DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN KENYA; A CASE STUDY OF THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY-(1998-2008)

By

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Reg. No- R50/70343/08

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES TO THE INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.

October, 2008

DECLARATION

This dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted for award of a degree to any other University.

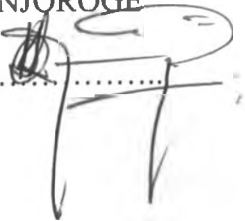B.N. MUGAMBI

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This dissertation has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University supervisor.

DR LUCAS NJOROGE

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Date........... 20/11/08

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DEDICATION

To all the innocent victims of disasters in Kenya; it was never their plan to be there during that fateful moment and even if it was, the disaster was simply an occurrence beyond their capacity to manage, resist and survive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
CBO	Community Based Organizations
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EWS	Early Warning Systems
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
KRCS	Kenya Red Cross Society
NOC	National Operation Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MDG's	Millennium Development Goals
RCAT's	Red Cross Action Teams
UN	United Nations
US	United States

ABSTRACT

Disasters, whether natural or man-made are the most destructive phenomena in human history. Notably, the two forms of disasters have been increasing globally in the recent past due to a myriad of factors such as environmental degradation, rapid unplanned urbanization, technological development, diseases and ethnic conflicts among others. However, even as disasters continue to destroy property, lives and livelihoods, their management in Kenya remains a big challenge and appears to lack the political goodwill. This is despite of the numerous UN recommendations towards DRR as a sine qua non measure to fight poverty and reverse the trend of losses caused by disasters whenever they occur. Here, disaster response has continued to be reactionary, ad hoc and uncoordinated. This is because the country lacks a clear national policy to regulate the various actors in disaster management. Due to inefficiency by the various civil authorities in disaster response, the military have often been called in to respond to emergencies as a last resort but with remarkable success.

This study has heavily relied on secondary data obtained through library research and enriched further with primary data that was gathered through use of open ended questioneers that were administered to seven key actors in disaster management who were purposively selected due to their expert knowledge on the area of study. The study finds that the absence of a national disaster management policy is largely responsible for poor coordination of disaster management in Kenya and strongly recommends that the same be completed expeditiously. Further, the study proposes creation of a National Disaster management authority that will merge the activities of the various government agencies that purport to deal with disaster management and regulate the NGO's while recognizing the special role of the military and consider assigning them the lead role in response to certain types of disasters for effective, efficient and timely response.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Disaster management world over is a very important undertaking in reducing the negative impact of such occurrences to the general development of a country and its people. Whenever a disaster occurs, the damage is normally so widespread since in most cases, the occurrence is unexpected. Indeed, when disaster strikes the responder's initial action is to endeavor to save lives and resettle victims. Many actors appear with all forms of tools, equipments, personnel and other types of resources to help in normalizing the situation.

Here relief supplies are given in huge quantities. However, such relief supplies may save lives but may not necessarily save livelihoods.[1] This is because after disruption caused by disaster; relief providers leave the area without developing any meaningful local coping mechanisms in the event of another disaster. Consequently, the vulnerable groups are left in a situation where in the event of another disaster; they will still be dependent on the various responders to come to their rescue. Again, this will be through short-term measures that are not sustainable. The need for developing resilient measures within such vulnerable groups is now a matter of priority.

Due to this reactionary approach to disasters especially in the developing countries, the same have continued to cause a lot of damage and reversing development gains already made in various sectors. It is sad that whenever a disaster situation has passed, people tend to forget that the same can recur and revert back to life as usual. Whereas the members or the public may be excused for this anomaly, governments world over have been looked upon as the ultimate

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[1] UN/ISDR, *Building Disaster Resilient Communities*: Global Network or NGOs for Disaster Risk Reduction, UN 2007 p 31.

authorities in not only acting to prevent disaster but also to prepare the people far such occurrences and come to their rescue when the unexpected actually occurs. This calls on all governments to have clear policy guidelines on disaster management or risk reduction to mitigate the negative impact of the emergency when it occurs. In the case of Kenya, in the absence of a clear and comprehensive disaster management policy and a coherent institutional framework to implement it, the government's response to drought and other types of disasters has tended to be ad hoc and uncoordinated.[2] Here, the military has usually been called in the last minute to save the situation after other responders have failed to normalize the situation.

This is despite of the fact that some disasters are so common in the country such that one can almost predict their occurrence with precision. What of the annual flooding in the Budalangi area of western province, the Nyando plains of Nyanza province and the droughts of the north-eastern parts of the country among others. Incidentally, such common forms of disaster have tended to catch the government unaware. This is a clear cause for alarm because when the unfamiliar disaster strikes, it is difficult to fathom the kind of confusion it can cause to both the government and other actors. The recent collapse of a building along Ronald Ngala Street in the city of Nairobi and the Nairobi bomb blast of august 7th 1998 are a clear testimony of the dangers of lack of a clear emergency response mechanism for the country. In the two instances, the response was not as fast as expected. This calls for a need to set up institutions of disaster management in the country that will be guided by a clear policy in their daily operations. In so doing, the role of the military should be recognized and entrenched in the disaster management plans of the country. This is important because it will ensure a more effective response by the

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[2] SUDA, C A, *Natural Disaster Preparedness,* Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi, 2000, p 96

institution as opposed to the current situation where they are at times called upon as the last result.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Disaster occurrence has been a common feature all over the world. Indeed, their occurrence has increased with the rising economic development, technological sophistication; and greater exposure to vulnerable populations. It is estimated that natural disasters kill at least one million people around the world each decade.[3] According to Munich Re, one of the world's largest re-insurance companies, 950 natural disasters were recorded in 2007 and were responsible for losses amounting to US$ 75 billions.[4] 97% of them occurred in the developing countries and largely affected the poor. If not contained, these occurrences have the risk of disrupting planned development activities and undermining realization of the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] among other national development programs as policy makers divert resources from other planned activities to managing the unforeseen event.

Although disaster occurrences are common events around the world, most governments and other actors tend to react to them in a haphazard manner; devoid of any planning. In the absence of proper planning, most governments look upon the military to bring in their equipments and disciplined personnel to help in responding to the emergency once the civil authorities have failed to respond adequately; yet, the military is rarely involved in any pre-planning activities, nor are they considered among first responders. This is despite of the fact that globalization, environmental changes and degradation, technological developments, and the changing lifestyles

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[3] Schneid D T and Collins, L *Disaster Management and Preparedness* Lewis Publishers, New York 2000, p. 151
[4] Kuepper, Gunnar J. "Disaster management is Planet Management; Facts, Challenges, and Forecast for 2008" *Internet Journal of Rescue Disaster medicine*, 2008, Vol.7 Issue 2, p3-3

are posing new challenges in disaster management that require new approaches to respond to effectively.

As Sanderson, D argues, it is no surprise that increased urbanization correlates with increased risk, as unplanned growth rarely takes account of physical hazards.[5] What we have witnessed lately in Kenya is a mushrooming of informal settlements where the poor live in deplorable and highly disaster risk conditions. It is even more worrying that such areas are inaccessible during disaster due to poor infrastructure.

Despite the increasing risk, disaster preparedness still appears a mileage in developing countries. In Kenya, disaster response continues to be ad hoc through formation of committees which operate without a clear mandate or policy guidelines. Such committees also loose relevance soon after the disaster situation has been brought under control and normal life resumed. This is a risky situation that should not be allowed to prevail in a world of rising disasters. As Roberts S.P 2007 argues, "approaching public life as if catastrophe were inevitable has important benefits; even if no catastrophe occurs."[6] This should provide a challenge to leaders and planners to be at the top in developing alternative approaches to disaster management for efficiency.

In this regard, the role of the military is worth considering. This is because in many cases, they have been called upon to intervene and even provide a leading role in disaster response where the civilian organizations have failed to respond adequately. Indeed wherever they have intervened,

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[5] Sanderson D " Cities, Disasters and Livelihoods" *Risk Management*, vol.2 No-4, 2000 p50
[6] Roberts's P "What the catastrophists' heresy can teach public officials" *Administration theory and praxis*, vol. 29,No.4, 2007. p547

they have succeeded and yet, their role has not been captured and fully incorporated in the disaster response plans in the country. Why should they continue offering a last resort intervention when they can undertake first line response and effectively bring the situation under control without much suffering of the vulnerable groups? It would appear that the military has huge potential for disaster management that has not been fully tapped and ought to be harnessed in a clear policy without undermining the institution's traditional role.

1.3   OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to evaluate disaster management in Kenya and assess the capacity of the military to respond to emergencies quickly and decisively, offer relief to the vulnerable, restore their lives and livelihoods; and institute quick recovery measurers for them to resume normal lives as quickly as possible to prevent further suffering from the impact of disaster.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

•   Assess the existing disaster response mechanisms in Kenya and the role of the military.

•   Asses the capacity of the military in disaster management in Kenya.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Academic Justification

Throughout human history, the military have been utilized by the civil authorities in disaster response. However, the involvement has at times raised debates especially in the US where the debate now centers around the need to either give the institution a leading role currently performed by the homeland [internal] security or leaving them to stick to their traditional role where they can ' be put on tap and not on top' in times of such emergencies.[7] Indeed in this regard, the author quotes the country's top leadership as having suggested that the congress should consider whether to change the federal law so that emergency response in significant natural disasters could be performed by the military[8]. This is because the civilian agencies were slow and lacked adequate resources.

In Kenya, the military has been involved in response to various forms of disasters with remarkable success. However, no research has been conducted on their nature of involvement, the role they play and how the same can be institutionalized in the country's disaster response and national development plans for better performance. This study is timely and unique because it analyses the crucial role the military plays during disaster, identifies constraints and proposes better ways of utilizing this key resource for better future emergency management in the country. The study further serves to supplement the existing literature on the study which, as the researcher found out is quite scanty. It is hoped that its findings and recommendations will go a long way to provoke a quest for wider research in this crucial area.

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[7] William B. " The jurist", *legal news and research*, university of Pittsburg (2005)
[8] Ibid.

1.4.2 Policy Justification

There are many forms of disasters taking place around the world each day if not in every hour or minute. What is common about these emergencies is that they disrupt peoples' livelihoods, destroy the infrastructure, divert planned use of resources, interrupt economic activities, cost lives and retard development. However, despite of this fact, most governments especially in the developing countries appear not to acknowledge the magnitude of the problem and come up with long-term measures to address the problems posed by disasters in a more effective manner.

Instead, we continue witnessing reactionary measures to disaster situations that only serves to give temporary reprieve to the affected persons who are left under the same conditions of vulnerability once the relief suppliers are gone. This vicious circle creates a donor verses recipient syndrome between the responders who are usually from outside on one hand and relief receivers on the other.[9] It is the contention of this study that such a situation is not desirable and there is need for long-term sustainable measures to break this cycle. Despite of this fact, not much research has been done on this area with a view of assessing the existing approaches and recommending long-term remedial measures in Kenya.

Indeed, such long-term and sustainable measures are urgent because besides traditional /common disasters such as floods, droughts, collapsing buildings and road accidents among others, the country is now at the risk of emerging disasters such as the terrorist bombings as witnessed recently in Nairobi and Mombasa. Such measures would be inadequate if they failed to incorporate the crucial role the military plays wherever a disaster of large magnitude occurs. This

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[9] UN/ISDR, Disaster Reduction in Africa, ISDR Informs, issue 4, 2004,Unon Print Shop, Nairobi p5

study will therefore be useful in influencing policy decisions in development of appropriate guidelines relating to employment of the military in disaster management issues in the country.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For quite a long time, actors in disaster management have tended to react to disaster situations in their own individual way in disregard to the benefits of a systematically coordinated approach. Within the various actors, each has its own strengths and weaknesses that determine the success or failure of the techniques they employ in disaster management and risk reduction and as Munslow, B and others (1999) have argued, institutional complexities complicate complex emergencies still further while in some cases, aid has fuelled conflict due to poor coordination. [10] It is important that disaster management agencies in a country deliver their services in a systematic manner to avoid confusion at a time when coordination is most crucial for success.

On the other hand, vulnerable groups, to whom all relief efforts by the various responders are directed usually, act as separate independent entities until disaster strikes. This is only when they seek to act as one unit in order to safeguard their common interests at a time of great need. Through the general systems theory, Von Bertalantty describes a group of objects that work in concert to produce good results. The theory puts emphasis on the whole rather than reduced parts in achieving better outputs. Therefore, holism is preferable to reductionism because when units act as a whole, better output is expected. A well-coordinated whole works to produces better results as opposed to separate units even within a system.

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[10] Munslow B et al, " Complex Emergencies; The institutional impasse" *Third World* Quarterly, vol. 20 No1 1999 p 207

For the purpose of this study, the general systems theory is adopted to emphasis on the importance of the various disaster management agencies such as the military, ministry of state for special programmes, private organizations, individuals and other actors working in unison as if they were a whole system in disaster management and risk reduction so as to relieve the suffering of the vulnerable persons with minimum delay. The holistic approach to disaster situations will have the benefits of effective and efficient utilization of resources – human, capital and machines to achieve quick and decisive response before the vulnerable groups undergo a lot of unnecessary suffering. The theory will further demonstrate that on their part, targeted communities can also act as one unit in utilizing the resources in order to help one another before, during and after a disaster. Figure one is a model showing the desired systematic disaster management system for effective disaster management;

Figure 1: Systematic disaster management model
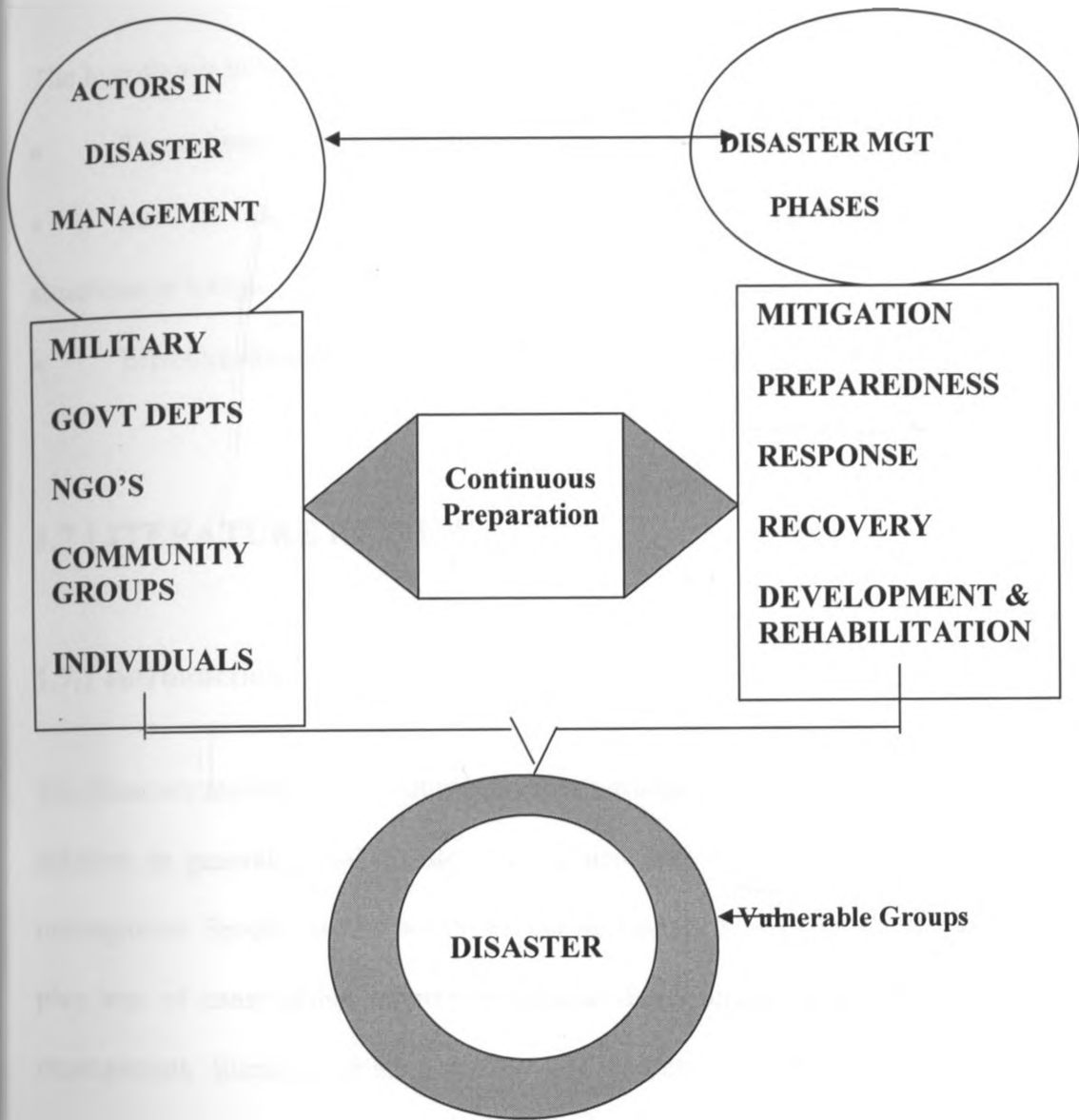
Source: Author.

