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SYMPTOMS OF A FAILING SYSTEM: NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA AFTER TWO DECADES

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ABSTRACT

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) came into existence in 1999, with the intention to expand the operational scope of the National Emergency Relief Agency (NERA). The Establishment Act of NEMA, saddled the Agency with the responsibilities of overseeing emergency/disaster management activities in Nigeria through policy formulation and the coordination of other agencies and stakeholders. Two decades after its establishment, the Agency has struggled to meet its formulation goals, as disaster management in the country is still inefficient. This article therefore assesses NEMA using flood mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery as cardinal variables. To achieve this objective, the survey research designed with mixed method approach was found suitable

and was adopted. To generate primary data, three States: Kogi, Bayelsa and Oyo were purposively selective as a result of their histories/prevalence of floods. Using the multi-stage sampling technique, one local government each was selected from the states as samples. With the use of Taro Yamane method, one thousand, one hundred and ninety-eight respondents were selected for the administration of questionnaires, while in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions were conducted with survivors of flood emergencies/disasters in selected communities. Also, KIIs were conducted with relevant NEMA officials and those of State Emergency Management Agency in the selected States. The research found-out that the legislative instrument that established NEMA was weak. Besides, the Agency operated in a complex policy environment which negatively impinged its operations. Apart from ecological variables, the Agency was plagued by poor funding, low institutional capacity and bureaucratic corruption. Considering the overall consequences of disasters on the Nigerian State, it was recommended that NEMA should be repositioned to play more active roles.

Keywords: Public policy; Disaster management; Flood mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

1. INTRODUCTION

The need to expand the operational scope of the National Emergency Relief Agency (NERA), ostensibly to cater for all aspects of disaster management – mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery informed the establishment of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in 1999. As parts of its formulation goals, NEMA was to oversee emergency/disaster management in Nigeria through policy formulation, monitoring and coordination of other agencies and stakeholders (NEMA, 1999). Emergency coordination, according to NEMA's Establishment Act was to take both horizontal and vertical forms. Horizontally, NEMA was to coordinate the activities of federal government agencies directly and indirectly involved in emergency management in the country. On the other

hand, the vertical aspect was designed to focus on agencies of/stakeholders from other level of government, in particular, State/ Local Emergency Management Agency/Committees. By implication, emergency management in Nigeria is tailored after the country's federal political structure (Adefisoye, 2019; Adefisoye and Agagu, 2020).

Two decades after its establishment, NEMA has struggled to meet its formulation goals of ensuring a dynamic, effective and efficient emergency/disaster management system in Nigeria. Rather, the Agency has made less impact in Nigeria's complex policy environment, which is replete with inter-governmental/inter-agency rivalry, lack of political will, institutional underfunding, low administrative capacity and bureaucratic corruption among others ills (Adefisoye, 2019). In particular, NEMA, being the lead-agency was established to rely on 'advocacy' rather than 'coercion' in the discharge of its duties in an abnormal policy environment like Nigeria's where impunity thrives. The foregoing has no doubt had a negative effect on policy implementation as it concerns emergency/disaster management in the country. According to Dye "a policy does not become a public policy until such policy is adopted, implemented and enforced by government institutions" (Dye, 2005: 13-14). Besides, "government institutions give public policy three distinctive characteristics, namely: legitimacy, universality and coercion" (Dye, 2005: 13-14). Therefore, since NEMA, which is the lead-agency in Nigeria's disaster management arena lacks enforcement powers, then, disaster management in the country is perceived as 'illegitimate'.

To this end, this article aims at assessing NEMA as the lead-agency in Nigeria's disaster/emergency management system after two decades. This is done using flood mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery as cardinal variables. The choice of floods was informed by that fact that flooding is the most common disaster in Nigeria (Etuonovbe, 2011:9; NEMA, 2012; Aderogba, 2012; Adefisoye, 2017; NIHSA, 2018). Within the past two decades of NEMA existence, Nigeria witnessed flood

emergencies of high magnitudes especially in 2011, 2012 and 2018. In particular, 2012 and 2018 were declared as years of national disaster in Nigeria.

1.1 Theoretical Framework: The Goal Theory

The Goal Theory is adopted as the theoretical compass for this discourse. The development of this theory is linked with Max Weber and Roberts Michels in their separate works on bureaucracy. However, Talcott Parsons popularized the theory by elevating goals of organization to central position as *the raison d’etre* of all organization (Okoli and Okoli 1990: 196). This theory contends that all organizational activities are oriented and directed toward the achievement of set goals. Goals are regarded as value premises, which serve as the inputs to decisions. Goals are essential elements of organization. To be effective, an organization must clearly spell out its goals, objectives and strategies (Mullins 1996: 292).

This theory possesses several appealing values. One of such striking values of the theory is that it provides the basis for standard performance and for passing judgment on the effectiveness of organization (Ikelegbe and Osumah, 2007: 192). Also, it provides guidelines for decision-making and justification for actions taken. It also helps to develop commitment of individuals and groups to the activities of the organization. As a result, attention is directed on purposeful behaviour and basis for motivation and reward systems. It is the basis for objectives and policies of the organization.

Furthermore, goals give indication of what the organization is really like its true nature and character both for members and for people outside the organization (Mullins 1996: 292). Contributing to the foregoing, Agagu (2010), points out that “goals must clearly be defined in order to stimulate and enhance performance”. He then adds the characteristics and importance of a goal, and they are: goals narrow attention and direct efforts to goals relevant activities, and away from perceived undesirable and goal-irrelevant actions; goals can lead to more effort. This propels a worker to work more

intensely to attain benchmark especially when incentives, promotion or even deadline are attached to such attainment; and goals influence persistence in that one is inclined to work through setbacks or work harder if pursuing a goal.

