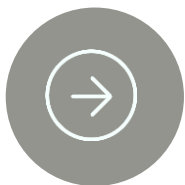# ROLE OF **YOUTH** IN DISASTER RESPONSE

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RAWS
India
A journey towards change...

CBDM INDIA 2025

What government says?

"Over the last two decades, most community-based efforts have been confined to **disaster preparedness and contingency planning** for the short term. We need to expand the scope of community-based efforts and support communities to identify local risk reduction measures and implement them.

Such efforts reduce risk and create opportunities for local development and sustainable livelihoods. Localization of disaster risk reduction will also ensure that we make the most of traditional best practices and indigenous knowledge"

-Hon. Prime Minister

NDMA की '**आपदा मित्र**' जैसी स्कीम्स से युवा आगे आ रहे हैं। आपदा मित्र के रूप में जिम्मेवारियां उठा रहे हैं।कहीं कोई आपदा आती है तो लोग विक्टिम्स नहीं रहते, वो वॉलंटियर्स बनकर आपदा का मुकाबला करते हैं।

यानी, आपदा प्रबंधन अब एक सरकारी काम भर नहीं है, बल्कि ये 'सबका प्रयास' का एक मॉडल बन गया है।

-Hon. Prime Minister

Prime Minister's Ten Point Agenda on DRR

1. All development sectors must imbibe the principles of disaster risk management

2. Risk coverage must include all, starting from poor households to SMEs to multi-national corporations to nation states

3. **Women's leadership and greater involvement** should be central to disaster risk management

4. Invest in risk mapping globally to improve global understanding of Nature and disaster risks

5. **Leverage technology to enhance the efficiency of disaster risk management efforts**

Prime Minister's Ten Point Agenda on DRR

6. **Develop a network of universities to work on disaster-related issues.**

7. **Utilise the opportunities provided by social media and mobile technologies for disaster risk reduction**

8. **Build on local capacity and initiative to enhance disaster risk reduction**

9. Make use of every opportunity to learn from disasters and, to achieve that, there must be studies on the lessons after every disaster

10. Bring about greater cohesion in international response to disasters

India & Disasters

India is highly vulnerable to a wide range of **natural and man-made disasters** due to its **diverse geography, dense population, and varied climatic conditions.**

The country experiences frequent floods, cyclones, earthquakes, droughts, road accidents, lightning, terrorism, border conflicts, and landslides, affecting millions of people every year.

India & Youth

Youth are the **backbone of India**, representing more than 50% of the country's population. As a **dynamic and energetic force**, Indian youth play a crucial role in shaping the nation's future. With increasing access to **education, technology, and global opportunities,** young people are becoming powerful agents of change in areas such as **innovation, entrepreneurship, social reform, and environmental protection**.

India & Youth

They are actively participating in **democratic processes**, **leading awareness campaigns**, **volunteering in community development**, **and driving digital transformation**. The strength of India's youth lies not only in their numbers but also in their **ability to adapt, learn, and lead.** Empowering them with the **right skills, opportunities, and platforms** is essential for building a **stronger, more inclusive, and resilient India**.

Role of Youth in Disaster Response

Youth play a vital and multifaceted role in disaster response in India. Their energy, adaptability, and growing awareness of social and environmental issues make them key agents in enhancing community resilience and ensuring swift, effective action during emergencies.

First Responders

Volunteer Workforce

Community Mobilizers

Technology and Innovation

Psycho-social Support

Policy Advocacy and Research

Building Long-Term Resilience

Youth-led organisations in disaster response

National Cadet Corps (NCC)-Ministry of Defence

Participates in disaster relief, rescue operations, blood donation drives, and crowd management during emergencies

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)-Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports

Volunteers trained for disaster response, awareness campaigns, logistics support in affected regions.

Bharat Scouts and Guides-Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports

Search and rescue, first aid, community awareness, relief distribution.

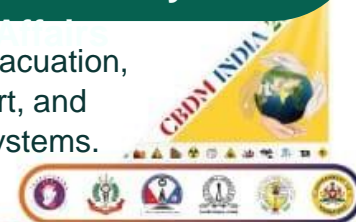### National Service Scheme (NSS)-Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports

Relief camps, health awareness, rescue support, post-disaster rehabilitation.