Figure one above shows the unity of purpose between the various actors in disaster management and the stages of emergency management they must undertake at all times so as to respond effectively to the common enemy-disaster when it strikes. The key activity is continuous preparation because it is not possible to prevent disasters but if we prepare for them adequately, we can mitigate its negative impact considerably.

1.6 HYPOTHESIS

The hypotheses to be tested in this study are;

- The military plays a very crucial role in disaster management in Kenya.

- Lack of institutional capacity within the military leads to poor response to disaster situations in Kenya.

- Effective disaster management in Kenya is possible if the military took the lead role.

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.7.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed in this study includes writings and research works by various authors and scholars on general global disaster management issues and the role of the military in disaster management. Specific works related to disaster management in Kenya and the role various actors play was of considerable interest. For an in depth understanding of the concept of disaster management, literature relating to the key phases in disaster management; i.e. mitigation, prevention, response, relief and rehabilitation were accorded special attention. These phases are crucial in disaster management because they are interrelated and the management at each stage determines the overall performance in disaster management in a country. The literature so reviewed was quite useful in identifying key issues in these phases, the general area of study and guided identification of the main gaps that are addressed in the study.

The review has been conducted in four broad areas of mitigation, preparedness, relief / response and recovery. Section 1.7.2 looks at disaster mitigation; which is very crucial because it is the basis for building resilience and reducing vulnerability. This is usually through deliberate policy measures that seek to remove the vulnerable groups from the harms way. Ideally, mitigation aims at prevention which is the ideal goal of disaster management. However, most developing countries, Kenya included are very weak in this area. Where prevention does not stop a disaster occurrence, it is important that we prepare for the same so as to reduce its impact. Disaster preparedness is therefore addressed in section 1.7.3. Here, the country must have in place adequate preparedness plans, early warning system (EWS) and a community based disaster management mechanism among other requisites. Section 1.7.4 is concerned with the third phase-disaster response. The phase is important because it is during this crucial moment that the efficiency of the first two measures is brought to test. The ultimate goal here is to move swiftly to save lives and stop further damage both at the disaster site and its vicinity. The phase is closely followed by the relief and rehabilitation stage which is covered under section 1.7.5. Here, every attempt is made by the various responders to restore the vulnerable group's lives and livelihoods through supply of food, provision of shelter and medical services among others. These are all discussed in detail because an understanding of the phases is deemed crucial for an appreciation of the disaster management cycle.

Disasters occur quite frequently all over the world and yet; decision makers usually devote resources to the most pressing current problems rather than to a problem that may not occur under their watch. Indeed, such disaster comes in many forms and natural disasters kill at least

one million people around the world each decade.[11] Due to their frequency and the destruction they cause on human lives and livelihood, Schneid D T asserts that disaster preparedness world over is no longer a matter of choice but mandatory irrespective of where one lives.[12] We must shift from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. This is because prevention is not only more human than cure; but it is also much cheaper. Above all, we should not forget that disaster prevention is a moral imperative, no less than reducing the risk of war.[13] Consequently, we should always prepare for disaster occurrences the same way the military prepares for wars whose occurrence they cannot tell with certainty. This is not the case in Kenya and successive disasters have continued to overstretch the resources of the responders.

Schneid further identifies the various steps in disaster preparedness as identification of potential risks, assessing their viability, evaluating the probability of the risk occurring and an appraisal of the potential damage in order to come up with a realistic and practical approach to management of the problem. This is because we must acknowledge the fact that we live in a world of risks and seek appropriate ways of managing and reducing the risk in order to reduce vulnerability.[14] Human vulnerability is determined by factors such as the physical environment where they live, social economic and ecological factors among others.

Besides prevention and preparedness, other key issues in disaster management include mitigation, response and recovery. In all these phases, various activities are undertaken to improve on disaster management and risk reduction. However, the key thing in success of the activities in each stage is proper coordination of the various actors and the activities to avoid

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[11] Schneid D T et al, *Disaster Management and Preparedness*. Lewis Publishers, New York, 2000, pp 151
[12] Ibid p 12
[13] ICRC, *Introduction to Disaster Preparedness: Disaster Preparedness Training Programme*. P 17
[14] Op Cite p 31

waste of resources. At the end of the day, the endeavor is to save lives, livelihoods and restore human dignity for the affected persons.

To improve on disaster management in the country, Suda C A recommends an effective institutional framework that coordinates the various actors and with community participation. Hence, public institutions should work more closely with their partners in the private sector, local authorities and NGOs on the basis of their comparative advantage.[15] Such coordinated effort is crucial because during disaster, there are very many actors who seek to help but each comes into the scene on their own and the multiplicity of actors makes it difficult in ascertaining who takes the final responsibility for integrating disaster reduction into development planning.[16] Besides this, the various actors require a coordinating agency that will ensure that all the equipments, supplies and other resources are effectively utilized to combat the problem and relieve suffering to the affected persons. Such coordination is not clear and a study that leads to its identification is crucial for better results in disaster management in Kenya.

1.7.2 Disaster Mitigation

In disaster management, mitigation refers to the actions taken to reduce the effects of a hazard before it occurs. This is a very important phase because if well performed; loses that normally follow a disaster event can either be reduced or prevented altogether. According to Robert S.P 2007, limiting exposure by dispersing vulnerable targets is key mitigation measure. For instance, after the Oklahoma City bombing, the federal government changed architectural standards to

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[15] Ibid p 98

[16] UN/ISDR, *Disaster Reduction in Africa* ISDR Informs Issue No.3 2003, Majestic Print Works Ltd, Nairobi p 4.

favor a low raise federal buildings rather than a high tower[17]. The lessons we learn from each disaster event are crucial in improving on our mitigation measures. However, as Tom Beer observed in an article on safer sustainable communities," disasters commonly lead to immediate responses but as time passes, the memory and need for preparedness fades..."[18] In its world report on disaster in 2005, the ICRC data revealed that in the recent times, 89% of natural disasters are weather and climates related and have been most pervasive in the last 10 years.[19] Notably the impact has been felt more in the developing countries. Kenya has had a big share of such disasters through perennial flooding in the Nyando and Budalangi areas, regular land slides in Murang'a and parts of Meru district and droughts in various parts of eastern, north eastern and coast provinces among other areas.

Consequently, the United Nations [UN] has recognized disaster reduction as a precondition for sustainable development through adoption of the ISDR.[20] By 1990s the need to link development goals and gains with disaster risk reduction was realized and the period was declared the international decade for natural disaster reduction (IDNDR). This was later followed in 1999 by the Yokohama strategy for safer world and which emphasized on the need for disaster and risk prevention. The world summit on sustainable development which was held in Johannesburg-South Africa in 2002 stressed on the need to achieve poverty reduction through adoption of disaster risk reduction measures.[21] In Jan 2005, the world conference on disaster risk reduction [WCDR] was held in Kobe, Japan where the Hyogo Framework for Action was signed.

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[17] Roberts S.P. " What the catastrophists' heresy can teach public officials" Administration *theory and praxis*, vol. 29, No.4, 2007 p560
[18] Hamilton R et al " Geophysical Risk& Sustainability"*; ICSU committee on Disaster Reduction (* 2004) p3
[19] ICRC, *World Disaster Report, Focus on Information in Disaster*. 2005 Kumarian Press Inc, USA, p 55.
[20] UN/ISDR, *Disaster Reduction in Africa* ISDR Informs No.3 2004, Majestic Printing Works Ltd, Nairobi, p 5.
[21] Ibid p 5

This was upon realization that in the past two decades, on average, more than 200 million people had been affected every year by disasters[22].

Among key outcomes of the Hyogo framework of action were; the need to build on the internationally recognized frameworks such as the MDGs to strengthen global disaster reduction activities, recognition of the intrinsic relationship between disaster reduction, sustainable development and poverty eradication among others and recognition for a need for fostering a culture of disaster prevention and resilience and pre-disaster strategies as sound investments both at individual, community and international levels. The declaration further affirmed that states have a primary responsibility to protect the people and their property on its territory from hazards while communities ought to be empowered to have the capacity to respond effectively to disasters at that level, hence the need to prioritize disaster risk reduction in a national policy consistent with the country's resources and capacities available to them. This means that just like states depend on the military to protect its citizens from external aggression; it can as well utilize it in protecting them against disasters. Here too, "the importance of strengthening cooperative and synergistic interactions among various stakeholders and promoting voluntary partnerships for disaster reduction"[23] was underscored. Such synergy is crucial to avoid duplication of efforts which leads to misallocation of resources and time wastage. The aim of the above measures was to achieve a significant reduction in the loss of life and material damage caused by disasters by the end of the period. However, it is notable that substantial time has elapsed and yet disaster remains a big challenge in the world. This is because national governments and other responsible agencies are yet to tackle disaster related issues through projects focused directly on

[22] UN/ISDR, *Disaster Reduction in Africa, ISDR Informs*, No 5, 2005. Unon Print Shop, Nairobi pp24-25
[23] Ibid p 26

mitigation measures.[24] Just like the world joined hands in the mid 19th century to control diseases like typhoid, cholera, dysentery, small pox and many other killer diseases which were regarded as just part of the every day risks of living, such decisive mitigation measures with regard to disaster risk reduction ought to be taken if the menace has to be contained. However, disasters are today seen in much the same way as the diseases were in the early 19th century; unpredictable unlucky and part of the every day risk of living.[25] This is not true because the epidemiology of disasters – systematic science of what happens in a disaster shows that disasters are largely preventable. Just like the diseases were fought through involvement of all stakeholders, including the communities, fight against disasters has to be fought by all stakeholders in a systematic manner.

For instance, the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster of December 2004 sparked a vigorous discussion on the need for community involvement in disaster mitigation measures by involving them in the various activities. According to the ICRC in Cuba and Jamaica, there is excellent forecasting of hurricanes that enables the people to develop ideal mitigation measures. This is largely due to functional local government's proactive voluntary activity and evidence of great improvisation and local (community) knowledge of the area.[26] People's knowledge of the area where they live is big advantage during a disaster event because they can help themselves better using local coping mechanisms available to them. Such initiatives can be replicated elsewhere to enable governments develop sustainable homegrown disaster management initiatives. In Kenya, the local authorities have both the mandate and resources to spearhead such initiatives while local knowledge abounds within communities that reside in certain environments; indeed even animals

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[24] UN, *Introduction to Mitigation Concepts*. P13.
[25] Ibid p 14
[26] ICRC, *World Disaster Report: Focus on Information in Disaster 2005*. Kumarian Press Inc, USA p 55.

have been known to evacuate from hazards long before disaster strikes due to their adaptation and familiarity with the local environment.

Press, F et al, (1999) argues that in disaster mitigation, introducing scientific and technological advances is of potential value. This is because more people are getting exposed to hazards especially in the growing towns and the mushrooming informal settlements in most third world countries. The authors underscore the value of improved early warning systems to move people out of harm's way, sound land use to avoid hazards and construction practices to better withstand loads imposed by hazards as examples of more effective mitigation strategies based on new knowledge. [27] The kind of urban growth in our towns and enforcement of building regulations by the relevant authorities raises a lot of questions on the levels of mitigation in this country. According to Press F, considerable disaster mitigation efforts have been made in the US because the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) raised mitigation to be of equal priority with response and recovery and developed a national mitigation strategy.[28] It is the contention of this study too that an effective disaster management system in Kenya must accord equal priority to mitigation the same way response is given high priority during disaster. This is purely because good mitigation measures by themselves helps to reduce the negative impact of an emergency when it finally occurs.

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[27] Press F et al "Mitigating natural disasters" Science; 06/18/99, Vol.284 Issue 5422 pp 2 of 3
[28] Ibid pp 2 of 3

1.7.3 Disaster Preparedness

According to Schneid D T, the key to minimizing or controlling the cost and death toll of a disaster is prevention.[29] The author further cites the US government executive order No.11988 of 1997 as a good example of action towards disaster preparedness because through the order, the US Army Corps of engineers have done an excellent job in working towards preventing the damage from flooding.[30] As new forms of disaster emerge in the scene, disaster managers are also faced with new and different challenges as new issues ranging from media control to reaction by shareholders; issues that were never given consideration in disaster preparedness in the past emerge.[31] Such emerging risks include terrorism and cyber crime. In Africa, HIV and AIDS is one of the emerging risks and this was declared a national disaster in Kenya in 1999. Others such disasters include collapsing buildings and increased slum fires with the rising urbanization, urban poverty and poor planning of our cities.

This phase is important because even after taking all the appropriate mitigation and prevention measures, we cannot be able to stop a disaster from occurring. For disaster preparedness strategies to be effective, they must be based upon relevant and reliable information. This is because coping strategies of the vulnerable people is ever changing as the risk itself; hence, they must be regularly monitored, assessed and amended. This will enable the vulnerable groups cope with the various disasters including the new threats such as terrorism. The changing

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[29] Schneid D T et al *Disaster Management and Preparedness* Lewis Publishers, New York, 2000, p 3
[30] Ibid p 3
[31] Ibid p 5

dimension of disaster also calls for new response mechanisms, hence justifying use of the military in disaster management.