The framework is suitable for the assessment of NEMA as the lead-agency in Nigeria's disaster management arena. As a government agency, NEMA has struggled to meet up with its formulation goals and make significant impact particularly with respect to emergency coordination in the country. Although, the Agency has pioneered laudable initiatives in the past like the NDMF, educational partnership initiatives with higher institutions and the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC); and the introduction of community volunteering; these initiatives have not yielded the desired fruits. As Woodrow Wilson rightly posited in his pioneering work on "The Study of Administration", in 1887, "the broad plans of governments actions are not administration; the detailed execution of such plans is administration" In other words, it is not enough to have a good policy roadmap, frameworks or laudable initiatives, working out the content, context and intents of such is imperative.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Perspectives on Disaster Management

The idea of disaster management stems from the overall and compelling need posed to humanity by the unfettered occurrence of disasters caused by both natural and anthropogenic factors. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, reported that an estimated 500 disasters occurred in 2002 alone, with more than 10,000 people killed; 600 million others affected, with \$5 billion and \$13billion as total damages and insured losses respectively" (ISDR, 2004). In his estimation, Van Niekerk explained that more than 180 deaths are recorded daily due to the impact that unmitigated and mismanaged hazards have on the volatile conditions in the developing world and elsewhere (Niekerk, 2004). Also, Arrow, Becker, Ostrom,

Schelling, Sen, and Solow in a World Bank-supported study noted that between 1970 and 2010, an estimated 3.3 million people all over the world had died as a result of multi various disaster occurrences (2010:26). It is worthy of note that between 1900 and 2003, natural disasters killed over 62 million people world-wide (OFDA/CRED, 2003). This, according to Cohen and Werker (2008) is “approximately the same number as all those killed in the two World Wars, yet scarce attention has been paid to natural disasters in the economics and political science literature, while dozens of articles on conflicts and conflict resolution are published each year”.

In its 2015 report, the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) explained that natural disasters had a devastating impact on human society globally, with the occurrence of 376 reported natural disasters that caused the death of 22,765 people; made 110.3 million people victims and caused US\$ 70.3 billion damages (CRED, 2016:13). This, according to CRED was near the total number of disaster occurrences between 2005 and 2014 which is 380 (CRED, 2016: 10). Subsequently in 2016, disasters including storms and earthquakes caused \$175 billion in terms of damage, besides the death of 8,700 people (Munich RE, 2016). From these reports, the financial cost of disaster apparently increased in 2016 by US\$64.7 billion.

These entire incidents have had adverse and gory consequences on humans, wildlife, aquatic life, infrastructures and economies. Also, they have put a question mark on the level of preparedness of countries for disasters. In addition, disasters do not discriminate; hence, their effects are reflections on measures taken before they occur. Arrow, Becker, Ostrom, Schelling, Sen, and Solow (2010:1) have argued that disasters expose the cumulative implications of many earlier decisions collectively and a few by default. In a similar vein, Ayeni (2007:4) concluded that in spite of the catastrophic consequences of these disasters, they are highly predictable and so their consequences should have been more easily envisaged for necessary curtailment.

Generally, the effects of disasters can be situated within the purview of the economic, social and physical/infrastructural contexts. Socially, disaster events disrupt the functioning of societies by displacing families and hampering smooth and friendly relationships. In the area of infrastructure, disaster occurrences have destroyed monuments, retarded development and have ultimately affected human civilization. Economically, disasters have spelt untold doom on the finances of both individuals and countries generally. Summarizing these effects of disasters, Egeland explicated that:

Disasters challenge societies and governments. They can undermine the legitimacy of government by creating apparent chaos and disruption and by highlighting the weaknesses and limits of government. They can result in deaths, destruction and disruption to every aspect of society. Poorer countries may find that ‘the consequences of disasters erase years of development and take years to reverse’ (Egeland, 2006).

Stemming from the above, it becomes pertinent to note that, the indisputability of hazards and calamities as facts of human existence poses a compelling need to finding ways of managing them, so as to protect the human race from possible extinction. This is no doubt, one of the fundamental purposes for the existence of the state and its machinery, the government. Attesting to this fact, Janda, Berry and Goldman (2000:557), argued that the central piece of the social contract theory, irrespective of its variants is that all citizens are willing to submit their personal freedom or at least, their affairs to the state in return for some benefits from the government. Such benefits include protection from the gory consequences of disasters. Corroborating the views of James Bryce (1883-1922), Gauba (2007: 421) submitted that:

The test of a government is the welfare of its people. Thus, the standard of merit of any government can be judged by the adequacy with which it performs the chief functions of government: the protection of its

people from internal and external enemies (which also include natural hazards and man-made disasters); the securing of justice; the efficient administration of common affairs, and bestowal of aid to individual citizens in their several occupations.

