, the distribution of bottled water and packed foods an aspect that would seem straight forward, experienced some major huddles (Ladislaw, 2014). The coordination between the various agencies was poor and most of the decision making process was left in disarray. The distribution of the packed foods and water did not take place until Thursday afternoon in New York. This is relative to the fact that the plane that was carrying the supplies did not land until Thursday morning. What's more is the fact that most of the foods that were offered to the victims were perishable. This meant that the foods did not last more than a few days, considering that most of the people did not have a place to store up the foods offered.

What is more intriguing is the level of laxity that is seen in the efforts towards responding to the disaster. Despite the fact that the government and the rest of the relevant agencies had information days leading to the actual disaster. There is little or no significant efforts that indicated that the various agencies were ready for the disaster despite having enough information to prepare for the same. Much of the efforts that were developed were haphazard. In the end, agencies blamed each other for the lack of fluidity in the efforts to respond. The federal government and the local governments were at each other, pointing fingers.

Having had the information about the devastating impacts that the storm was going to have, it is imperative that efforts should have been made to make sure that costs of the hurricane were mitigate early on. However, this was not the case (Ladislaw, 2014). Much of the significant efforts were carried out right after the storm made landfall in New Jersey. This is despite the fact that, for example supplies could have been moved to the designated area warehouses and relief point's months before the impact. More importantly, this came after Katrina, which had far worse mistakes to learn from.

In light of the public, there was an element off poor response. Most of the people by the time the storm hit had not responded to the calls to evacuate. This is a common phenomenon, where warning are publicized but the public does not heed the warnings (Wilson et al., 2007). As such, this complicates the response efforts, as the agencies have to deal with the destruction of the storm along with rescuing public members, who did not heed to the warning.

What actions were undertaken to deal with the crisis?

In an effort to make sure that these challenges are not met again, the President came up with some significant pieces of legislations to enhance the outcomes of disaster preparedness. In January 2013, the president signed into law some two significant legislations, that is, Public Law 113-1 and Public Law 113-2 (Ladislaw, 2014). In light of Public Law 113-1, FEMA's borrowing authority was increased by an estimated \$10 billion dollars as requirement for emergencies. This is a legislation that allows the agency to continue paying flood insurance among other disaster related claims. The second law assisted the agency with an additional \$50 billion dollars to help rebuild the areas that were affected by the hurricane (Ladislaw, 2014). Later on in February of the same year, the president created a task force to help with the rebuilding of the areas that were affected (Ladislaw, 2014). This was after evidence indicated that the rebuilding efforts were

disorganized by the element of bureaucratic processes among the various agencies at the federal and local levels of governance. The task force is chaired by the secretary of housing and urban development, who intern collaborates with tribal communities, local and state officials (Ladislaw, 2014). The task force further offers recommendations on resilient rebuilding promotions on infrastructure. This is relative to the impacts that the hurricane had on infrastructure across the coastal cities. Microgrids were also established to ensure that there is power resilience in the wake of another disaster, under the Department of Energy.

Were the choices made successful? Why (or why not)?

The efforts to rebuild the affected areas, have had less than desired outcomes. This is relative to the fact that, there are persons that were affected by the hurricane that have not yet found permanent residence years later (Friedman, 2013). This is an aspect that should have been handled swiftly to make sure that the people affected got their lives back in order. However, there is a chance that these victims may not find the resolve that they seek, seeing that some of the victims from Katrina are still struggling with their lives from the disaster. The level of difficulty further increases with the fact that, hurricane Andrew has also had massive impacts.

References

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