According to the ICRC, disaster preparedness should be a continuous and integrated process resulting from a wide range of activities and resources rather than from a distinct sectoral activity by itself.[32] Therefore, if a government is to succeed in the task, it has to create a strong mechanism to coordinate the various sectoral approaches towards a realizable goal. Consequently, disaster preparedness should broadly encompass key objectives including increasing the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of disaster response mechanisms at the community and other levels of governance, strengthening community based disaster preparedness initiatives and developing activities that are useful for addressing every day risks that the communities face and for responding to disaster situations such as say health, first aid or social welfare programmes that have components useful for disaster reduction and response.[33] Such initiatives will empower the communities to act as first responders to their own local problems before help arrives from other quarters. This study will explore possible utilization of the military in building the capacity of the local communities in disaster prone areas to enable them develop resilience in future emergencies. This consideration is in recognition of the fact that by the nature of their operations, the military has the potential of reaching even the remotest parts of the country. They have the equipments and the personnel have the discipline characteristic most modern civilized military.

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[32] ICRC, *Introduction to Disaster Preparedness*. 2001, p 2/20
[33] Ibid p 6/20

According to the ICRC, a comprehensive disaster preparedness strategy includes the elements shown in the table below;

Table 2: Comprehensive steps in Disaster Management Strategy

1. Hazard, risk and vulnerability assessments.	2. Response mechanism and strategies.	3. Preparedness plans.
4. Coordination.	5. Information management.	6. Early warning system.
7. Resource mobilization.	8. Public education, training & rehearsals.	7. Community-based disaster preparedness.

Source: *ICRC – Disaster Preparedness Training Programme, 2000.*

From table 2, it is evident that disaster preparedness is a goal rather than a specialized program. The goal is only realizable when all the prerequisites are identified well in advance and strategies put in place to realize them. Therefore, a combination of the above activities should be continuously undertaken in a country like Kenya to effectively manage disaster occurrences. It should be noted that the activities are complementary and none is superior or of a higher priority than the other. Indeed, ICRC argues a case for conceptualization of disaster preparedness within on-going projects such as primary health care and nutrition initiatives as the only sure way of ensuring that disaster is continuously planned for and effectively responded to when it occurs.[34] This will ensure continued improvement in disaster preparedness measures so that disaster managers are not caught unawares at any one time. This study posits that even better success will be realized through an expanded role of the military in disaster management.

Disaster preparedness measures call for identification of vulnerable areas for appropriate mitigation measures. In his paper on cities, disaster and livelihoods, David Sanderson argues

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[34] Ibid p 16/21

that the recent natural disasters show that it is almost always the poorest who are worst affected.[35] The situation is worsened by the deplorable conditions in which the poor live in some cities. According to him, half of the world population i.e. 2.5 billion people live in cities. The figure is expected to double by the year 2025, where up to half the populations of the largest cities of the developing world are in unplanned and often-illegal squatter's colonies.[36]

Sanderson, in the same paper as quoted above further amplifies the vulnerability of populations living in such settlements with the example of two recent disasters in turkey and Venezuela where in Turkey, two earthquakes that occurred in a heavily urbanized northeastern region of the country in August and November 1999 left over 17,000 people dead, 44,000 injured and 300,000 homes destroyed while in Venezuela, floods which occurred in March 2000 destroyed over 23,000 houses and damaged a further 64,000[37]. In India two cyclones in October 2000 killed well over 10,000 people and left 8 million homeless.[38] Indeed, disasters are daily occurrence in such settlements but the minor ones usually pass unnoticed by outsiders.

According to Ban Ki-Moon, UN secretary General, the difference in disaster management is realized through preparedness and prevention which he refers to as "the hard truth, for it emphasizes foresight and advance planning, and not merely the emergency relief that dominates headlines when crisis hit."[39] In the article, the Secretary General stresses the virtue of preparation for preparedness by giving two contrasting examples between Myammar and Bangladesh. The later suffered cyclone Bhola; in 1970 that claimed over half a million lives. After another

[35] David Sanderson "Cities, Disasters and Livelihoods" *Risk Management* 2000, Vol.2, No.4 p 49
[36] Ibid p 49
[37] Ibid p 49
[38] Ibid p 50
[39] Ban Ki-Moon UN Secretary General "Preparedness The Key" Daily Nation 21 July 2008 p11

140,000 perished in 1991, the country put up an elaborate early warning system, community based disaster preparedness, evacuation and mitigation measures. This worked very well a few years later where when cyclone Sidr visited in 2007, only 4000 lives were lost.[40] Incase of the former who had no experience in such disasters, hence any preparedness or mitigation measures put in place, Cyclone Nargis that hit the area in May, 2008 left a wave of great destruction. Disaster preparedness is therefore the key to instituting resilience measures that give vulnerable groups better coping mechanisms and eventually; realization of savings by governments and donors on response, relief and rehabilitation expenditure. Such preparedness would be highly improved in Kenya through utilization of the military who have fairly good capacity that remains under-utilized during peace time.

1.7.4 Disaster Response/ Relief

According to Sean A, et al, information is a key determinant of the levels of success in disaster response. This is because people look upon the authorities for information and…. "decision making can be negatively influenced when authorities are not forthcoming with information or try to 'protect' citizens by withholding information".[41] On the other hand, the ICRC argues that it is not the sophistication of equipments that work in disaster response but a coordination of the various actors by a responsible lead agency that is able to mobilize and create harmony between the myriad of actors. In the US, there was a debate on the need to give the military a lead role in disaster response following the devastating hurricane Katrina while in Kenya, the institution took a lead role after a lot of confusion by other responders following the bombing of the US embassy

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[40] Ibid p11
[41] Sean A, et al "The lack of Disaster Preparedness by the Public and its Effect on Communities" *Internet Journal of Rescue and Disaster Medicine*: 2008, Vol 7 Issue No 2. P 7 of 13

in Nairobi in Aug, 1998. The big questions therefore is whether the military should take the leading role from the onset of a disaster event or continue to render a helping hand to the civil authorities in such events even amidst the emerging new threats. ICRC further vouches for a people centered early warning and response system as a more useful tool than the sophisticated machines that other agencies may bring in to respond to a disaster in certain circumstances.[42]

To Wilson, Sean A et al, the public considers a number of factors in reacting to a disaster. These include the significance of and understanding of the threat, confidence (or lack of it) on the local authorities that usually relay the information on a disaster occurrence and credibility of the source of information among others[43] Information flow and credibility of the source is therefore very crucial in disaster response because with incomplete information, people are less likely to trust the sources and comply with recommendations. The same authors underscore the importance of "therapeutic community response; the altruistic community where "uninjured victims are often the first to search for survivors, care for the injured and assist others in protecting property from further damage while awaiting intervention by authority"[44] They concur with the ICRC on the point that local coping mechanisms are indeed more effective in disaster response because the response is quicker and unhindered by logistics.

Similarly, with the complexities of disaster occurrences and the need for new approaches to their management, Herzog, J.R also Concurs with the above views on disaster response planning and argues that "the planning process should emphasize response flexibility so that those involved in

[42] ICRC: World Disaster Report: Focus on information in Disaster, 2005, Kumanos Press INC: USA, p 55
[43] Sean A, et al "The lack of Disaster Preparedness by the Public and its Effect on Communities" *Internet Journal of Rescue and Disaster Medicine*: [2008] Vol 7 Issue No 2. P 6 of 13
[44] Ibid. P 7 to 8.

operations can adjust to changing disaster demands…. Success of any response plan will also be realized only if it is clearly linked with the disaster preparedness plan initially".[45] Effective disaster response therefore calls for a harmony between mitigation, prevention and preparedness. This is because during preparation, planners are able to identify resources and develop evacuation plans that can be operational zed within a short period for a meaningful outcome. Herzog further observes that people's response to evacuation exercise is conditional to such issues like the perception of immediate and severe danger, the existence of a limited number of escape routes, the perception that the escape routes are closing necessitating immediate escape; and a lack of communication about the situation.[46] These conditions are determined by individual's perception of what is true and may severely hamper disaster response systems if the people do not have accurate information. Probably, the most important aspect of this phase is "taking advantage of the window of opportunity for the implementation of mitigating measures that might otherwise be unpopular"[47] This may include demolishing human dwellings located near hazard areas in order to avoid injuries in the event of another disaster in future.

Whereas the above measures are necessary for effective disaster response, the efficiency and discipline by the key actors in the exercise is most important. In Kenya, disaster response has been at most haphazard with the military getting involved only at the last minute when the vulnerable persons have already undergone a lot of unnecessary suffering. Consequently, this study will endeavor to assess and appreciate their role with a view of improving on the same for better results in the future undertakings.

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[45] Herzog, J. R. " A Model of natural Disaster Administration: Naming and framing Theory and Reality *administrative Theory and Praxis*; vol. 29, No 4[2007] 586-604
[46] Op cit. p 7 of 13
[47] Ibid, p 7 of 13

1.7.5 Disaster Recovery

Shortly after disaster response enters the final stage of recovery where according to Wilson Sean A et al, citizens begin "the task of picking up the pieces of their lives and seek to help one another in resuming normal lives."[48] Activities during this phase include; clean up exercises, repairs to the damaged property and infrastructure and short term financial assistance to the victims. To the above authors, the U. S government offers loans and grants to disaster victims in order to help them rebuild their lives expeditiously. This is vital because disaster occurrences are usually pure accidents and the vulnerable persons can not be expected to have prepared for them. As of 1999, at least 13 agencies and departments provided a variety of disaster relief programs where by between 1980 and 1986 the FEMA and SBA alone handed out $ 9.1 billion in grants and loans[49] for such assistance. Indeed, such an effort would be worthy copying in Kenya where disaster victims have usually been left on their own save for a few basic relief supplies that do not help them to rebuild their livelihoods.

To Wilson, Sean A, et al, disaster recovery efforts are negatively affected or delayed by factors such as location of the affected areas, economic status and community awareness among others. Consequently, such locations like very steep areas prove inaccessible at a time of need for rescue while the low-income households are severely affected and even take longer to recover[50] In Kenya, the government has recognized the challenges posed by such factors and through the draft disaster management policy, seeks to move away from short term relief responses to development with a view of strengthening the resilience of vulnerable groups to cope with

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[48] Wilson. Sean A. et al "The lack of Disaster Preparedness by the Public and its Effect on Communities" *Internet Journal of Rescue and Disaster Medicine* [2008] Vol 7 Issue No 2
[49] Ibid. p 8 of 13
[50] Op Cit p 9 of 13

potential disasters.[51] Bridging of such gaps through enhancing the vulnerable group's resilience is important.

Ideally, the victims' levels of income determine the recovery rate; where the poor take longer to recover as compared to the wealthy people. Recent events especially with the September 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York makes it clear that 'disaster can mean something far more catastrophic from which it may take months or even years to recover with only 3 out of 5 enterprises affected likely to recover and resume business[52] Others find it extremely difficult to recover and go out of business altogether. Here governments may come in to assist such enterprises and even individuals to rebuild their livelihoods since the disaster was not due to their act of omission or commission. In the long run, it would be more ideal if governments sought to reduce underlying risk factors as a good measure in disaster risk reduction.

The ICRC identifies key preparedness mechanisms that that will directly increase the effectiveness and efficiency of disaster response as; evacuation procedures, search, rescue and assessment teams, assessment procedure and information priorities and measures for activating special installations for disaster response. Other such measures include procedure for activating distribution systems, preparations for emergency reception centers and shelters, procedure for activating emergency programs for airports, harbors and land transport; and preparation for storing or making arrangements for rapid acquisition of emergency relief supplies and equipments[53] These measures become very useful during disaster response but only if they were

[51] GOK, *National Disaster Management Policy* [Draft] 2004 p viii
[52] http:// www. Ids.org, Prepare/disaster
[53] ICRC, *Introduction to Disaster Preparedness: Disaster Preparedness Training Programme.* P 11

catered for during preparedness stage. To realize this, such gaps like low levels of political commitment to disaster preparedness, limited capacity in risk identification, and uncoordinated emergency response must be tackled conclusively.

1.8 METHODOLOGY

This section explains the methodology to be used in conducting the study to arrive at the findings presented. This includes sources of data, sample design, and methods of data collection, analysis and presentation.

1.8.1 Methods of data collection

Ideally, this is an exploratory study that has largely relied on secondary data obtained through library research. Here reference was made on the various books, journals, magazines, news papers and the internet to obtain general information related to the study of disaster management. Specifically, information on the global traditional role of the military, its utilization in disaster management and the debates on its involvement in this task was examined in order to inform this unique study.

To enrich the study further, the secondary data was supplemented by primary data obtained from the field through interviews with selected officials from seven of the few organizations dealing with disaster management in one way or the other in Kenya.

To obtain a representative sample of the officials, purposive/judgment sampling method was applied. This is because the researcher was only interested with expert opinion on general issues regarding disaster management in Kenya and the role of the military in this area. From a sampling frame of 11(eleven) key players, a sample size of 7 officials was interviewed [one from each organization]. This was found appropriate because disaster management is a specialized area and the information required for the study would only be obtained from such key actors. The sample size was considered representative and adequate according to the sampling frame.

After compiling the list of the actors, an interview was arranged with a senior technical officer in each case who was identified through the researcher's own judgment based on the type of information required from the interviewee. A face to face interview was then conducted through use of open ended questions for those within easy reach while for those who could not be reached for such an interview, the questions were mailed to the respondents and written answers received back through e-mail service.

The information obtained through the primary sources was very useful in enriching the secondary information from library research so as to come up with reliable and useful findings and recommendations for the study. These are presented in chapter four under critical analysis of disaster management in Kenya.

1.9: DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Disaster - Serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society causing widespread human, national, economic or environmental losses which exceed their ability to cope within the means available to them.

Source: GOK; Disaster Management Policy (draft) 2004.

Vulnerability – The extent to which a community, structure, service or geographical area is likely to be damaged or disrupted by the impact of a particular hazard on account of their nature, construction, proximity to hazardous terrain or disaster prone area.

Source: UNEP, Kenya Natural Disaster Profile

Disaster Risk Reduction – Systematic development and application of politics, strategies and practices to minimize vulnerabilities, hazards and the unfolding of disaster impacts throughout a society in the broad context of sustainable development.

Source: GOK; Disaster Risk Reduction for Kenya 2006-2016.

1.10 ORGANIZATION OF THE REST OF THE RESEARCH PAPER

The rest of the research paper is structured as follows: In chapter two, the types, actors, prevalence and general issues on disaster management in Kenya are identified, examined and explained while chapter three concerns with the global perspective on issues on disaster management by the military and its role on the same in Kenya. Chapter four is a critical analysis of disaster management in Kenya where the general activities by various actors, successes and challenges are highlighted. The specific role of the military is given special attention. Chapter five contains a presentation of the study findings, recommendations and conclusions drawn from the study.