The idea of disaster management therefore stems from the overall danger posed to humanity by the occurrence of disasters caused by both natural and anthropogenic factors. As Clary (1985) has rightly observed “crises have always played a role in policy formation but the entire structure of disaster response was crisis-driven” According to him, “when a disaster struck, people acted; society’s attitude toward natural disasters was fatalistic (Clary, 1985:1). Therefore, government institutions, public and private agencies and policy-makers all over the world and at different levels have seemingly or deliberately sought means to managing the effects of unmitigated and ill-managed hazards on human existence and well-being. Petak (1985) captured these efforts and expressed that “throughout history, public policy makers have sought to anticipate the unexpected in order to reduce the risk to human life and safety posed by intermittently occurring natural and man-made hazardous events”. The results of such efforts have culminated in the formulation of disaster management as “the co-ordination and integration of all activities necessary to build, sustain and improve the capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to and recover from threatening or actual natural or human-induced disasters” (NDMF, 2010:2).

The inherent complex and dynamic qualities of disasters perhaps leave governments in a quandary about what to do to manage them (National Research Council, 2007). More specifically, the magnitude, scope, uncertainty, dynamism and infrequency of disasters give rise to some important questions:

- How can we increase the resilience of communities to disasters—for example, by adding levees, raising the elevation of the living floor in homes, or imposing zoning regulations?

- How can we reduce the impact of disaster events—for example, through more effective warning systems or better evacuation plans?
- How can we most effectively provide assistance to those who have been affected—through development of a common operating picture and common situational awareness shared by all emergency responders or through better search-and-rescue procedures? (National Research council, 2007: 49-50).

2.2 Comprehensive Emergency/Disaster Management (Phases in Emergency/Disaster Management)

Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM) refers to a State's responsibility and capability for managing all types of emergencies and disasters by coordinating the actions of numerous agencies (Center for Policy Research, 1979). Although, disaster management is the responsibility of all, due to the fact that disasters don't discriminate, the government is expected to take the lead. The 'comprehensive' aspect of CEM includes all four phases of disaster or emergency activity: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. It cuts across all risks: attack, human-induced and natural, in a federal-state-local partnership (Center for Policy Research 1979). The four phases have been termed variously by different scholars: while some refer to them as "elements of disaster management", other refer to them as the "components" of disaster management. For instance, Ojo (2004: 10-11), referred to these phases as 'elements' of disaster management, and classified them into two broad parts: Pre-Disaster phase (consisting prevention, mitigation, preparedness and early-warning); and Post-disaster Recovery Phase (consisting disaster impact, response, which is also search and rescue, recovery and development) (Ojo, 2004: 10-11). Noticeably, each of the two broad groups contains four independent but interrelated activities.

2.3 Mitigation

Mitigation actions involve lasting, often permanent, reduction of exposure to, probability of or potential loss from hazard events (NDMF, 2012: 12) They tend to focus on where and how to build. Examples include: zoning

and building code requirements for rebuilding in high-hazard areas; floodplain buyouts; and analyses of floodplain and other hazard-related data to determine where it is safe to build in normal times, to open shelters in emergencies, or to locate temporary housing in the aftermath of a disaster. Mitigation also can involve educating businesses and the public on simple measures they can take to reduce loss and injury, like fastening bookshelves, water heaters, and file cabinets to walls to keep them from falling during earthquakes (Lindsay, 2012: 2-3).

2.4 Preparedness

While mitigation can make communities safer and better informed, it does not eliminate risk and vulnerability for all hazards. Therefore, jurisdictions must be ready to face emergency threats that have not been mitigated away. Since emergencies often evolve rapidly and become too complex for effective improvisation, a government can successfully discharge its emergency management responsibilities only by taking certain actions beforehand. Preparedness involves setting-up institutions and responsibilities for emergency actions and garnering the resources to support them: a jurisdiction must assign or recruit staff for emergency management duties and designate or procure facilities, equipment, and other resources for carrying out assigned duties. This investment in emergency management requires upkeep: the staff must receive training and highly motivated; and the facilities and equipment must be maintained in working order.

2.5 Response

The onset of an emergency creates a need for time-sensitive actions to save lives and property, as well as for action to begin stabilizing the situation so that the jurisdiction can regroup (Lindsay, 2012: 2-3). Such response actions include “notifying emergency management personnel of the crisis, warning and evacuating or sheltering the population if possible, keeping the population informed, rescuing individuals providing medical treatment, maintaining the rule of law, assessing damage, addressing mitigation issues

that arise from response activities, and even requesting help from outside the jurisdiction” (NDMF, 2012: 12).

2.6 Recovery

The recovery phase starts after the immediate threat to human life has subsided (NDMF, 2012: 12). During reconstruction it is recommended to consider the location or construction material of the property. Also, this phase should focus on the need to re-integrate victims of disasters and other Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) back into the society, so that they live their normal lives.

3. METHODOLOGY

To achieve these objectives, the survey research designed with mixed method approach was found suitable and adopted. The mixed method approach is the use of quantitative and qualitative methods to generate both primary and secondary data. For the primary data, three of Nigeria’s thirty-six states: Kogi, Bayelsa and Oyo were purposively selective as a result of their histories and prevalence of floods. Using the multi-stage sampling technique, one local government each: Lokoja (Kogi), Yenagoa (Bayelsa and Ibadan North East (Oyo) were selected as samples. Also, with the use of Taro Yamane method of calculation, a total of one thousand, one hundred and ninety-eight (1,198) respondents were selected as the sample size for the administration of questionnaires, while 8 KIIs were interviewed. The key informants consisted top ranked officials At the state level, the Heads/representatives of Kogi State Emergency Management Agency (KOSEMA); Bayelsa State Emergency Management Agency (BASEMA); Oyo State Emergency Management Agency (OYOSEMA) and Ekiti State Emergency Management Agency (EKSEMA) were interviewed at the state level. This was done with the intension of understanding the level of interaction between NEMA and agencies of other levels of government, particularly, the state. Besides, some victims/survivors of flood emergencies at the study areas were interviewed in form of Focus Group Discussion and IDI.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Disaggregation of Data by State

For the purpose of distinction of responses by States/L.G.As; and for analytical neatness, this section presents disaggregated elicited data on the basis of States/L.G.As.

