
Response And Mitigation Measures in Disaster Emergency

A hurricane has hit the southeast U.S gulf coast leaving over 500,000 people homeless, without food or medical care. As a member of the emergency and crisis administration team for the hurricane that has hit the Southeast coast gulf cost a response plan has to be formulated for the evacuation and rescue of the affected victims. The response plan begins by gathering the team that is going to participate in the rescue mission for the victims affected by the hurricane. The team should include relevant stakeholders and people with expertise in handling a disaster. Each member needs to be aware about the role that they are going to play, and they need to be competent in that area. The second thing in the response plan is to prepare for the worst scenario. Hurricanes usually leave a trail of destruction wherever they hit. It is good to assume and prepare for the worst that is category 5 hurricanes with severe wind and rain, coastal, inland saturation and carry all necessary tools and equipment that are going to be helpful in such situations. The equipment should also be accompanied by personnel that are competent enough to operate them. Preparing for the worst ensures that all bases are covered. The third part of the plan is to assess hazards and response. There should be a full list of all possible hazards that are associated with a severe hurricane together with all the emergency team should be walked through each step of the response. All the evacuation routes should be confirmed, and all supplies and one should make sure that all supplies including first-aid kits and tools are ready.

The response team should then monitor the storm path by listening to local radio and TV news for updates so that they are better prepared for any eventuality. The next step of the plan is now to activate the emergency team. The emergency team mobilizes and positions all emergency equipment, providing medical care, water, and food that may be needed by the people that have been affected. It is then followed by coordinating with the local authorities. At this time the rescue team needs to coordinate with the local police, ambulance, and fire and rescue so that the rescue mission can be streamlined. The emergency team should also put in place appropriate means and plans to reach the affected areas. It may include the use of helicopters or speedboats which will make it possible for the emergency team to navigate through and reach the areas that have been affected. After reaching the affected areas the emergency team needs to assess the situation and attend to the people that have been mostly affected first before proceeding to the next ones. Children, women and the elderly are usually the most vulnerable in cases of disaster. The team needs to attend to them by giving them the medical attention that is required then providing them with meals. The other victims can be attended to after the emergency team taking care of the most vulnerable people.

The emergency team needs to find a central place where all the people that have been affected by the disaster can be gathered and provided with the necessary requirements. After gathering at a central point, the emergency team should carry out head count so that they know the number of the people that have been affected by the disaster and their demographics in terms of men, women, children, the disabled and the elderly. Having that demographic will make the emergency team to be in a position to plan and take good care of the people that have been affected until they are able to go back to their normal life. The best place will be a nearby school and in the event that there is none then they can be provided with temporary structures such as tents, mattresses, water, mosquito nets to avert further cases of contagious diseases such as

cholera and malaria. The people that need further medical attention should be airlifted for further treatment in medical facilities. Proper arrangements can then be made on how to resettle the other group of people that have been affected and they should be helped to resume their normal lives.

Mitigation plans are very important when it comes to handling natural disasters. As a member of emergency and crisis controlling team for a scenario that involves a hurricane, a mitigation plan is important in trying to lessen the effects of hurricanes. Hurricanes are usually some of the most devastating forms of natural disasters in the U.S. Hurricanes develop when the sun heats up the temperature of the ocean surface enabling them to produce strong storms that have winds in excess of 74 mph. The strong storms usually rotate in a circular manner as a result of the Coriolis Effect and the hurricanes can grow to hundreds of miles across. Nothing can be done to stop a hurricane, but its impacts can be lessened if a mitigation plan is put in place to avert its catastrophic effects. Recovery efforts are usually more expensive than easing measures. Mitigation procedures for a hurricane usually fall into two categories that are mechanical and non-structural measures.

The mitigation efforts on physical measures attempt to make the physical infrastructures “disaster-proof” through repair and replacement of or additions to the frame. Flood abatement is one of the methods of reducing hurricane along the coast. Building dikes along the coast to contain the amount of water from overflowing can play an important role in controlling the overflow. Another alleviation plan that can be put into effect is repairing drainage system of the surrounding areas especially the outdated ones. It involves replacing drains and worn-out pipes so that they can be in a position to handle several inches of rainwater per hour. Reservoirs and dams need to be built in order to handle the downtown flooding. The reservoirs and dams should be designed to hold large volumes of water so that they can handle some flood water during hurricanes. Investment should also be made on green storm water infrastructure also called low-impact development. Damaged areas should be rebuilt using features such as “green” roofs that are covered with vegetation, permeable pavements and rain cisterns that decrease runoff thereby lowering chances of flooding.

Other forms of mitigation efforts for hurricanes fall into non-structural methods which do not involve massive changes in the existing infrastructure. One of them is an updated floodplain map. Flood Insurance Rate Maps are created by FEMA in corporation with the state and local officials to define exceptional flood areas which have a possibility of getting a one percent flooding within a year. “Risk premium zone” those are areas that insurance companies may charge higher premiums as a result of increased risk of flooding in those areas are also listed. Another mitigation measure is in terms of policies in flood insurance. Flood cover on homes that are built on distinctive flood threat areas should be subsidized in order to encourage developers to put up more homes in floodplains. Subsidy on insurance on homes built on exceptional flood threat areas will make it easier for members of the public to receive compensation and help them rebuild their lives after a disaster such as a hurricane.

The main difficulty that may be faced by the people involved in the emergency response for the over 500,000 victims left homeless, without food and medical supplies as a result of the hurricane is infrastructure. Hurricanes usually destroy the infrastructures of the area where they strike leaving a massive destruction of roads, electricity and communication network. Without a good road network, it becomes difficult to initiate rescue operations and even provide the much-needed assistance such as foodstuff, medical equipment and temporary structures where the

affected families can be housed. Destruction of the communication network makes it difficult for the members of the rescue mission to communicate with the affected people, therefore, they may not be in a position to know the magnitude of the destruction and the kind of assistance that is required by the affected people. Communication is very vital in any rescue operation because people need to know the exact point where the disaster has struck and its magnitude of the disaster.

There are several strategies that a member of the emergency and crisis management team can do to overcome the difficulties posed as a result of the destruction of properties is set up a measure that can ensure that product and services reaches the affected people. The measures can include the use of helicopters that can reach the affected people even where the road network has been destroyed. Speedboats can also be used in areas that have flooding. Speedboats can help in transporting foodstuffs and medication to the people that have been affected by the floods within the affected areas. They can also help in the evacuation of the people that have been affected and provide temporary shelter such as tents so that the people that are affected can have temporary shelter to live in as permanent remedies are being sorted.

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