CHAPTER TWO: TYPES, ACTORS, PREVALENCE AND MANAGEMENT OF DISASTER IN KENYA

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Africa is highly vulnerable to external shocks arising from natural disasters such as cyclones, floods, droughts and earthquakes among others. In most cases, these countries are least prepared for such disasters; hence, their occurrence tends to divert a large portion of government and donor resources from otherwise essential infrastructure investment to emergency relief operations[54]. Despite of these persistent disasters, most developing countries lack in adequate preparedness to deal with the emergencies once they occur. This situation is attributed to lack of resources for disaster preparedness while in other cases; their occurrence is simply ignored as policy makers concentrate on more urgent needs in society. This is mostly on the hope that disaster may not occur after all and even if it does, the damage might be minimal or manageable. It is therefore important to understand the various types of disasters experienced in Kenya, their prevalence, disaster management and the main actors in this field. The chapter is presented in three sections as follows;

In section 2.1 it is important on the outset to understand the types, and prevalence of disasters in Kenya for a number of reasons. Different arrears of the country experience different types of disaster and even where they could be similar; say floods; their magnitudes differ according to

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[54] ATDF journal; vol 4 issue No 4, Washington DC, June 2005.

the terrain, frequency and amount of rainfall in the particular area in a given time among other factors. The prevalence and types of disasters also determines the nature of preparedness and response within a specific area. On the other hand, an understanding of the various actors and their roles is crucial in this study for an appreciation of the state of disaster management in Kenya. Further knowledge on these variables is important for planners because it will guide decision making for equitable and appropriate distribution of available resources towards preparedness, mitigation and response according to specific needs of each area.

Section 2.2 highlights broad disaster management issues in Kenya, various actors with specific attention to challenges and achievements they have made in their areas of operation. An analysis of this situation is vital for this study because it enables us to understand the existing capacity for disaster management and areas of improvement for better performance in the future. It also enables us to appreciate the key role of the military in disaster management in Kenya within the period covered by the study.

In section 2.3, a conclusion on the entire chapter is provided for a better comprehension of the types of disasters commonly experienced in Kenya, where they are most likely to occur, the key issues in disaster management and the existing gaps that call for military intervention in disaster response in the country.

Like other countries in the world and especially in Africa, Kenya has its own history of disasters dating back to 1899.[55] Indeed, their frequency has increased over the past decade resulting to an equally increased number of people injured and property destroyed during the emergencies. This

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[55] Suda C A, *Natural Disaster Preparedness* Institute of African Studies (2000), University of Nairobi, p 98

has also led to increased use of the military in disaster management as aid to civil authorities whenever emergencies of large magnitude have occurred in various parts of the country. With the global climatic change, the number and intensity of weather related disasters will increase across the globe[56]". Moreover, such disasters have become an impediment to sustainable development because whenever they occur, resources are usually diverted from other development activities towards responding to the unforeseen event.

Whereas various sect oral approaches to disaster management exist in the country, there is yet to be developed an effective national focal point for coordination of disaster management activities. Consequently, different approaches such as the Kenya food policy of 1981 and the national environment management coordination act of 1999 among others addresses disaster management through a thin prism of their key focal areas; food security and preservation of the environment respectively. Even within such sectoral approaches, the key component of disaster management i.e. Disaster Risk Reduction [DDR] is not well addressed. Yet, this is the only sure way through which humankind's vulnerability can be limited. "By taking the right steps early, we can save lives and livelihoods that would otherwise be lost". [57] This calls on governments to consider DDR issues at every stage of development planning to avoid situations where disaster management issues are ignored until an emergency actually occurs. Indeed, DDR is now considered key to realization of the Millennium Development Goals [MDG's] as set out in the global development agenda by 2015. Conversely, attainment of the MDG's is crucial for reducing vulnerability to disasters.[58] This is because there is a close correlation between poverty

[56] Ban Ki-Moon. "Preparedness The Key" Daily Nation 21 July, 2008.11
[57] Ibid pp11
[58] GOK *Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy for Kenya, 2006-2016*; a Resilient and Safer Nation Pp5

and vulnerability where the poor are more vulnerable and even take longer to recover from the impact.

It is notable that whereas development is largely viewed positively, it has also been responsible for creation of urban poverty. This is because of uncontrolled rural-urban migration in search of job opportunities but people end up with very low paying jobs or nothing and are compelled to live under deplorable conditions. For these urban poor living in hazardous locations is sometimes chosen if it provides them cheap access to work in the city centre or the industrial area. Consequently, there are a number of slums that have come up in very unstable living environments such as ravines, along flood planes, the railway line and adjacent to noxious and dangerous industrial or transport facilities.[59] Kenya has a high percentage of climatic related disasters; a situation usually associated with severe socio-economic impacts that include lack of food, water, energy and many other basic needs; famine, mass migration of animals and people, loss of life and property, and damage to infrastructure among many other socio- economic miseries.[60] Most of these disasters have been so frequent but their prevention or effective response has been lacking due to absence of adequate disaster management measures and institutions across the country. Consequently, they have usually tended to catch the government and other actors unawares compelling the authorities to call in the military to help in the response, relief and rehabilitation efforts.

Through the draft national Disaster Management Policy, the Kenya government acknowledges the problem of poor coordination and lack of an institutional framework as a major challenge to

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[59] UNDP *Reducing Disaster Risk, a Challenge for Development*, 2004 John Swift Printing Co. USA P 5
[60] Ibid pp.5

disaster management in the country. It is notable that whereas many agencies are keen to help when disaster strikes, this has been done outside a unified policy framework and remains reactive.[61] Consequently, there doesn't exist a sustainable process of disaster management in the country.[62] Such a situation is not desirable because through various disaster occurrences, we are constantly reminded of the nature's destructive power and the need to prepare for such emergencies. It is tragic to believe that humanity is a helpless victim of nature and fail to prepare adequately for disaster through creation of the necessary administrative, legal and institutional framework for managing it. How can we account for the destruction caused by floods in the flood prone areas year in year out while the disaster can be predicted, mitigated and prevented altogether? It would appear that Africa the country would require homegrown solutions to such emergencies. This was due to the emerging dimensions of disasters that are unique to Africa; such as child trafficking, drug abuse, and the devastation caused by HIV and AIDS. This requires that the authorities pay greater attention to disaster relief mitigation, prevention, preparedness, vulnerability and risk reduction and building resilience within the communities.[63] These preventive measures are important because they ensure integration of disaster management planning into the national development plans. Through such integration, the synergy from various actors can be harnessed for a systematic approach to effective and efficient disaster management in the country

The ISDR national platform for Kenya was launched in august 2004 in a workshop whose key objective was to promote a multi-level and multi-sectoral cooperation and collaboration in

[61] GOK *National Disaster Management* Policy [Draft], 2004, pp 1
[62] Ibid p ix
[63] ISDR *Disaster Reduction in Africa* ISDR Informs No.4 2004 UNON Print Shop, Nairobi, and pp 169

disaster risk reduction and integration of the same into national development planning policies and implementation.[64]

However, some challenges have persistently stood on the way for an effective and efficient disaster management system in the country. The most outstanding challenge is the absence of a national disaster management policy. Its development has been in progress since 1999 but to date, it has not received cabinet approval. Consequently, there is no clear institutional framework for disaster management in the country. Therefore, disaster management issues are at times highly politicized leading to emergence of several government departments dealing with similar issues. The country also lacks inadequate resources and capacity to implement disaster reduction measures and even in instances where resources are not a big problem, disaster reduction measures do not seem to have the emotional and/or political appeal that will normally be accorded to a disaster event.[65] There is usually poor planning and timeliness in disaster response and gaps in information sharing both vertically and horizontally while there are no clear inventory of existing national resources for employment on disaster response. On the other hand, poor infrastructure impinges on speedy response to disaster events whenever they occur, infective enforcement of existing legislation even in the absence of a policy, failure to tap the existing potential of the local community's coping mechanisms and assisting them to improve on the same through training and other forms of empowerment; and Lack of a regular disaster monitoring and evaluation mechanism in the country; all combine to curtail effective disaster and risk reduction efforts in the Country.

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[64] Ibid pp 31
[65] UN/ISDR *Disaster Reduction in Africa, ISDR Informs*, issue 5 2005 Unon Print Shop, Nairobi pp 1

2.1 DISASTER TYPES AND THEIR PREVALENCE IN KENYA

Kenya is prone to both natural and man-made disasters that vary from place to place and pose diverse challenges to the various actors in their management. However, on their own, natural hazards like drought, earthquakes and floods are not harmful but when these interact with people, they are likely to cause damage of varying magnitude resulting in a disaster. It is therefore notable that disasters occur when the hazards interact with vulnerable people, property and livelihoods causing varying damage depending on the level of vulnerability of the individual, group, property or livelihoods.[66] Vulnerability levels are further influenced by such factors like location of buildings, social-political and economic factors and the environment among other variables.

The country experiences a number of disasters most of which are weather related and affects certain parts of the country more than others depending on a number of factors. Such disasters occur largely in the arid and semi-arid areas, which make up more than 80% of Kenya's landmass support nearly half of the livestock population of the country and over 30% of the total human population.[67] However, even the well-endowed areas too experience various forms of disaster from time to time. Indeed whether natural or man-made, disasters do not discriminate in their destructive power. Such disasters have been changing with technological developments and posing enormous challenges to the various response and recovery agencies worldwide. Besides the traditional [common] forms of disasters in Kenya, the country has also experienced new types of disaster like terrorist bombings and complicated killer diseases such as HIV and Aids.

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[66] UNDP, *Kenya National Disaster Profile*. Nairobi, pp 10

[67] GOK, *National Policy for Sustainable Development of the ASAL of Kenya 2004,*Nairobi, Kenya, p 9

Among the most common natural and weather related disasters in Kenya, drought and desertification are major occurrences in large parts of the country. Their effects have become more pronounced in the last three decades with the worst in recent times occurring in the year 2000 and affecting Central, Eastern, Rift Valley, Coast and North Eastern provinces. In all, the drought led to a huge food shortage in those areas leaving 4.4 million people in need of relief food.[68] Normally, this type of disaster is more prevalent in North Eastern, Rift Valley, Eastern and coast provinces. During the droughts of 2000 and 2006, over 7.9 million people required food aid and the military had to be called in to airlift and drop food rations to the vulnerable and inaccessible areas. Besides airlifting food rations, the military also dug boreholes and used their water boozers to supply water to the vulnerable populations and their livestock. The institution also supplemented health provider's efforts in provision of treatment to the sick and the malnourished children.

Besides drought and desertification, floods are another common form of disaster in Kenya. These occur due to natural factors such as flash floods, river or coastal floods. In Kenya, floods are mostly caused by torrential rains and are most frequent in Western, Nyanza and the Coast Provinces. Poor drainage in some urban areas has also contributed to floods in such areas. This has been a perennial problem that has taken the country back on development due to the huge cost of reconstruction that the government undertakes every time the disaster occurs. To date, the impact of the 1997-98 El-Nino rains in the country is still felt. The unexpected short rains of October-December of that year caused a lot of social, economic and other losses running into millions of Kenya shillings.[69] Indeed, the country's GDP declined from 2.3% in 1997 to 1.6% in

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[68] GOK, Disaster Risk Reduction strategy for Kenya 2006-2016, A Resilient and Safer Nation, pp9
[69] Op Cit p28

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April 1998 following the damage caused by the El-nino rains[70]. To date some of the damaged infrastructure has never been rebuilt while floods have continued to cause havoc in the vulnerable areas of the country. In Budalangi area of Western province, the menace is almost predictable because it has been too frequent. However, in the recent past, the impact has not been so severe because the military has been actively engaged in construction and reinforcement of dykes to control the floods from river Nzoia that has been responsible for the flooding.[71] Construction of these dykes has been an annual exercise but the problem persists. With the extra input by the military, better results are expected since their intervention in other ventures such as containment of cattle rustling in the country's border areas has equally been successful.

Related to floods are the landslides, which mostly occur during heavy rains in Kenya. The areas most affected are those with a rainfall exceeding 1200m per annum and include parts of the districts of Murang'a, Kirinyaga, Meru, Nyeri, Kisii and Mombasa. These have become so common in Kenya because so many forests have been cleared to make way for farmland. People have cut trees to cultivate and the soil gets loose.[72] Ideally, the bare land exposes the soils to the rainwater making the ground vulnerable to the menace during heavy rains. In Murang'a district alone, is estimated that landslides have been responsible for the loss of over 1 million cubic meters of soil in an area of 30km sq [73] This is a big loss of productive soil and an indicator of environmental degradation that must be addressed through new measures in disaster management in the country. In this regard, the military, which have not been involved in any activities in the area, can help in soil conservation measures as a disaster mitigation measure.

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[70] GOK, Nairobi Bomb Attack Report, Appeal for Assistance, August, 1998, p 3
[71] GOK, Disaster Risk Reduction strategy for Kenya 2006-2016, A Resilient and Safer Nation, p 11

[72] Ibid p 38
[73] Oppo Cit, pp13

Kenya is also prone to earthquakes and volcanic activity because the Great African Rift Valley runs through the country. The most vulnerable areas are in the Rift Valley and Nyanza provinces. Although earthquake damages and casualties have so far been very low in the country, recent records of minor but frequent seismic activities should be closely monitored.[74] The global climate change phenomenon does not discriminate and the country is as vulnerable as any other part of the world.

Terrorism is another emerging urban phenomenon in Kenya. This is the unlawful use of force against persons or property in order to intimidate or coerce a government, civilians or any segment thereof in furtherance of political or social objectives.[75] Going by the experiences of the 1998 US bombing in Nairobi where 247 people were killed and approximately 6000 injured,[76] terror threat can no longer be ignored in Kenya. Indeed, a similar attack followed at the Kikambala Paradise Hotel in Mombasa in 2002. It is therefore evident that the country is vulnerable to terrorism and disaster management measures should be geared towards appropriate prevention and response mechanisms. Such measures will indeed be inadequate if the role of the military is not taken into consideration. This is especially necessary because terrorism is a complex international crime that requires a more sophisticated security agency than the ordinary police officers to manage. As a matter of fact, the military assumed a lead role in the response and rescue mission at the Nairobi bomb blast after two days of uncoordinated efforts by the civilian agencies.[77] Their intervention created the much-needed order in search and rescue,

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[74] GOK, *National Disaster Management Policy (Draft).* November 2004 p 7
[75] USA, Federal Emergency Management Agency, *Emergency Response to Terrorism, Report* 1997 p 7
[76] GOK, Nairobi Bomb attack Disaster [Report] Appeal for Assistance, August, 1998, p 1
[77] GOK, Nairobi Bomb blast Report, 1998 p 3

general security and provision of equipments and personnel for effective management of a situation that was turning chaotic due to the haphazard and uncoordinated response by the civilian agencies.

Another emerging disaster in Kenya is civil conflicts that are either internally generated or have external influence from the neighboring countries. These have been frequent in various parts of the country and for various reasons. Where conflicts turn violent especially over scarce resources and search for political power as witnessed recently in Kenya after the December 2007 general elections, such conflicts have led to great loss of lives and destruction of property. During the said post-election violence, over 1000 lives were lost, thousands displaced and millions worth of property destroyed. It actually took the intervention of the military to quell the violence in some parts of the Rift Valley. In the arid and semi-arid areas, lives have been lost as people fight over water, pasture or through cattle rustling that has been getting more complicated with time. Indeed, cattle rustling has been a big source of civil conflict and the government has resulted to use of the military in the most vulnerable areas like Turkana, Samburu, Baringo and Pokot Districts among others due to use of modern weapons by these communities. Here, besides pursuing and recovering stolen cattle, the military personnel have also been engaged in opening up roads, medical camps and distribution of relief supplies among other humanitarian assistance.