Table 1: Sex of respondents.

State	Sex		Total (n=1194) Percentage (100)
	Male	Female	
Kogi	217 18.2%	178 18.9%	395 33.1%
Bayelsa	197 16.5%	203 17.0%	400 33.5%
Oyo	219 18.3%	180 15.1%	399 33.4%
Total	633 53.0%	561 47.0%	1194 100.0%

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Table 1 shows the disaggregated data of respondents by sex. While Oyo state has a highest number of male respondents (219) and closely followed by Kogi (217); Bayelsa has more female respondents that participated in the research (203).

Table 2: Educational level of respondents.

State	None	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary Institution	Total(n=1,194)
Kogi	25 3.1%	42 2.1%	172 14.4%	156 13.1%	395 33.1%

Bayelsa	9 8%	31 2.6%	207 17.3%	153 12.8%	400 33.5%
Oyo	41 3.4%	37 3.1%	185 15.5%	136 11.4%	399 33.4%
Total	75 6.3%	110 9.2%	564 47.2%	445 37.3%	1194 100.0%

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Table 2 shows that respondents with secondary education are more than other levels with 564 (47.2%); followed by those with tertiary education with 445 representing 37.3%. Respondents with at least primary education are 110 (9.2%) while respondents without education formal education are 75 (6.3%).

Table 3a: Disaggregated data on NEMA's flood management strategies before flood emergencies and disasters (Flood Mitigation and Preparedness).

NEMA usually carry-out early warning programmes like media campaign and community sensitization on impending flooding	Yes	Per-centage (%)	No	Per-centage (%)	Indif-ferent	Per-centage (%)	Total (n=1,194) Per-centage (100)
Kogi	231	19.3	108	9.0	56	4.7	395 33.1%
Bayelsa	179	15.0	193	16.2	28	2.3	400 33.5%
Oyo	270	22.6	101	8.5	28	2.3	399 33.4%
Total	680	56.9	402	33.7	112	9.3	

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

The items on table 3 (3a – 3d) were designed to elicit responses on the strategies adopted by NEMA before flood emergencies and disasters (mitigation and preparedness) in Nigeria. Specifically, Table 3a indicates that 57% of the total responses across the three study areas attests that

NEMA usually carry-out early warning programmes like media campaign and community sensitization on impending flooding; 33.7% are unaware while 9.4% are indifferent to the item.

Table 3b: NEMA and the training of community-based organizations on flood management.

NEMA usually train community-based organizations on flood management	Yes	Per-centage (%)	No	Per-centage (%)	Indif-ferent	Per-centage (%)	Total (n=1,194) Per-centage (100)
Kogi	208	17.4	126	10.6	61	5.1	395 33.1%
Bayelsa	134	11.2	237	19.8	29	2.4	400 33.5%
Oyo	240	20.1	121	10.1	38	3.2	399 33.4%
Total	582	48.7	484	40.5	128	10.7	

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Table 3b shows a slim difference between responses that agreed that NEMA usually train community-based organizations on flood management (582 respondents) and those that disagreed (484 respondents).

Table 3c: Collaboration with other agencies/stakeholders to carry-out sensitization on flooding

NEMA usually collaborate with other agencies/stakeholders to carry-out sensitization on flooding	Yes	Per-centage (%)	No	Per-centage (%)	Indif-ferent	Per-centage (%)	Total (n=1,194) Per-centage (100)
Kogi	223	18.7	113	9.5	59	4.9	395 33.1%
Bayelsa	148	12.4	222	18.6	30	2.5	400 33.5%
Oyo	255	21.4	112	9.4	32	2.7	399 33.4%
Total	626	52.5	447	37.5	121	10.1	

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Table 3c indicates that 626 respondents representing 52.4% of the total responses attest that NEMA usually collaborates with other agencies/stakeholders to carry-out sensitization on flooding. On the other hand, 474 and 121 respondents ticked ‘No’ and ‘Indifferent’ respectively.

Table 3d: Conduct of mapping of communities at risk of flooding/ the formulation of evacuation plans.

NEMA usually conduct mapping of the communities at risk of flooding and formulates evacuation plans	Yes	Per-centage (%)	No	Per-centage (%)	Indif-ferent	Per-centage (%)	Total (n=1,194) Per-centage (100)
Kogi	213	17.8	122	10.2	60	5.0	395 33.1%
Bayelsa	116	9.7	250	20.9	34	2.8	400 33.5%
Oyo	230	20.0	123	10.3	37	3.1	399 33.4%
Total	559	47.5	495	41.4	131	10.9	

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Table 3d shows that 41.6% of responses indicates that NEMA did not conduct flood preparedness activities including mapping of the communities at risk of flooding and the formulation of evacuation plans. 369 respondents agreed that the Agency carried-out such activities while 94 respondents are undecided.

Table 4a: Disaggregated data on NEMA’s flood management strategies during flood emergencies and disasters (Flood Response).