Youth Red Cross (YRC)-IRCS, Ministry of

First aid, shelter, emergency supply distribution, especially during natural disasters and health emergencies.

Non-Government Organisation

Goonj, Bhumi, Robin Hood Army, Youth for Seva, RAWS etc
Local support, PDNA, relief,

Civil Defence & Home Guards youth volunteer-Ministry of Home Affairs

Search & rescue, evacuation, firefighting support, and community alert systems.

Schemes by the government

Scheme	Description
Aapda Mitra Scheme-NDMA	Train community volunteers (including youth)
(NSS)-Disaster Management Cells	NSS units in colleges conduct DM workshops, mock drills, and field volunteering during emergencies
School Safety Program (under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan)	Training of school children and teachers in evacuation, first aid, and earthquake/cyclone drills.
NYKS – Disaster Management Training	Equip NYKS volunteers (mostly youth in rural areas)
Skill India-–DM/Rescue Modules	Training modules under "Security Sector Skill Council" include disaster response, community safety, and emergency services.
Programs by SDMAs/ SDRFs/Home guards	engages local youth for training and awareness.

Challenges

Lack of Training and Awareness >

Most young people do not receive formal training in disaster preparedness, first aid, or emergency response.

Limited Opportunities for Participation >

Youth often lack structured platforms or roles in official disaster management systems

Inadequate Access to Resources >

lack access to tools, information, and financial support needed to participate in disaster response efforts

Safety and Security Concerns >

Without protective gear or support systems, youth may be discouraged from participating due to personal safety concerns.

Challenges

Lack of Recognition and Support ›
Youth contributions are often undervalued or overlooked by authorities and institutions

Socio-Cultural Barriers ›
In some communities, youth—especially young women—face restrictions based on age, gender, or social status, which can limit their ability to take leadership

Poor Integration with Policy and Planning ›
gap between youth-led initiatives and government disaster management plans

Digital Divide ›
lack access to the internet, smartphones, or digital literacy, especially in remote regions, which hinders their ability to gather or share critical information during emergencies.

Recommendations to Enhance Youth Role in Disaster Response

Integrate Disaster Preparedness into Education

Include Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) modules, Promote mock drills and safety clubs, Encourage project-based learning

Establish Youth Volunteer Corps

Create a structured National Youth Disaster Response Corps, Leverage NSS, NCC, Bharat Scouts & Guides, NYKS as platforms for recruiting and training young volunteers and train youth in first aid, search and rescue, communication, and shelter management

Skill Development & Certification

Partner with Skill India and NSDC to certify youth, Provide incentives and employment pathways in the humanitarian and emergency services sectors.

Leverage Technology and Innovation

Engage youth in developing mobile apps, GIS tools, and AI-based early warning systems, Promote hackathons and innovation challenges

Recommendations to Enhance Youth Role in Disaster Response

Community-Based Engagement

Train youth as community disaster ambassadors, Include them in Village Disaster Management Committees (VDMCs), Mobilize SHG-linked youth groups

Partnership with NGOs and CSOs

Collaboration between youth-led NGOs and district disaster authorities, Support capacity-building initiatives by organizations like RAWS, SEEDS, GONJ, IAG-Sphere

Use of Social Media for Awareness & Early Warning

Train youth to use social media responsibly, Develop local-language digital content for rapid information sharing

Inclusion and Equity

Participation of marginalized youth, including tribal, Dalit, rural, and differently-abled groups, Provide gender-sensitive training

Recommendations to Enhance Youth Role in Disaster Response

Recognition and Incentive

Introduce awards, fellowships, and scholarships, Offer internships and volunteer credits

Policy Integration and Monitoring

Include youth representation in District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs), Establish monitoring indicators on youth engagement in DRR within state and national disaster plans.

Conclusion

Youth in India are not just victims or passive recipients during disasters, they are proactive, resourceful contributors to response and recovery efforts. With proper training, support, and recognition, they can significantly strengthen India's disaster management system.

THANK YOU!