The HIV policy paper of 1997 recognizes HIV/AIDS as a major pandemic facing the country. Indeed, it is estimated that about 2.2 million people in Kenya today are living with HIV/ AIDs.

75% of them are those aged between 15-49 years[78]. This is an issue of concern because the above age margin comprises of the most productive group and unless adequate disaster management measures are put in place to curve the menace, the country risks losing its most productive people and suffer unprecedented population loss. Other such epidemics include malaria, cholera, typhoid and food poisoning among others. Such epidemics should be treated as emergencies and a potential national disaster whenever detected[79]. Therefore, the country should employ all the available weapons, including use of the military in as far as is practicable to prevent the disaster occurrence. The same case applies to livestock and wildlife diseases, which have a huge economic impact on the country. Livestock diseases affect export of beef while wildlife diseases negatively affect our tourism industry. It is notable that in this respect, the military have helped in control of livestock diseases in some remote parts of the country that are not easily accessible by the relevant government departments.

Transport accidents are another key source of disaster in Kenya. These range from road, rail to aviation, and marine accidents. A chronology of such accidents in the recent past shows the magnitude of this problem and the need for a long-term solution in its mitigation, prevention, and response and relief measures. In 2001, a road accident along kericho/ Londiani road claimed 76 lives on the spot while in 2006; an air crash in Marsabit killed 13 people including four members of parliament. Derailment of a goods train at Athi- River in 2000 killed 25 people.[80] These are just but a few cases of accident fatalities in Kenya. During the said air crash, the military helped in evacuation and transportation of the victims because the crash occurred in a remote part of the

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[78] GOK, Disaster Risk Reduction strategy for Kenya 2006-2016, A Resilient and Safer Nation, p 20

[79] Oppo Cit p 9

[80] GOK, National Disaster Management Policy, 2004, p 5

country that is not easily accessible by other actors. It is also very common for them to be called upon for such missions because of their equipments including aircrafts.

The country is also prone to disasters arising from technological hazards posed by the increased use of scientific discoveries in the global village, deposition of hazardous waste in the seas due to ineffective policing, invasion by alien plant species such as the water hyacinth in Lake Victoria and the 'Mathenge plants in Baringo district. Others include frost, fog, strong winds and hail stones, the emerging street families that pose a huge social threat to the society, oceanic shoreline changes and their likely negative environmental effects on human settlement along the shoreline; and accidents on construction sites due to poor supervision and enforcement of building by- laws by the local authorities. This phenomenon has become a major disaster in main towns in Kenya with the most recent event occurring in Feb 2006 at Nairobi's Ronald Ngara Street where a building under construction collapsed killing 13 people on the spot.[81] During this disaster, it took a combined effort of Kenya's military and support from their counterparts from Israel to search and rescue for the victims who were buried under the rubble.

2.2 DISASTER MANAGEMENT; ACTORS, CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS.

There are various actors in disaster management in Kenya. These range from government agencies to international, national and local non-governmental organizations. In most cases the later play a major role in response and recovery through supply of essential goods and services after a disaster event but are rarely involved in disaster risk reduction planning activities. On the

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[81] Ibid p 1

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other hand, government departments are usually involved in the planning activities although at times, the involvement is at sectoral level where individual departments conduct their own activities independent of other departments. For this reason, disaster response is also usually uncoordinated and results in duplication of roles and waste of resources that would otherwise be utilized in better way if directed by one responsible unit.

Among these actors, the office of the president that is charged with the overall coordination of all government programmes in the country is also responsible for coordination of disaster management through the various agencies. Its coordinative role is operation zed through a wide representation to the lowest levels of administration vide its various departments that include the provincial administration and national security, the Kenya Police and the administration police. In the event of a disaster, the members of these departments are usually the first to arrive at the scene and join the first line responders (community) in seeking ways of managing the emergency, prevention of further damage, lose of lives or destruction of property. Through the ministry of state for provincial administration and internal security that has a structure from the lowest level – sub-location to location, division, district, province and to the national headquarters, the office has a pool of reliable personnel that can be mobilized within a short notice when need arises. For instance, during the Nairobi terrorist bomb attack, the Provincial Security Committee was able to mobilize 6,157 security officers for the operation within a short time[82]. The officers who were drawn from the various security agencies were able to offer initial response to the emergency.

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[82]GOK, Nairobi *Bomb Blast Report*, August 1998 pp 10

It is notable that the military have a representative at the various levels of the security committees and in this case, they eventually assumed the leading role because the ordinary security officers could not cope with a disaster of that magnitude. Disaster management committees also exist at each administrative level though they are not very active. Their membership comprises of relevant government departments, private sector, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)], Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and local leaders. The committee members also lack proper training on DRR and the necessary resources to respond to disaster when it occurs in their respective areas. In most cases, they remain redundant and are only convened either as a matter of routine or when the emergency occurs; only to make recommendations on the kind of help they require from the central government, a request that is passed through the governments established bureaucratic machinery that is usually slow; hence prolonging the suffering of the vulnerable persons.

Whereas the office of the President coordinates all the activities of the various actors in disaster management in Kenya, the Ministry of State for Special Programmes coordinates disaster management operations in liaison with the Ministry of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security. One of its key functions is management of the strategic grain reserve (SGR), which currently stands at 4 million bags of Maize per year and set to be doubled to 8 million bags in the current financial year. Through the department of risk reduction, the ministry also manages an early warning systems (EWS) through which monthly updates are given on impending (Slow- onset) weather related disasters. Such occurrences are common in the ASAL areas where drought usually leads to huge losses of livestock. The ministry is also in the process of creating another crucial department for mitigation and resettlement. This was prompted by the

experiences of the conflict that arose from the controversial December 2007 election results, which led to several deaths, destruction of property and displacement of thousands of people.

Since its formation in 2004, the Ministry has made considerable progress in discharge of its mandate. Key among these achievements is community training for involvement in DRR through early warning. This is upon realization that the local community members are usually the vulnerable groups and in the event of a disaster, those not injured are normally the first responders. To this end some 10 selected community members from the Budalangi area that is usually prone to flooding are undergoing training on early warning systems in India. Along with that, the Ministry is collaborating with the Masinde Muliro University on community training under the Western Kenya Floods control programme to train and sensitize the community in the region on ways and means of coping with the perennial floods. The training is expected to improve their resilience and equip them with disaster management skills.

Further to the aforementioned positive steps, the ministry has made plans for development of a National disaster response plan, which is at an advanced stage of completion with the document expected within the next one month. All stakeholders have been involved in its development and the various disaster prone areas have been mapped. The mapping will ease response by the various actors once completed. Under relief food distribution, the Ministry has continued to distribute relief food to the vulnerable groups in all parts of the country, the bulk of which is procured with public funds while various donors also contribute to the same

In discharge of its mandate, the ministry faces a number of challenges. Among these challenges, human resources is the major factor. The ministry does not have any staff at the local levels and relies largely on the Provincial Administration Staff for its ground operations including distribution of relief supplies, and general coordination of disaster management efforts at the local level. This is partly because the ministry is new having operated just as a department of the Ministry of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security until it was promoted to a full Ministry in 2004. The other key challenge is lack of adequate funds for its disaster management operations. Although the Ministry handles emergencies, it does not control any strategic financial reserve. Relief funds are only given for specific disaster when it occurs and this hampers their timely and effective response.

On institutional Capacity, whereas the Ministry is the lead agency in relief and rehabilitation, some key departments that are vital for its operations are based in other Ministries. These include the National disaster operation centre (NOC) which is based in the Ministry of Provincial Administration and Internal Security, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) in the Ministry of Development of North Eastern and Arid areas and the Meteorology department which is under the Ministry of Environment and natural resources among other key support departments. These departments are crucial to the Ministry's operations but it has no control over their daily operations and it can only seek crucial information on disaster management from them when need arises.

The other actor in disaster management in Kenya is the National disaster operation Center. The center was created in 1998 in response to the challenges posed by the El-Nino rains that pounded

the country causing a lot of damage to infrastructure and loss of lives. The Nairobi Terrorist bomb that followed shortly in August 1998 aroused more attention on the need for an effective institution for disaster management in the country and this led to improvement of the department through training of both civilian and military officers to work together during disaster events in any part of the country. Their other mission is to coordinate, mobilize resources and respond and disseminate information on disaster incidents in the country to the various actors. As a section in the Ministry of state for provincial Administration and Internal Security- Office of the President, the center's vision is to be the leading focal point for disaster Management and response in Kenya.

Among its key roles, the centre coordinates disaster management at the local level from the national level. This is done through information gathering and sharing since it runs a VHF communication system that is linked to various police stations in the country. The centre also operationarizes decisions of the national disaster coordination committee which is the top organ under the office of the President. Other functions of the Centre include preparation of an inventory of the resources for disaster response in the country, development of the needs from donors, preparation of evacuation plans, shelter and refuge areas; and preparation of situation reports (SITREPS) on disaster in the country.

Among its key achievements, the center has been able to install communication channels that are manned on 24 hr basis throughout the year. This facilitates quick communication with all the key stakeholders in the event of a disaster for effective response. The national focal point and disaster risk reduction department, which is now under the Ministry of special programmes, was also a

creation of the centre. The department is vital for development of prevention and mitigation measures that are key elements in disaster management. Another key achievement is establishment of a mutual networking system with various stakeholders at the lower levels. Indeed, the centre does not have any staff of its own at those levels and realization of its mandate is dependent on such mutual cooperation with the various government departments, NGOs and other actors at the local level. The center has also succeeded in development of a national inventory of disaster response equipments and personnel in the country, hazard mapping, advocacy, and establishment of regional / international networks with similar organizations.

In its operations, the center faces a number of challenges that impede negatively on its performance. Despite of the fact that the center is a key actor in disaster management in the country, it lacks a legal framework and institutional structures to exercise its mandate effectively. Consequently, it has to rely on the goodwill of other agencies to perform its duties. This points to lack of political goodwill to develop and empower the centre because it would appear that normally, disaster prevention and mitigation does not attract as much attention as response. Indeed disaster reduction is considered more of a development issue than humanitarian; hence, more resources are channeled towards humanitarian activities [response] than to development (DRR)[83] This explains the slow pace in building its capacity to act as an effective national focal point for emergency management, and one of the reasons why the military is often called upon to attend to some disaster situations that either catch the civil authorities unawares or are of a high magnitude.

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[83] UN/ISDR, *Disaster Reduction in Africa, ISDR Inform*s, issue 5 2005 Unon Print Shop, Nairobi pp 1

Other challenges include development of a disaster management plans, creating awareness for preparedness, developing community response systems and activation of disaster management committees to the lowest public administrative level. These committees are central to the operations of the centre since they act as centers of information, offer first line response and are key to EWS. The centre also lacks adequate resources for logistics, transport and lags behind on technological knowledge particularly on the emerging threats such as biological, chemical and terrorism related crimes that can cause massive disasters. Other challenges include poor infrastructure for response during emergency, incapacity to implement mitigation measures and coordination with the various government departments that deal with disaster management in one way or the other due to lack of a legal framework for its operations.

The foregoing has highlighted key actors in the public sector but there are also a number of private organizations that collaborate with government departments in disaster management in Kenya. One of these is the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) that was founded in 1965 as one of the societies of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent (ICRC). Its vision is to be the leading humanitarian organization in Kenya, self sustaining in delivering quality service of preventing and alleviating human suffering to the most vulnerable in the community. In disaster management, the society plays a crucial role of preparedness through training of the Red Cross Action Teams [RCATs] who are always available in several parts of the country as productive, quality and reliable teams to offer relief wherever an emergency occurs. Indeed, the organization, like the provincial administration has its membership to the lowest levels in the country.

Besides the RCATS, the society also maintains a minimum stockpile of supplies for relief response that is accessible within a short time in the event of an emergency. The supplies are obtained through fundraising activities, appeals from well-wishers and relief collection week activities where countrywide campaigns are conducted across all branches to aid in building the stockpiles. The society also carries out social and health services aimed at empowering communities to prevent disasters through promotion of health living, HIV/Aids awareness, and first aid. Throughout the period it has operated in the country, the society has gained recognition over the years as a reliable agency for disaster response in the country. Besides its pool of trained personnel in first aid, the society also boasts of a countrywide representation by a team of well trained volunteers who are always utilized in disaster management activities including distribution of relief food, evacuation, health care and education and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure among other communal duties. Besides first aid and the above-mentioned activities, the society also carries out HIV and Aids awareness campaigns through which many people have been sensitized across the country on the scourge. The education program is further supplemented by free HIV/aids testing and counseling services that have benefited many people. This is a valuable input towards fighting this disease, which was declared a national disaster in 1999 but has continued to pose a big challenge to health provision in the country.

Other achievements by the society include maintenance of confidence to both donors and the Government who have continuously assisted the society in realizing its mandate, maintenance of a pool of disciplined and reliable volunteers who commands a lot respect and acceptance across the country and mutual working relations with other actors in disaster management in the

country. This is on recognition of the fact that no single agency can succeed effectively in DRR by working in isolation.

A number of constrains inhibit smooth operations of the society. In the event of a major disaster such as the Nairobi terrorist bomb blast of 1998, the society's equipments, personnel and other resources are overstretched leaving the society helpless when donors fail to respond to their appeals on time. The society purely relies on donations from well wishers and when these are not forthcoming; their operations are limited and appear ineffective. The vulnerable persons too have a lot of expectation on the society whenever it appears in an emergency scene.

The society also at times faces difficulties in obtaining the right information from government officials in instances where such information is confidential; yet the society complements government efforts and at times, assume the lead role during some disaster events in the country. Another significant challenge is the source of information from among the many government agencies that deal with disaster management issues in one way or the other. At times, it has also been difficult to identify the coordinators of various disaster events leading to a lot of delay in appropriate response.

The other major actor from the private sector is the St John Ambulance. The organization plays a crucial role in disaster management in Kenya in various ways. Key among its functions is the provision of first class ambulance services in the event of a disaster free of charge. The ambulances are well managed with state of the art medical equipments and well trained emergency medical technicians [EMTs.] who are always on call 24hrs a day and ready to attend to any type of emergency in any part of the country. Other disaster management related activities

include first aid training to various organizations including government departments, private organizations, CBOs, and schools among others, community activities on HIV/Aids education and road accident management centers on various black spots in the country. The organization has trained community members on first-aid around the areas where they have opened such centers for quick response in times of emergency. Although they respond to disasters free of charge, the organization also provides its services to some organizations reasonable rates in order to generate some revenue for the continued charitable life saving services in the event of a disaster.

The organization has realized some tangible success in discharge of its mandate in the country since its establishment. It is the lead agency in provision of first aid medical care, evacuation and reliable ambulance services during emergencies in the areas where it operates. Its operations have been successful due to available, disciplined and well trained full time and volunteer workers who command a lot of respect from members of the public and other partners such as the Kenya police with whom they maintain a 24 hr communication channel on disaster response. Through its continuous training on first aid, the organization has been able to create a large pool of responders within government departments, private organizations and other groups of people who are well equipped with life saving skills in the event of an emergency around them. The organization also maintains a pool of well equipped ambulances which are manned by well trained staff that are ready to respond to an emergency at any time of the day or night.