At the event of flood emergencies, NEMA usually mobilize its search and rescue team to disaster scenes	Yes	Per-centage (%)	No	Per-centage (%)	Indif-ferent	Per-centage (%)	Total (n=1,194) Per-centage (100)
Kogi	211	17.5	125	10.5	59	4.9	395 33.1%

Bayelsa	145	12.1	227	19.0	28	2.3	400 33.5%
Oyo	246	20.6	116	9.7	37	3.1	399 33.4%
Total	602	50.2	468	39.2	124	10.3	

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Items on Tables 4a to 4c were designed to elicit responses on the strategies adopted by NEMA during flood emergencies and disasters (flood response) in Nigeria. Specifically, Table 4a indicates that 50.4% of the total responses attested that NEMA mobilized its search and rescue team to disaster scenes at the event of flood emergencies, while 39.2% disagreed.

Table 4b: NEMA and the deployment of rescue boats, vans and other equipment during flood disasters.

NEMA usually deploy rescue boats, vans and other equipment during flood disasters	Yes	Per-centage (%)	No	Per-centage (%)	Indif-ferent	Per-centage (%)	Total (n=1,194) Per-centage (100)
Kogi	199	16.7	133	11.1	63	5.3	395 33.1%
Bayelsa	104	8.7	267	22.4	29	2.4	400 33.5%
Oyo	221	18.5	135	11.3	43	3.6	399 33.4
Total	524	43.9	535	44.8	135	11.3	

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Table 4b shows that 524 respondents representing 43.9% of the total responses agreed that NEMA did not deploy rescue boats, vans and other equipment during flood disasters.

Table 4c: Collaborate with the Fire Brigade, Civil Defence, the Military and divers to rescue victims of flood disasters.

NEMA usually collaborate with the Fire Brigade, Civil Defence, the Military and divers to rescue victims of flood disasters	Yes	Per-centage (%)	No	Per-centage (%)	Indif-ferent	Per-centage (%)	Total (n=1,194) Per-centage (100)
Kogi	210	17.6	128	10.7	57	4.8	395 33.1%
Bayelsa	133	11.1	232	19.4	35	2.9	400 33.5%
Oyo	213	17.8	136	11.4	50	4.2	399 33.4%
Total	556	46.5	496	41.5	142	11.9	

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Table 4c shows 41.5% of the entire responses indicated that NEMA did not collaborate with agencies like the Fire Brigade, Civil Defence, the Military and Divers to rescue victims of flooding. On the other hand, 46.6% of responses attested that NEMA did so.

Table 5a: Disaggregated data on NEMA's flood management strategies after flood emergencies and disasters.

The distribution of relief items by NEMA is usually well organised and well-coordinated	Yes	Per-centage (%)	No	Per-centage (%)	Indif-ferent	Per-centage (%)	Total (n=1,194) Per-centage (100)
Kogi	191	16.0	143	12.0	61	5.1	395 33.1%
Bayelsa	117	9.8	245	20.5	38	3.2	400 33.5%
Oyo	217	18.2	123	10.3	59	4.9	399 33.4%
Total	525	44	511	42.8	158	13.2	

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Table 5a shows that 44% of responses indicate that the distribution of relief items by NEMA was well organized, well-coordinated; while 42.8% of the responses indicated otherwise.

Table 5b: NEMA and the re-settlement of survivors of flood victims.

NEMA usually assists victims of flood disasters to re-settle and live their normal lives	Yes	Per-centage (%)	No	Per-centage (%)	Indif-ferent	Per-centage (%)	Total (n=1,194) Per-centage (100)
Kogi	201	16.8	140	11.7	54	4.5	395 33.1%
Bayelsa	128	10.7	232	19.4	40	3.4	400 33.5%
Oyo	230	19.3	121	10.1	48	4.0	399 33.4%
Total	559	49.8	493	41.2	142	11.9	

Source: Fieldwork, 2019.

Table 5b shows that 559 elicited responses indicate that NEMA assisted victims of flood disasters to re-settle and live their normal lives; while 493 disagreed.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis of Key Informant Interviews

In the analysis of the key informant interviews, responses from key informants were analysed contextually. In line with certain ethical considerations governing the conduct of human subject research and in line ‘impersonality’ in the civil/public services, the names of key informants were withheld while their offices/positions were represented with codes which are presented as follows:

KI 1: Deputy-Director, Department of Planning, Research and Forecast, NEMA Head Office, Abuja

KI 2: Head of Operations, NEMA, North-Central Operations Office, Abuja

KI 3: Head of Operations, NEMA, Edo Operations Office, Benin-City.

KI 4: Regional Head, NEMA, South-West Regional Office, Ibadan

KI 5: Director-in-charge of Relief and Rehabilitation, KOSEMA, Lokoja.

KI 6: Head of Administration, BASEMA, Yenagoa.

KI 7: Executive Secretary, OYOSEMA, Ibadan.

KI 8: General Manager, Ekiti SEMA, Ado-Ekiti

What strategies have your agency adopted in flood management: before (mitigation and preparedness), during (response) and after (recovery) flood emergencies/disasters?

Responses to the above item included strategies adopted by government agencies involved in flood management before, during and after flood emergencies and disasters in Nigeria, that is: mitigation and preparedness, response and recovery respectively. Responses from the KIs across are presented below:

Table 6: Flood management strategies in Nigeria.