The organization has also enjoyed good working relationships with its partners in disaster management over the years making it one of the most successful formations of St John ambulance in the region. Its staff is recognized as key disaster management agents alongside

others such as the military, police, The Kenya Red Cross and Red Crescent Society and government departments among others.

However, the above successes have not been without some constraints that the organization has to cope with. It lacks sufficient resources for disaster response in times of emergencies of a huge magnitude. For instance, it has only fourteen (14) ambulances distributed only in the major towns of which, nine are in Nairobi, two in Kisumu and one each in Mombasa, Nakuru and Kakamega. This renders its response in the remote parts of the country difficult. When emergencies occur in the slum areas of the city, the vulnerable are inaccessible due to poor infrastructure and the organization does not have helicopters to airlift the victims.

Whereas the organization is always ready to train on first aid for disaster mitigation, most people do not see the need for preparing for unforeseen events and would rather invest on the immediate needs.

Another key challenge is enforcement of rules and regulations for disaster risk reduction especially in the factories. It also lacks sufficient full time employees for its activities with most of them offering voluntary services for which they are not always available. Of the 15000 workers, only 39 are on full time employment by the organization. The organization is also constrained in terms of communication equipments with other key actors like the fire stations, hospitals and the police among others. Legislation on use of certain medical equipments is another challenge to the organization. For instance, use of defibrillator machines outside the hospital by non-medical staff is prohibited in Kenya; yet the machine is essential as a lifesaver during emergency and is available as a first aid kit in developed countries.

Other actors in disaster management include the Ministry of Health which offers medical and related health services, the Ministry of local government that mostly deals with fire fighting equipments, the Ministry of water, Public works, Agriculture and the Ministry for livestock development among other government departments. Other private organizations include the Frying Doctor Services, African Air Rescue (AAR) services and the African Medical Relief Fund (AMREF) among other private organizations.

2.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the most common types of disaster and their prevalence have been highlighted. The actors and general issues in disaster management in Kenya have also been pointed out for a clearer picture of the situation in the country and why the military becomes a key player in disaster management in the country. Indeed, Kenya has a large pool of disaster management agencies from both the public and private sector. Most of the disasters are also not unique and are in some cases predictable, and preventable if not manageable to the level of reducing their negative impact on the vulnerable groups. What appears to be the problem is coordination of the various actors in the absence of a legal framework. Therefore, DRR is not entrenched in development planning in the country leading to a plethora of uncoordinated sectoral efforts by individual government agencies that tend to compete for a stake and recognition as the most important actors as compared to their colleagues. In the absence of a systematic approach to disaster issues, its management becomes a big problem with the various actors going about it their own way at the different phases in its management. This aggravates the suffering of affected persons and in the long run, amount to waste of the available resources in the country.

The Consequence of such uncoordinated approach is the scattered distribution of government departments dealing with disaster management in one way or the other to different Ministries, hence rendering them ineffective. The resultant confusion is a source of frustrations to the private sector which is a key prayer especially in disaster response since at times; they have no idea to which department or government ministry to go to for specific information on disaster management. Amidst this confusion, it would appear that the political will to build a central, strong and effective disaster management agency lacks in the country. The result is that the civil authorities turn to the military every time other agencies are overwhelmed or are unable to manage a disaster event in the various parts of the country due to uncoordinated approach to the problem.

CHAPTER THREE: MILITARY IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

3.0   Introduction

This chapter looks at the global perspective of the military involvement in aid to civil authorities in what is commonly referred to as civil-military relations. This perspective is important for an understanding of the role the military plays in disaster management and the reasons behind their utilization by the civil authorities in such and other development activities outside their traditional primary duty of defending the state from external aggression. The chapter is divided into two sections with section 3.1 concerned with a brief background on state formation and the traditional role of the military as contrasted with its changing role as a result of globalization, emerging new threats to state security and calls for the military to justify its existence amidst the diminishing traditional threats to the survival of the state. Debates on the role the military ought to play in disaster management; reasons for its involvement and the controversies this involvement generates are also highlighted.

In section 3.2, a closer look at the role of the military in disaster management in Kenya is given for the purpose of fulfilling the objectives of this study. This is useful because among the actors in disaster management in Kenya, the military plays a central role but are only called upon where other agencies have failed in response to a particular emergency. An understanding of their functions, achievements, constraints and the future in disaster management in the country was therefore very useful in this study.

3.1 THE MILITARY AND ITS INVOLVEMENT IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

To understand the role of the military in Disaster Management, it is important to look at the origin of the military and its purpose. Before the Westphalia conference of 1648 that culminated to the formation of the state system as we know it today, there existed empires and city-states that did not have boundaries but only frontiers. The Westphalia state came with the concept of sovereignty and territorial integrity, which meant that states were now confined within a defined geographical area- the state territory that was sacrosanct and sovereign. With acceptance of this concept came the need for each individual state to seek to protect its boundaries in order to protect their sovereignty and territorial integrity. This led to formation and maintenance of the military for both defensive and offensive purposes. Eventually "this saw the formation of armies and navies to go and venture outside geographical confines in search of resources and more territory. Thus despite the dubious morality of use of violence to achieve political aims, the military has been used to do just that throughout recorded history".[84] As technology developed, the military became more versatile and their killing capabilities got enhanced. The last two World Wars left the world devastated due to destructive capabilities of the weapons and today; a nuclear war is viewed as a zero sum game that will destroy the current civilization.

Whereas the emphasis has been that the military should conduct their traditional business of securing the sovereignty and integrity of the state, the emergence of liberal democracy as the main ideology in the international system calls for the re-evaluation of the role of the military with the changing security dimensions; including its role in disaster management. This thinking has been prompted by the new security threats across the globe that has now shifted from the

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[84] Craig A. Synyder (Ed), 1999.· "Contemporary Security and Strategy" Macmillan Press Ltd, London. P13

traditional realists approach to the idealists; and lately, to human perspective that seeks to securitize all aspects of human life; from the state-centric view to social-political and economic aspects of the individual.

Throughout human political history, the military has been utilized in supporting civil authorities in various activities other than their core duty of defending the state against external aggression. The use of military in social civic activities is a well-developed concept in the United States and has been applied in many countries as well. Indeed, the concept of "Military Civic Action" MCA is a formalized approach to what has gone on in an informal manner since the beginning of organized government. It is the process by which the military contributes to the social and economic development of a society. As Kent Butts notes the Greek and Roman soldiers had built roads, colonial armies had established public works, and, in the United States, the Army Corps of Engineers had helped to settle the frontier and maintain transport arteries for safe passage of goods; why shouldn't African militaries participate more in building their countries?

Following disintegration of the Soviet Union, end of cold war and emergence of a uni-polar global system, threats of armed military war have even decreased further leading to questioning of the role of the military during peacetime. Would they rather not be utilized in community development activities such as construction of roads and digging boreholes in the absence of threats of war? In a forward to the edited works by McRae and Hubert Dan, Koffi Annan asserts that "Today, we know that security means far more than the absence of conflict. We also have a greater appreciation for non-military sources of conflict. We know that lasting peace requires a broader vision encompassing areas such as education and health, democracy and human rights,

protection against human degradation and the proliferation of deadly weapons. We know that we cannot build peace without alleviating poverty, and we cannot build freedom on foundations of injustice. These pillars of what we now understand as the people-centered concept of human security are inter-related and mutually reinforcing"[85]Consequently, the desired changing role of the military is not only prompted by decreased threat of armed conflict but also by the emerging security threats, especially in Africa. This new thought on human security calls for the need to "re-think the role of the military in sustainable development and find constructive ways in which the armed forces can contribute to long-term sustainable development in general and technological innovation in particular."[86] This will greatly enhance their capability in disaster response when called upon to render support to the civil authorities in the event of either natural or man-made disasters such as those prevalent in many African countries due to ethnic conflicts.

However, whereas it is common practice for many countries to deploy the military forces in times of disaster- often to prevent looting, establish communication or restore calm, it is only recently that international military intervention has been undertaken as a mechanism of disaster response in internal conflicts. Such deployment has raised a number of ethical dilemmas with states torn between using the military in such situations and confining them to their traditional role. This is largely because even where they have been called upon to intervene; their mode of operation is different because their culture assumes a certain independence and superiority over the established machinery. Hence, they establish hierarchical decision making machinery for effecting their strategy and in the long-run, make other actors feel undermined and isolated.[87]

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[85] McRae R. et al [Ed] *Human security and new Diplomacy, Protecting people, promoting peace*, 2001, McGill queen's university press, Canada, pp xix.
[86] ATDF-American journal of public health, vol 4, issue 4. pp12.
[87] Lederach,J P, Military Intervention; *Disaster Management ethics*,1st [ed.] UNDP,1997,pp 9

This however has not prevented civil authorities from calling for military intervention during major disasters although there is a ranging debate as to the actual role they should play.

During the recent hurricane Katrina and Rita in the US, the above debate took a centre stage because some people felt that the devastating disaster which claimed over 1000 lives was not well handled. Consequently, some felt that the military should be given the lead role during such emergencies while others argued that the events should not cause them to question the supremacy of civilian agencies in coordinating and leading disaster response and recovery [88] Those in support of the 'taking over' argue that the military's command and control structure would provide the kind of framework and efficiency that is necessary during emergency while others target exploitation of the military's equipments such as helicopters, heavy machines and tents among others.

Besides their core duties, Kenya's military has been involved in many nation building activities such as limited construction of public utility infrastructure, relief supplies services, peace keeping, search and rescue, restoration of water supply systems, rehabilitation of water dams for irrigation, sinking of boreholes for community use and other civil related activities. However, major questions have been raised on justification for continued maintenance of the military if it can not be utilized in civil activities including disaster response during peace time. Is it not prudent to allocate more resources to social projects rather than to the military? What role does the military play in Disaster Management and how can it be enhanced for better performance? How do they strike a balance between disaster management and preparing for war as their core duty? Political leadership would wish to divert the resources meant for military to other social

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[88] CDSP; Disaster Preparedness Wilberforce University, summer 2006, vol.1 issue 1, pp 3

sectors of a state. This leads the military leadership in a dilemma in the maintenance and fulfillment of their aims and objectives. It is thus prudent for the military leadership to quickly and meticulously reorient their thinking and clearly defend the legitimacy of the military in the government agenda by providing public goods without compromising their core role. Indeed, a more visible military in civil duties endears itself to the people and by extension, popularizes the government to the citizens through the extra civil goods. This study seeks to look at the contributions that the military has made towards disaster management in Kenya between 1998 and 2008 with a view of appreciating their input and suggest ways of improving on the same.

3.2 The Military and Disaster Management in Kenya

The military in Kenya has been involved in disaster management activities in the country on several occasions. However, it is notable that the involvement has mostly been only in response to emergencies of a high magnitude and which prove difficult for the civilian agencies to handle. Whenever they have been called upon to intervene in such cases, their response has usually been successful leaving behind the question as to why they are never involved in disaster risk planning or assigned the role of the lead agency in disaster situations across the country.

The question that arises is why the civil authorities result to the military in emergencies beyond the capacity of the other actors in the country. From the outset, the military is a war outfit that is always ready for an emergency and is prepared to work around the clock to win their battles. Consequently, they are well trained and equipped to operate against any natural or manmade obstacles. This training along with the sophisticated equipments gives them an advantage over any civilian agency in response to various types of disaster in the country. Indeed, most disaster

response especially in the remote parts of the country requires use of aircrafts; only the military has such aircrafts at the disposal of the civil authorities. On the other hand, soldiers are generally disciplined and used to central command that enhances effective teamwork which is a sine qua non in response to emergencies. For that reason, they are usually better coordinated and achieve more than their counterparts particularly in search and rescue operations.

Prior to 1998, the military in Kenya responded to disaster situations out of the experiences acquired either through military training or out of experiences gained from peace keeping missions outside the country. Hence, they lacked specific training in disaster management. This situation changed after the experiences of the damage caused by the el-Niño rains and the Nairobi bomb blast. The two incidents brought into light the need to focus on involvement of the military in disaster management in Kenya. This was because in the case of el-Niño, the rains caused a lot of damage on the countries infrastructure cutting off roads and leaving some people marooned in their areas of habitation. Here, the military had to come in to restore the damaged infrastructure and airlift essential services to the marooned vulnerable groups among other emergency services.

These challenges posed to the military by the el-Niño rains and the Nairobi bomb blast awakened them to the need to pay more attention to disaster management through continuous preparation in order to improve on its response. Consequently, a fully fledged disaster management unit was created following a recommendation of the task force created to carry out an assessment of the damage caused by the bomb.[89] This unit within the military now has better trained and equipped to respond to common disasters in the country such as road accidents, fires, floods and violent

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[89] GOK, Nairobi Bomb Blast Report, August, 1998, p3

conflicts among others. Besides this unit, the military also reinforces the national operational centre by seconding its officers to the unit to help in its management and technical operations. Indeed the centre is more associated with the military than its mother ministry- provincial administration and internal security.

The next question to address here is the activities the military in Kenya conducts normally in disaster management. Key among the activities is restoration of security, law and order in areas where the ordinary law enforcement officers have been overwhelmed. The outstanding examples in this case include the 1998 terrorist bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi, the December 2007 post-election violence in the rift valley province and the insurgency by the Mt Elgon land defense force in western province. In the case of the Bomb-Blast, the military assumed the lead role following three days of uncoordinated efforts by the various responders.

The other major activity is restoration and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure. The organization has a comparative advantage in this area because it has various types of heavy road construction equipments and a fully fledged engineering unit that far surpasses the capacity and expertise of the ministry responsible for road construction in the country. These came in handy during the el-Niño rains where they were able to erect a temporary bridge on Nairobi-Mombasa highway after a bridge was swept away by the raging floods. In Budalangi area of the Western province, construction and reinforcement of dykes by the military has helped in management of the perennial flooding of River Nzoia. Related to this activity is distribution of relief food supplies to the remote parts of the country, essential services like water and provision of medical

care to persons affected by various types of disasters. Search, rescue and evacuation of vulnerable groups constitute other crucial roles of the military in disaster management in Kenya.

Other disaster management functions by the military in Kenya include fire fighting services, folk lifting of accident vehicles, excavation and removal of rubbles from collapsed buildings and clearance of security roads in the remote parts of the country to facilitate government operations in such areas. Among the various disaster management agencies in the country, the military prides itself as one of the key actors due to the above and other roles it has played in this area over the years. However, this is not without challenges. The major challenge is the fact that normally, the military are not involved in disaster risk reduction planning and yet, they spend substantial amount of their routine operational budget whenever they are called upon to render a hand in disaster response. At the same time, striking a balance between their core function and such peripheral duties in the absence of a clear plan poses a dilemma to the defense managers. Elsewhere, coordination with civilian agencies proves difficult because the military aspires to be on the top of things by virtue of their training while the other agencies assume the mandate.