SN	Strategies for Flood Mitigation and Preparedness	Frequency (n=10)
1	Flood forecasting and predict	2
2	Collaboration with others agencies in form of stake-holders engagements	7
3	Sensitization, awareness and early warning activities	7
	Strategies for Flood Response	
4	Partnership/collaboration with the Military/paramilitary formations, local divers, boat owners etc.	4
5	Search and Recue	5
6	Evacuation of victims to safer places	5
	Strategies for Flood Recovery	
7	Erection of IDP camps	5
8	Provision/administration of immediate reliefs	5
9	Post-flood Assessment	5

Source: Author's compilation, 2019.

In particular, KI 1 explicated thus:

Since 2012, flood management by NEMA has improved. We collaborate with other agencies like NESREA, NIMET, NIHSA, etc. We usually receive the Annual Seasonal Rainfall Predictions from NIMET and the Annual Rainfall Outlook (A.F.O) from NIHSA. We also often organize stake-holders' forum where we analyse these predictions and bring-out grey areas. All these happen before flood incidents. We also organize awareness campaigns in partnership with SEMAs to sensitize people on flood-related issues. After disasters, we usually carry-out post-disaster assessment to determine the extent of damage of the incidents... With respect to flood response, we deploy all relevant gadgets. We make sure that we have food stored for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and we setup camps for them. We use boats for rescue and we partner with Emergency Management Vanguard (EMVs), local divers and other volunteers. We have volunteers in each local government... As a matter of fact, there is the Disaster Risk Unit (DRU) in the military. We partner with them in the areas of training of our personnel and during response (Interview with KI 1, January, 2019).

It is important to clarify that prior to the episodic flood disaster that ravaged the country in 2012, virtually all the highlighted strategies and measures were not in place. For instance, the production of NIHSA's A.F.O commenced in 2013 and besides, only a few States had complied with the provisions of the National Disaster Management Framework (NDMF) of 2010. For the sake of emphasis, the NDMF is the blue-print for disaster management in Nigeria and it stipulated that States should replicate NEMA at their level and at the same time formulate enabling laws that would in-turn lead to the establishment and functioning of LEMC at the local government level. However, many States did not see any reason to put in place a functional SEMA and assist the local

government do likewise. In other word, flood management in Nigeria before October 2012 was not different from what NERA stood for – relief giving. This indifference to emergency/disaster management; lack of political will and the lack of proactive measures contributed to the quantum of destruction expressed in 2012.

A closer look at the various responses on the strategies adopted by emergency management bodies in Nigeria in managing floods are structural, agency-driven and less dynamic. Noticeably, the importance of citizen participation in flood management has not been fully explored in Nigeria's flood management arena. OTA, 1980; and Adefisoye, 2017) have argued that human inputs; natural events and their probabilities; and governmental responsibilities are three fundamental factors that will determine to a very large extent the successful implementation of public policies in flood management.

Question: Despite these 'laudable' strategies and collaboration among various stake holders particularly government agencies, why is flooding still a major disaster in Nigeria or why the obvious gaps?

Responses on this item especially by NEMA officials show that contending issues and gridlocks in Nigeria's inter-governmental relations have in many ways impinged on flood management in the country. Specifically, the absence of the local government in disaster management occasioned by low political wills on the part of many state governments couple with certain administrative lacuna in NEMA are prominent causes. Responding the question, KI 1 lamented that:

That is just the irony of our federal structure. Going to the localities ordinarily should not be the duty of NEMA. That is why there are SEMA and LEMC. The approach should be bottom-top... when disasters overwhelm LEMC, SEMA may come in and where SEMA is inadequate, NEMA may come in... The gap is obvious

inasmuch as SEMAs are not in the same level with NEMA in terms of funding, capacity building and staffing... although, they are improving but not to the required level. Besides, the issue of co-ordination is a major challenge. Even these international organizations will tell you that co-ordination is a major challenge of disaster management. (With respect to local governments' involvement) The absence of the LG has created a huge gap in disaster management in Nigeria because automatically, the first level of disaster management is missing while the middle level is struggling. To the best of my knowledge, there is not LEMCs. Disaster management should commence from the local government, but in our own case, it's the reverse. On the issues of adequacy of funding, 'adequacy' is a national issue. There is no agency that could claim to be adequately funded... As it is, NEMA is fairly funded (Interview with KI 1, January, 2019).

In the same vein, the Coordinator of the North-Central zonal office of NEMA which oversees Kogi state submitted that:

The major challenge is that of the low capacity of other response agencies like SEMA/LEMC and MDAs. We relate well with SEMAs but to a very large extent, they are not active and not functional although there are established Acts in the state, however, SEMAs are not totally active. This no doubt creates a gap in flood management... The input of the local government is very poor. They have no structure and look unto NEMA whenever flood incidents occur. They don't even look at it as if it is their responsibility to support the people... In Kogi State for instance, these Committees only exist on paper but not backed by law. They are figure-heads (Interview with KI 4, January, 2019).

On the part of SEMA, the representative of KOSEMA, equally lamented that:

Poor logistics, inadequate data, poor funding, attitudinal disposition of our people towards early warning and unwillingness to evacuate where there call their ancestral lands; and lack of political will on behalf on government. Also, the absence of LEMA is another challenge... they are there on paper... Besides, we have no warehouse, we use those of sister-agencies. Between 2012 and 2018, KOSEMA could only boast of an old Hilux van. NEMA is like a godfather to us, the Agency has really been there for us to rescue us... Interview with KI 6, January, 2019).

In a more profound manner, KI 7 stressed that:

We are where we are because the government has misplaced its priorities. It lacked the required political will to drive an effective emergency management system. The best we called OYOSEMA is a relief-giving agency and not an emergency management agency which it claims to be on paper. The Agency is not given a free-hand to operate. Funding is a major problem. Before the advent of the present administration, we were adequately funded... apart from the running cost, there were other statutory funds that we received but everything is thrown at NEMA and other international agencies. Going by the Act that established, the Agency, the Agency ought to have its own budget and account. Besides, 30% of the Ecological Fund which ought to be exclusive to emergency management; however, we got a funny amount of 50,000 naira monthly as our running cost and could only boast of an old Hilux van. Before, we can

respond to an emergency, we will have to write the Deputy Governor for financial assistance who will then channel our request to the office of the state's Accountant-General... This process may take up to three weeks and we speak of 'emergency management'. For the past eight years, we have been enjoying the kindness of NEMA (Interview with KI 9, May, 2019).

4.3 Discussion of Findings from the Administration of Questionnaire, and Conduct of IDI, FGDs and KII

From the data gotten from the administration of questionnaire, it can be deduced that the strategies employed by NEMA in the management of floods in Nigeria can be described as top-bottom and agency-driven. This finding corroborates the works of Olorunfemi (2011); Smith (2013); Nkwunonwo, Malcolm and Brian (2015); Adefisoye (2017); and NIHSA (2018). Noticeably, the importance of citizen participation in flood management has not been fully explored in Nigeria's flood management arena. OTA, 1980; and Adefisoye, 2017) have argued that human inputs; natural events and their probabilities; and governmental responsibilities are three fundamental factors that will determine to a very large extent the successful implementation of public policies in flood management. It is also worthy of note that respondents in Ibadan N/E (Oyo state) experienced more the activities of NEMA more than those in Lokoja (Kogi) and Yenagoa (Bayelsa). This may be unconnected to the fact that the headquarters of NEMA's South-West region is located in the city. This perhaps justifies the argument that there is the need to bring disaster management services nearer to the people.

From in-depth interviews and FGDs conducted, salient issues that further attested to the laxity of government agency in areas of flood mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery were raised. Besides, the issue of lack of patriotism on the part of IDPs/survivors of flood emergencies was raised. Specific issues raised included, lack of efficient early warning system and community sensitization; absence of mitigation and preparedness activities

by government agencies; poor disaster response and recovery; inadequate relief camps for IDPs; and poor relief administration. It is important to note that some of these issues arise as a result of poor co-ordination and monitoring of flood management activities by NEMA which is the lead-agency. Although, they were affirmations of NEMA's media campaigns of impending flooding, such campaigns were not taken to the communities. In other word, the social capital of communities was not employed during emergency mitigation and preparedness. The various responses also attested to poor emergency responses in the country by NEMA.

In particular, IDP management and relief administration which are activities within the genus of disaster recovery are often poorly coordinated and monitored as a result of certain *criminogenic* patterns observable in relief administration in Nigeria (Abdulazeez and Oriola, 2018). Besides the issues of diversion or stealing of relief items, the administration is sometimes politicized. Highlighting these issues, a former Head of Relief and Rehabilitation, NEMA, Ekiti Operations Office explained that:

Relief administration is one of the challenges of disaster management in Nigeria. This is because the Act governing relief management stipulates that we (NEMA) handover whatever we have received to SEMA. However, due to the Nigerian factor, they may hoard 50 bags of rice from 100 given by them by NEMA. Relief co-ordination is a challenge we have. At times, these stakeholders keep relief items in their warehouses to expire. Besides, SEMA keeps information from us (KII conducted on 10th August, 2018 at NEMA E.O.O at Ado-Ekiti).

In addition, it was widely reported in the media that relief materials were hoarded, diverted and in many extreme cases, distribution of those items was politicized (Reliefweb, 2016; *Vanguard*, 4 May, 2017; *Daily post*, June 15, 2017; and *Guardian*, 22 June, 2017). For instance in Oyo state, after the devastating flood disasters and wind storms that wreaked havoc on the state

in 2011 and 2013 respectively, officials of the Oyo state government accused an erstwhile Minister of State for the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Ms. Olajumoke Akinjide of politicizing the administration of relief materials (The Eagle online, 2013). In the same report, officials of NEMA were accused of “flirting with the opposition with a view of rubbishing the government” (The Eagle online, 2013). It is important to add that different political parties controlled Oyo state and the federal government during that period. To further attest to the poor co-ordination, poor monitoring, stealing and diversion of relief materials, it was reported on 4 May, 2017 that a local government Supervisory Councilor from Mafa LGA of Borno state, North-East Nigeria, Mr. Umar Ibrahim alongside an accomplice Mr. Bulama Ali Zangebe were convicted for stealing and diverting 245 bags of rice which were donated by the Danish Refugee Council to IDPs in the State (*Vanguard*, 4 May, 2017).

Basically, IDP management in Nigeria is exclusive to two major federal government bodies: The National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) and NEMA. The roles of NEMA are however meant to be replicated at the state and local government levels by SEMA and LEMC as stipulated under the National Disaster Management Framework of 2010. In other words, the structure of IDP management in Nigeria is tailored after the country’s federal political arrangement. Besides being in conformity with Nigeria’s federal structure, it reflects the ideology and principles of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GPID). For Instance, Principle 3(1) of the GPID states that “National authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction” On shelter, Principle 18 (1) of the GPID states that ‘All internally displaced persons have the right to an adequate standard of living’. Section 2(b) also requires the provision of ‘Basic shelter and housing’. As relating to food and nutrition, Principle 18(2) (a) of GPID states that “competent authorities shall provide

internally displaced persons with essential food and potable water (among other essentials)” Other provisions are on health, hygiene, security and education.