Ideally, the military in Kenya are fairly distanced from the community and do not interact with them regularly. Consequently, both do not understand each other and the prevalent suspicion, and fear of the military by the members of the community makes it difficult for them-military to gain acceptance from the community even where they are offering services beneficial to them. In the recent operation 'okoa maisha' (save lives) in Mt Elgon, some have accused them of all sorts of crimes including rape, torture and murder. Others have hailed their work and resisted their withdrawal from the area even after they successfully crashed the insurgents who had

created a lot of fear in the area. This poses a big dilemma to the military where it is viewed with suspicion by some and embraced by others during disaster response; and yet, they have a duty to aid the civil authorities as provided for within the law that governs their operations. Indeed, the question is the extent they should go and the exact role they should play in aid to the civil authorities. Besides some members of the community, other actors too, find it difficult to work with the military due to their unique mode of cooperation. This impedes on the organizations performance where collaboration and inter-agency cooperation is necessary.

Amidst these challenges, the military have succeeded fairly well in their areas of intervention and have gained admiration from other actors and members of the public for their commitment and dedication and successful discharge of their duties wherever they are called upon. Their effective performance during the 1998 Nairobi bomb blast is an outstanding feature. Other successful interventions include the 2002 Kikambala bomb blast, search and rescue at the collapsed building along Ronald Ngara Street in Nairobi in February, 2006 where 13 lives were lost and several injured,[90] airlifting of relief food during the 1999/2000 drought in the remote parts of the country, construction of dykes in Budalangi and elimination of the Mt Elgon Land Defense Force menace in the Mt Elgon district among others.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the historical perspective of the military, its traditional state security role and the emerging security challenges that call for its intervention. This involvement is through the centuries old civil-military relations where civil authorities regard the military as

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[90] GOK, Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy for Kenya 2006-2016, A Resilient and Safer Nation, Nairobi, p 17

their tool for defense against both internal and external threats. It is evident that amidst the diminishing external threats to state security, the military is being involved in development activities including disaster management more than ever before. The rationale behind such policy shift is that states have invested heavily in training and equipping the soldiers and such an asset should not be left idle when the state is facing threats from emerging challenges such as terrorism, conflicts and other disasters. Notably, the military have heeded to the call seriously and have discharged such duties to the best of their capacity when called upon despite of the constraints that stand on their way. However, there is wide debate on the levels of military engagements in such duties and in some cases, moral questions have been raised.

In Kenya, the military have always been called upon to respond to emergencies that defeats the combined efforts by other actors. This is because of their superior equipments, training and discipline. Wherever they have responded to an event, the military have been fairly successful and this has raised the question as to why they can not be accorded the lead role in disaster response so that such success can be realized sooner than later in such instances. Actually, the Nairobi bomb blast case offers an outstanding proof of their potential in the lead agency role. The intervention in subsequent disasters has equally been successful despite of a few challenges here and there. In all, use of the military in disaster management in Kenya can not be avoided and because they have proved to be key players in that field.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN KENYA

4.0 Introduction

Like other countries, Kenya has experienced many types of disasters and the same have been increasing over the years as new types emerge in the fast changing global scene. However, disaster management has remained weak in the country due to lack of a clear policy that would enable establishment of a disaster management body with institutional structure and linkages with a formal system of disaster management and necessary support for operations.[91] Consequently, disaster preparedness through an elaborate disaster risk reduction strategy has been lacking and disaster response has tended to be reactionary and devoid of coordination. This study has relied on both primary and secondary data to assess disaster management in Kenya and the role of the military in its management during the period - 1998-2008. The analysis of both the secondary and primary data is presented in this chapter along broad areas of interest in the study. Under section 4.1, data on issues in disaster management in Kenya is analyzed for an understanding of the situation in the country. This includes disaster occurrences and gaps in their management with a view to pointing out the way forward in future disaster management in the country. Section 4.2 looks at the capacity of various actors, constrains and achievements. Their desired end state for improved disaster management in the country is also analyzed. Finally, data on the role of the military is also analyzed in section 4.3.

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[91] GOK, Disaster Risk Strategy for Kenya-2006-2016; A Resilient and Safer Nation, p 4

4.1 Critical analysis on issues in disaster management in Kenya.

Kenya is prone to various types of disasters ranging from man-made to the natural ones. However, despite of the history and frequency of such disasters, the country lacks a clear comprehensive disaster management policy and a coherent institutional framework to implement it rendering its management to be reactionary, ad hoc and uncoordinated. Consequently, disasters in the country have continued to cause extensive damage to the people's lives, livelihoods and property.[92] Notably, a number of such disasters are predictable; hence, preventable if not manageable all together.

Whereas there isn't a clear institutional framework for disaster management in the country, there are several government and non-governmental agencies that deal with disaster management issues in the Kenya. These actors will always converge when disaster occurs, usually to respond to the problem through their own means and then retreat to their respective offices thereafter. These actors will rarely meet to lay common strategies on disaster management or risk reduction in the country. This situation is no longer desirable considering that disaster occurrences in the country are very common, frequent and are likely to increase with the emerging threats such as terrorism and cyber-crime in the modern world. Table 2 shows the most prominent disaster occurrences in Kenya in the recent past;

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[92] Op Cit p 6

Table 2: Some Recent Disasters in Kenya- 1998-2008

YEAR	DISASTER	CASUALTIES
1997/98	El-Nino rains	1.5 million people affected
1998	Fire (Bombolulu Girls Sec School)	- 25 students burnt to death, - Property damaged
1998	Petrol Tanker Explosion (Kisumu/Busia road)	36 people killed
1998	Bomb Blast –Terrorist attack Nairobi	- 214 people killed - 5600 injured - property destroyed
1999	Train accident (Tsavo)	- 32 people killed - 358 injured
1999/2000	Widespread drought	4.4 million people affected by famine
2001	Road accident (Kericho/Londiani Road)	76 people killed
2001	Fire (Kyanguli Boys Sec School dormitory)	- 68 students killed - Property destroyed
2002	Floods and landslides in various parts of the country	152,000 people affected
2002	Bomb blast – Terrorist attack in Mombasa	15 people killed
2003	Aircraft crash (Busia)	3 people dead 10 injured
2004	Food poisoning (Aflatoxin) Various districts in eastern province	- 123 people killed - 333 affected
2006	Drought affecting Northern part of Kenya Marsabit air crash	7.9 million people affected 14 people killed, 3 seriously injured
2007	Post election Violence	Over 1000 people killed, thousands displaced and property destroyed
2007/2008	Land clashes in Mt Elgon. Banditry attack in Mandera.	Over 200 people killed appx. 70,000 displaced and property destroyed. 18 people killed, villages destroyed and livestock stolen.

Source, *Author*

From table 2, it is evident that Kenya frequently experiences many forms of disasters that require urgent measures to respond to if they have to be contained. Consequently, as Schneid D T asserts, the country, just like should be the case with others has no choice but to embrace disaster preparedness as a mandatory [93] requirement so as to reduce casualties in the event of an emergency. Preparedness enables effective response when the unexpected finally occurs.
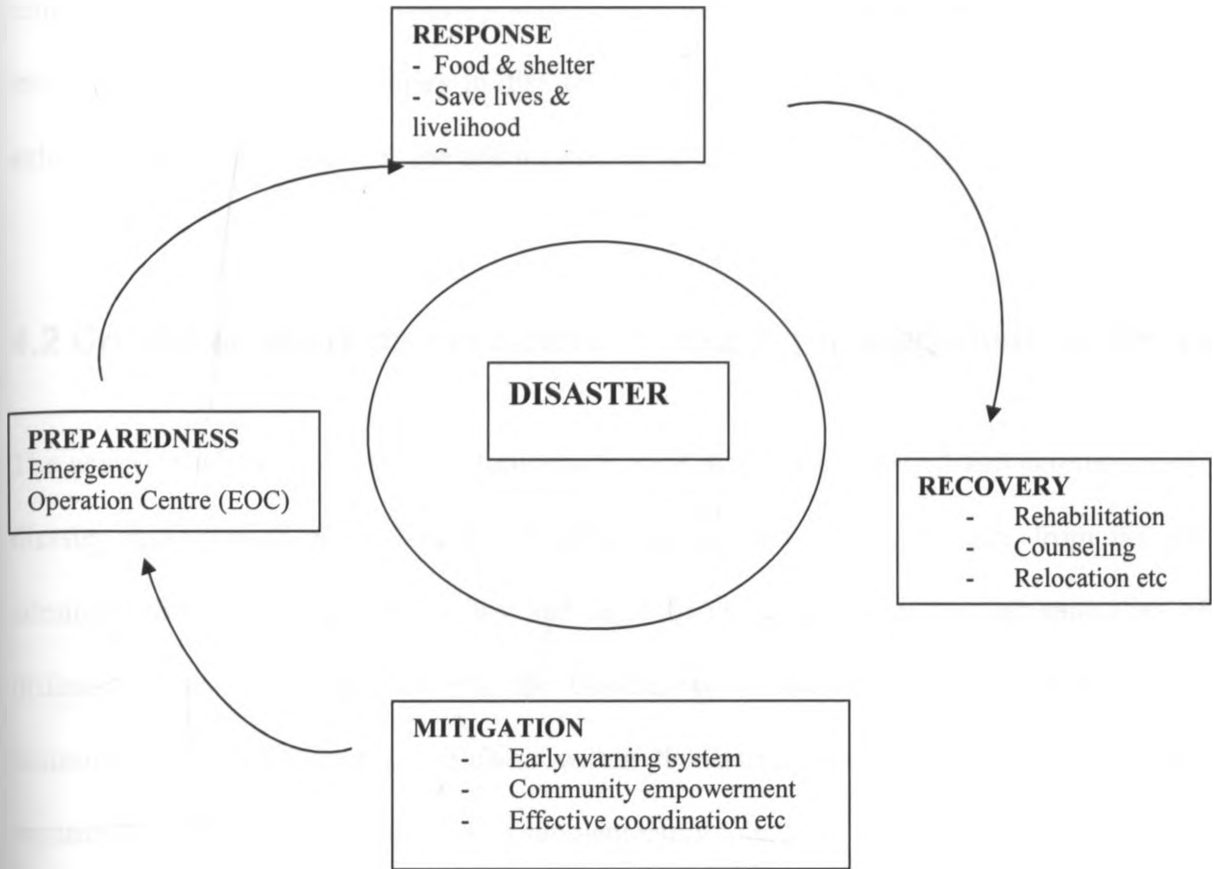
Preparedness is more effective within a framework that recognizes and seeks to empower community participation bearing in mind that these are usually the vulnerable groups and most importantly, the first responders to any type of an emergency within their locality before other responders appear on the scene. Their local knowledge also makes them a key resource in provision of local solutions to a local problem.

For efficiency, emergency management further entails continuous planning for the various activities that are normally essential in disaster management. This entails entrenchment of disaster risk reduction planning in the country's development planning so that the country can run away from the culture of reacting to disasters when they occur and reverting to business as usual once the event passes and the memory for preparedness fades.[94] This makes recurrence of disasters a nightmare to the vulnerable groups while the government; that is responsible for the overall management of public affairs fails to come up with concrete measures for continuous planning for the key phases in disaster management in the country as shown in figure 2.

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[93] Schneid D T et al, *Disaster Management and Preparedness* Lewis Publishers, New York, 2000, p 151

[94] Hamilton R et al, commission on Geophysical Risk& Sustainability; *ICSU committee on Disaster Reduction,* 2004 p3

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Figure 2: Key Phases in the Disaster Management Cycle

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │ RESPONSE            │
                    │ - Food & shelter    │
                    │ - Save lives &      │
                    │   livelihood        │
                    └─────────────────────┘

                       ┌─────────────┐
                       │  DISASTER   │
                       └─────────────┘

┌──────────────────────┐              ┌─────────────────────────┐
│ PREPAREDNESS         │              │ RECOVERY                │
│ Emergency            │              │   -  Rehabilitation     │
│ Operation Centre (EOC)│             │   -  Counseling         │
└──────────────────────┘              │   -  Relocation etc     │
                                      └─────────────────────────┘

          ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
          │ MITIGATION                         │
          │   -  Early warning system          │
          │   -  Community empowerment         │
          │   -  Effective coordination etc    │
          └────────────────────────────────────┘
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Source: Author

Figure 2 shows the ideal disaster management cycle that should guide all disaster managers for better output. The cycle entails the crucial phases of mitigation as a prerequisite to building resilience, preparedness in the event of a disaster occurrence, response when the same occurs and recovery/ rehabilitation for the affected persons. The phases are interdependent and more meaningful when undertaken continuously. It is notable that whereas appropriate mitigation and preparedness measures may be taken, disasters will always occur suddenly and in most cases

overwhelm the civil authority's capacity to respond adequately. However, with proper planning that involves the various actors, the destruction that usually follows a disaster event can be minimized. Consequently, a country should plan for them as if it was planning for war by increasing the role of the military in disaster management. The activities in each phase are not exhaustive and depend on the type and magnitude of the disaster.

4.2 Critical analysis on the Actors in disaster management in Kenya

The actors to whom the open ended questions were directed had varied and common views on disaster management in the country. Ideally, the issues of concern range from the general administrative matters like the policy and legal frameworks to institutional capacities of the different actors. It is apparent that the Government disaster management agencies are not harmonized and this creates confusion within themselves and worse of all, to the private organizations that should ideally play a supplementary role.

In the absence of such harmony, resources are thinly distributed to each of the departments and this end up being thinly distributed on the ground during emergencies. The consequence of this is that the impact of government response to emergencies is not fully felt and the vulnerable groups tend to rely more on NGO's for their needs during such hard times. Indeed, the government has had to cede some responsibilities to these organizations for incapacity to provide the services. A case in point is in the area of distribution of relief food where the responsible Ministry largely relies on the KRCS to carry out the distribution due to lack of personnel and transportation facilities.

With several government agencies appearing to address the same problem without a clear policy framework, the NGO's and the military find it difficult to tell who is in charge and to whom the responsibility of integrating disaster risk reduction planning should fall.[95] This has a negative effect on their participation in disaster management in the country.

Table 3 shows the responses by various actors on issues that they consider as major constraints to effective disaster management in Kenya;

Table 3: Constraints to effective Disaster Management in Kenya

Constraints	Respondents						
	OP/PA	MOSSP	MOH	MILITARY	NOC	KRCS	SJA
Policy - Guidelines	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Coordination	*	+	+	+	+	+	+
Equipments	+	+	*	=	=	*	*
Personnel	*	+	*	*	=	=	=
Disaster Training	=	*	=	*	=	=	*
Infrastructure	+	+	+	*	+	+	+

Source: Research findings

Key

[+] means it is a problem   OP/PA- Office of the President/Provincial administration

[*] means it is not a problem   MOSSP- Ministry of state for Special Programs

[95] UNEP, *Disaster Reduction in Africa*. ISDR Informs No.3 p 4.

[=] Means it is not a big problem.