In spite of this arrangement IDP management Nigeria is a foul-cry from what it was designed to be. For instance, UNICEF’s Report on the 2012 floods in Nigeria showed that a total number of 597 suspected cholera cases with no laboratory confirmation and 18 deaths were reported between weeks 1-52 of 2012 (UNICEF, 2013). This figure however rose to an extreme in December 2012 with 134 new cases, including 14 deaths from an outbreak in Osun state in November, 2012 (UNICEF, 2013). There were also cases of open defecation, inadequate food and shelters at IDP camps. According to Abdulazeez and Oriola (2018), “the failing and irresponsible nature of the State in Africa (particularly in Nigeria) has contributed to these menaces”.

From the KII, three observable issues affected the achievement of the mandate of disaster management by NEMA. First, is poor coordination; second is the complexity around Nigeria’s policy environment manifested in the lack of commitment from other levels of government; and the third is the fact that NEMA lacked enforcing powers; but only relies on advocacy.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article has assessed the performance of NEMA as the lead-agency in Nigeria’s disaster/emergency management arena after two decades of its establishment. Findings show that the policy environment in which NEMA operates in is ridden with certain complexities which directly and indirectly impinge on its functioning and shape its behaviour; since every administrative system is a product of its environment. Those environmental factors include (but not limited to) inter-governmental gridlock, lack of political will on the part of government, inter-agency rivalry and poor collaboration, inadequate funding and poor attitudinal disposition on the side of Nigeria. While within the Agency, low institutional/staff capacity

and bureaucratic corruption are prominent factors that have negatively impacted the Agency.

With respect to inter-government gridlock, NEMA, being a federal government agency did not enjoy an appreciable support and commitment from agencies owned and controlled by other tiers of government particularly SEMA and LEMA/C. This negative trend is reflective in low commitment to disaster management by the state and local governments; and poor funding. Another implication of the chaotic federal system in Nigeria on flood management is the near-absence of the local government. Despite being acknowledged globally as the first responder and immediate service-provider in disaster management; and being stipulated by the National Disaster Management Framework that state governments should formulate enabling laws that would in-turn establish and ensure the functioning of LEMC; the institution still assumes a passive role in the country's disaster management arena. This near-absence of the local government brings to the fore one of the implications of the overbearing nature of state governors under the aegis of the Nigeria's Governor's Forum on local government. It also haplessly made flood management in Nigeria top-bottom rather than being bottom-top and less effective. Besides, it raises the issues of bureaucratic alignment, true federalism and public policy implementation in Nigeria which policy scholars have labelled "the grave-yard of many good policies".

Like other government agencies in Nigeria, NEMA is inadequately funded and this has affected its service-delivery especially in the area of flood management. The fall-out inadequate funding is manifested in poor workers' welfare, poor and obsolete infrastructure and low institutional capacity. It is interesting to note that the Agency could only boast of just one response helicopter in a country of with an estimated 200 million populations. Closely related to inadequate funding is bureaucratic corruption. In recent times, the NEMA has come under severe probe from the National Assembly. Both the immediate past and the present DGs of the Agency have been indicted by the lower chamber of Nigeria's legislative organ of offenses ranging from misappropriation, misapplication and

diversion of funds meant for the Agency (*Vanguard*, 14 May, 2018). In addition to the foregoing, it was found out that the attitudinal disposition of Nigerians to the environment; illicit and indiscriminate dumping of waste; non-adherence to early warning; and poor waste management have constituted major burdens to flood management in Nigeria.

Above all, the enabling legal instrument (Act 12 of 1999) that established the NEMA was weak *ab-initio*, the Agency lacked enforcement powers or capacity but had to rely solely on advocacy to drive home its responsibilities. This implies that disaster/emergency management in the country is 'illegitimate' since NEMA which is Nigeria's lead agency is weak. Besides, the Act that established the Agency has not been reviewed since 1999, although NEMA had over the two decades of its existence produced series of policy frameworks and operational guidelines in certain grey areas, yet the Agency is still incapacitated by its establishment Act;

It is based on the foregoing that this article recommends that efforts should be made to tackle certain identified complexities enshrined in Nigeria's policy environment. For instance, government should show more political commitment to emergency management and play more active roles by allocating more public funds to the various agencies responsible for flood management in the country especially NEMA at the federal and SEMA at the state levels respectively. In particular, the government at the state level should ensure the domestication and implementation of national policy frameworks in emergency/disaster management. In doing this, the requirement benchmark for funding should be adhered to in the running of the affairs of SEMA; while the provisions contained in the Establishment Act of the agency should be strict and religiously followed. In addition, the local government should be repositioned to play active roles as first responder and immediate service-provider in emergency management. This would make disaster management in Nigeria assume the prescribed bottom-top form and lessen the burden on the lead-agency – NEMA.

Not overlooking the importance of government agencies and institutions in the implementation of public policies in emergency management, there is

the urgent need to reposition those agencies directly related to flood management in Nigeria. This can be achieved through adequacy of funding and the timely release of the funds. Besides, an effective resources management system should be in place to ensure the judicious utilization of funds; and check cases of diversion, misappropriation, misapplication and embezzlement of released funds. This would no doubt restore the confidence of both domestic and international donors in Nigeria's emergency management system. In addition, the Act that established NEMA should be urgently reviewed in line with current realities particularly with respect to granting enforcement powers to NEMA.

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