MOH- Ministry of Health

NOC- National Operation Centre

KRCS- Kenya Red Cross Society

SJA- St John Ambulance

From table 3, it is evident that all the key actors in disaster management in Kenya view the absence of clear policy guidelines as a major obstacle to effective disaster management. Of all the respondents interviewed, 85% view coordination as a big problem. All appear fairly comfortable with training in disaster response, while only 28% consider absence of equipments a big obstacle to effective disaster management. Notably, the military's major problem is only in the areas of coordination and policy guidance. Otherwise, they are well trained, equipped and do not view infrastructure as a problem. This is because of the heavy machines at their disposal that enable them to operate in any whether and find their way even in the most difficult terrain for disaster response. In all, the military have fewer constraints-33% as compared to the ministry of State for special Progammes at 83%, yet this is the agency that is responsible for disaster management in the country! This explains why the military have been very successful in disaster response whenever they have been called upon in any part of the country.

The National Operation Centre [NOC] which acts as the focal point in disaster response and planning is incapacitated by policy guidelines and coordination and infrastructure putting its capacity at only 50% as compared to the military who are operating at 66.6%. It is notable that the center's actual reporting point is not clear because its ownership and control is disputed between the Ministry of state for provincial administration and that of Special programmes; all in the office of the president. At the same time, the Ministry of Defense has a stake in the Centre

because it seconds senior military officers there for logistics and general administrative duties. This creates confusion and undermines effective disaster management in the country.

Among the above key obstacles or constraints, the most outstanding ones are infrastructure, coordination and policy guidance. These are isolated and presented in table 3 showing the level of perceived constraint in each case.

Table 3: Perception levels on key obstacles to disaster management in Kenya
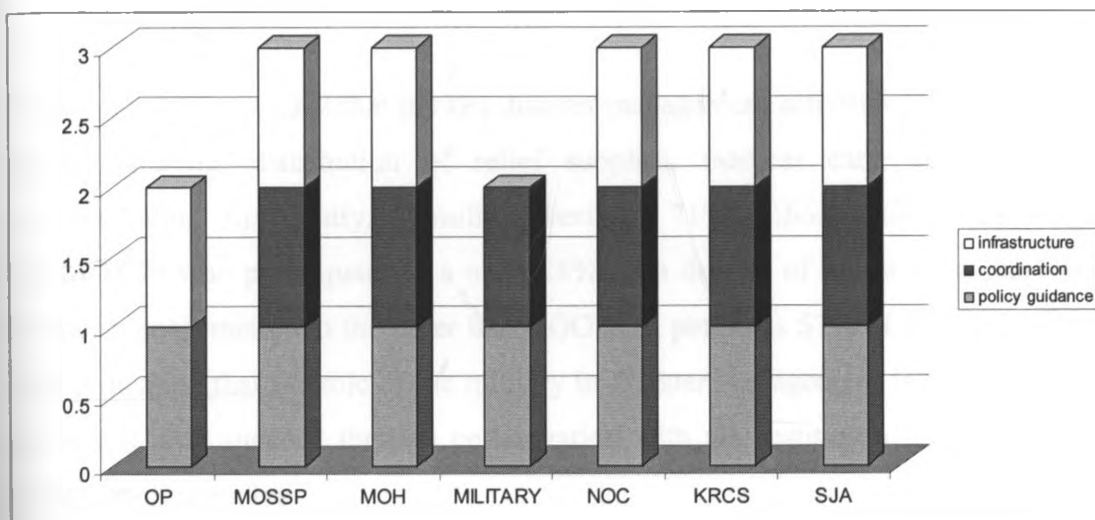
As shown in tale 3, 71% of the actors perceive the three key constraints at 100% while the military alone perceive the same at only 33%. Put together with the OOP/PA, the, resultant system can overcome the major obstacles to disaster management in Kenya. However, the synergy generated through participation of all the key actors in a well coordinated manner would produce better results.

The study also sought to establish the activities each of the actors participates in for disaster management so as to identify the key disaster management activities and the most active actors in each case. The results of this analysis are presented in table 4.

Table 4: Major disaster management activities by various actors in Kenya
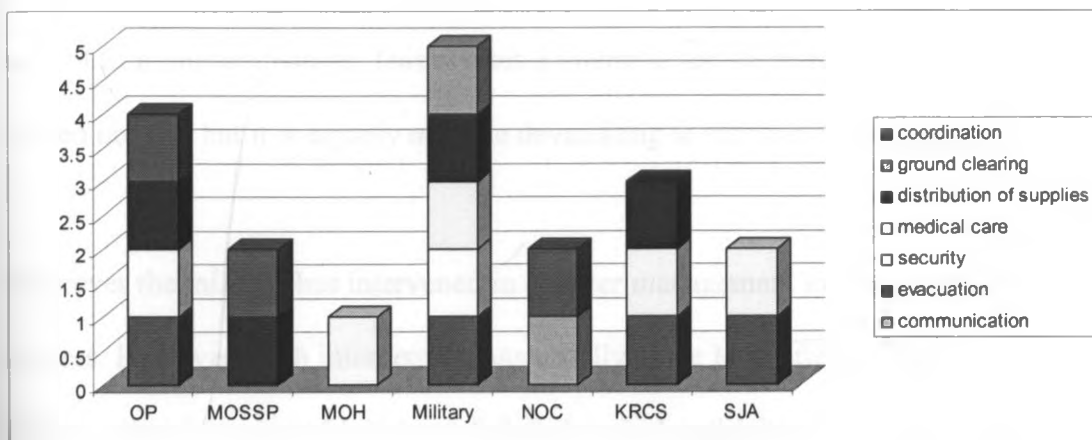
From table 4, it is evident that the key disaster management activities in Kenya are; coordination, ground clearing, distribution of relief supplies, medical care, security, evacuation and communication. Apparently, the military performs 71% of those activities as compared to NOC and MOSSP who participates in a mere 28% each despite of the fact that their core duties are disaster management. On the other hand, OOP/PA performs 57% of the key activities. This is a clear indication that the role of the military in disaster management is very crucial and the other actors can only succeed through collaboration with the institution from the onset of a major disaster in the country.

4.3 Critical Analysis on the role of the Military in Disaster management.

The role of the military in disaster management is not in dispute. What are disputable are the actual functions they should engage in particularly during emergency response. Some see their most important role as provision of security while others target use of their equipments, personnel and organizational capability for emergency response; while others go to the extent of proposing a lead role in disaster response because the civilian agencies have often failed to

contain disaster situations effectively in the first instance.[96] However their involvement has raised several professional and ethical questions for various reasons. To some, the military are subordinate to the civil authorities and should work under its direction on such operations that are not of a military nature. This creates a dilemma for the state because disaster management is indeed not war but it is equally or more devastating to the vulnerable groups than war.

Wherever the military has intervened in disaster management in Kenya, they have recorded good success. However, such intervention has usually come long after the disaster has had devastating effects upon the vulnerable due to failure by civil authorities to respond decisively in the first instance. During the Nairobi bomb blast, they came in long after the other agencies had been overwhelmed by the situation. In Mt Elgon, the ordinary law enforcement officers along with the civilians they sought to defend in the conflict suffered many casualties before the military came in to quell the clandestine Saboat Land Defense Force. The two instances justify a case for deeper involvement of the military in disaster management, including assumption of the lead role in some types of disasters in the country. This is because they have good training and exposure to disaster situations through peace keeping missions in different parts of the world. Their equipment; helicopters, vehicles and machines are also hardy enough for intervention in any part of the country. Table 4 below shows the actor's responses on whether the military should be accorded the lead role in disaster response to certain types of disasters.

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[96] Witt J L, " Military Role in Natural Disaster Response" *Disaster Preparedness[2006] CDSP, vol 1 issue 1 P 3*

Table 4: Preference rate for a lead agency role in Disaster Response

Actor	Preference Rate (%)
Military	50
MOSSP	33.3
Others	16.6

According to the responses obtained as shown in table 4, majority of the other actors prefer a lead role by the military in certain types of disasters. These include terrorist attacks, organized criminal gangs, collapsed buildings, and containment of cattle rustlers among other forms of emerging disasters.

Notably, the military have been accused by human rights organizations for abuse of human rights during disaster response. At the same time, the vulnerable groups have appreciated their intervention and even called their continued stay even after the situation had been brought under control. This implies that their role; which combines restoration of security with provision of essential humanitarian services and development of infrastructure have greater positive impact on the communities and should never be sacrificed because of political and civil society's activism. At the same time, the institution has to guard against accusations of abuse of human rights through enhanced routine interactions with the public in order to gain more acceptances outside the military barracks. At the same time, whereas the military have very key roles in disaster management, they must at the same time strike balance between those duties and their core mandate; that of defending the state territory and its sovereignty. This is because it would be

disastrous if they are unable to perform their core duties as a result of involvement in disaster management.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS, RECOMMEDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Study Findings

From the study, it is evident that natural and man-made disasters are common occurrences in Kenya. Despite of this fact, disaster risk reduction has not been incorporated in the country's development planning. This is contrary to the recommendations of the UN through the Hyogo framework among other international initiatives towards disaster risk reduction as a sine qua non to poverty reduction for development including implementation of the MDGs. Efforts towards adoption of a disaster management policy in the country remain a mileage since 1999 when the first attempt was made. Currently, various sectoral approaches to the problem are pursued independently by the various government agencies that are not coordinated under any institutional framework for efficiency in disaster management. Hence, there are competing interests between the government agencies as they seek to justify their roles especially in the area of response that normally attracts good funding from the government and donor agencies when disaster occurs. Notably, disaster management can not be entirely left to a single actor because depending on the impact, some disasters require the synergy of all the available efforts. These must be coordinated and directed by a responsible authority to realize their potential. The government therefore remains the key actor in coordination of disaster management in the country and can not afford to delegate this responsibility.

In the absence of effective coordination in Kenya and the competition for the available resources by various government agencies, disaster mitigation, which is key to effective disaster management, has not been accorded appropriate attention. The various actors, including the

government give more priority to response and recovery because the two have more public appeal and visibility but ends up creating a vicious cycle and a dependency syndrome on the vulnerable groups as responders rush into disaster scenes and disappear soon after the immediate problem has been addressed without seeking to eliminate the hazards.

It is also clear that disasters affect the poor more than the well to do persons in society. This is because the poor are the majority and live under deplorable conditions both in rural and urban environments where they are exposed to various hazards. This exposure is widening with the increased urbanization and the emerging threats such as diseases, terrorism, ethnic conflicts and environmental degradation among others. As a matter of fact, the government has a primary duty to protect its citizens from the effects of disasters through preparedness, mitigation, response, relief and rehabilitation. Where this has been done, people's resilience has been improved and the impact of the disaster has been reduced considerably.

Despite of the debates on use of the military in disaster management, no country can afford to keep it away from this at all. The military brings in a lot of expertise in coordination, discipline, personnel and equipments; key ingredients that are essential during emergency response. The success they have record in the areas of intervention earns them both enemies and friends because in most cases, some of the other responders and some members of the public are not used to their mode of operations and are suspicious of the same. However, it is notable that their intervention is an all round operation that addresses all the important social- economic aspects of the target areas. This involvement is increasingly justified by the diminishing external threats to state security and the increasing emerging disaster threats.

Another key finding of this study is that during disaster response, the credibility of the information available on the disaster situation is important in determining people's response to instructions and advice on safety measures. Consequently, proper information must be gathered and relayed through a credible channel and from a legitimate source so as to be useful to both the affected persons and the responders. In the final analysis, it is not the sophisticated equipments that work in disaster response but a combination of appropriate skills, coordination, information management and use of local knowledge and tools among others measures. For that reason, disaster management must address all the gaps that exist in DRR. These include governance, organizational, legal and policy frameworks, risk identification, assessment monitoring and early warning, knowledge management and education plus reduction of underlying risk factors.

Ideally, effective disaster management involves adoption of the DRR strategy through the major phase of disaster management cycle that revolves around mitigation, preparedness, response, relief and rehabilitation.

5.1 Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the researcher has arrived at five key recommendations that are deemed useful to the policy makers and researchers in Kenya. From the outset, the country can no longer afford to operate without an elaborate disaster management policy. Its adoption should be fast-tracked to enable appropriate legislation that regulates disaster matters in the country. Secondly, upon adoption of such a policy, the government should create a disaster management authority that will among other things, merge the activities of the various government agencies, coordinate the NGO's, mobilize and manage resources for disaster management in the country.

Thirdly, disaster management is a primary responsibility of the government. Consequently, it must entrench DRR in its development planning and put more emphasis on mitigation as opposed to response, relief and rehabilitation. This will ensure action in addressing; for instance the frequent damage caused by slum fires due to lack of access for rescuers and firefighter.

Fourthly, the role of the military should be acknowledged as quite crucial and appropriate legislation and regulations adopted to institutionalize their role in disaster risk reduction. Such regulations should assign them the lead role in certain types of disasters like terrorism and other modern disasters that tend to defeat the capacities of civil authorities. This will minimize casualties that occur before they are called in as a last result.

Finally, disasters will always occur and cause damages despite of our levels of preparedness. However, the government must endeavor to minimize the damages through sustainable disaster management systems that seek to empower the communities and give appropriate attention to the key phases in disaster management as a continuous process.

5.2 Conclusion

Disasters, whether natural or man-made are an international phenomena and are responsible for great losses of both property and human lives wherever they have occurred. However, some forms of disasters are predictable and can be mitigated through various preparedness measures so as to reduce their negative impact on the vulnerable groups. In the long run, successful disaster management in any country requires concrete policies that institutionalize and entrench disaster risk reduction into the national development plans for effective management. However, despite

the various mitigation, and preparedness measures, disasters will always occur and governments must improve on response and relief measures to reduce their impact on the vulnerable groups. This is the essence of the concept of disaster management in any country.

In Kenya like elsewhere in the world, the government has often resulted to use of the military where the other actors have been unable to respond to some forms of disasters adequately. This approach has been successful and it is only reasonable that the country accords special recognition of its role and develop measures to improve on the same. Such measures will include legislation that will regulate military involvement in the emerging disaster threats such as terrorism, ethnic conflicts and diseases among others without compromising their primary duty of defending the country against external aggression. During such emergencies, they should take the lead role in response operations while the government performs the general coordination to ensure participation by all the actors. This will minimize the casualties that are normally witnessed prior to the arrival of the military at the emergency scene. By instituting reform measures in disaster management, the government will not only be fulfilling its mandate but also complying with the international requirements as set out in various UN resolutions towards disaster reduction as a perquisite to realization of sustainable development.

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WEBSITES

http:// www lds.org, Prepare/disaster

http://www.lcms.org disaster relief manual

APPENDIX (1) List of actors interviewed

Ministry of State for Provincial Administration and National Security

Minister of State for Special programs

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Defense (Military)

National Operation Centre

The Kenya Red Cross Society

St. John Ambulance

APPENDIX (2) Open ended questions to various actors.

1. What activities do you undertake in Disaster Management in Kenya?

2. With whom do you collaborate during disaster response?

3. How long does it take you to respond to an emergency when it occurs?

4. What hampers effective disaster management within your organization?

5. What do you consider as major challenges to effective disaster management in Kenya?

6. Among the various actors in disaster management in the country, whom do you consider most effective in disaster response?

7. Why your choice for No-6 above?

8. Between the following actors, who should take the lead role in disaster response:

   - The Military.

   - Ministry of State for Special Programmes.

   - Any other.

9. Please justify your choice for question No-8.