



Making Pakistan Resilient

**NATIONAL DISASTER RISK
MANAGEMENT FUND**

**MEDIA & COMMUNICATION
POLICY**

(Approved in 23rd Board Meeting held on 23rd June, 2021)



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Company Secretary



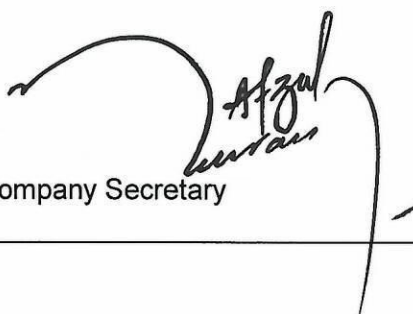
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General Terms¹

Content development

The process of researching, writing, gathering, organizing, and editing information for publication through various forms of media.

Disaster Risk Reduction

The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyze and manage causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events (UNISDR terminology).

Fund Implementing Partners (FIPs)

Any government or non-government entity or agency that has applied and been approved for project funding by NDRMF and is implementing the Fund's work aligned with its objectives for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Human Stories

A feature story that discusses an individual or community in an emotional way and presents people and their problems, concerns, or achievements in a way that brings about interest, sympathy or motivation in the reader or viewer. It may be "the story behind the story" about an event, organization or an interview with a survivor of a natural disaster or a beneficiary of NDRMF funded project(s).

Information

Any collection of data that is processed, analyzed, interpreted, classified or communicated in order to serve a useful purpose, present facts or represent knowledge in any medium or form. This includes presentation in electronic (digital), print, audio, video, image, and graphical, cartographic, physical sample, textual or numerical form.

Media

All forms of media (print, electronic, radio and digital/online).

Media Release

A press release, news release, media release, press statement or video release is a written or recorded communication directed at media representatives for the purpose of announcing something newsworthy.

Stakeholders

A person, group or organization that has interest or concern in NDRMF and can affect or be affected by NDRMF's actions, objectives and policies.

¹ The listed terms are general terms used in the document for information.



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1. Introduction

Pakistan's geo-physical conditions, climatic extremes, and high degrees of exposure and vulnerability has categorized Pakistan as a severely disaster-prone country. According to the Index For Risk Management (INFORM) 2018, Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), Pakistan's exposure to natural hazards and disasters risk rating stands at 6.4 out of 10, could be ranked between moderate to severe, as the country continues to suffer from a plethora of natural and human induced hazards that threaten to affect the lives and livelihood of its citizens.

According to a study carried out in 2016 by Verisk Maplecroft, a UK-based risk management company, Pakistan ranks globally at seventh position with around 136 million people (70% of its population) acutely exposed to natural disasters.

As a hazard-prone country with more people living in high-risk areas than ever before, it is increasingly important to pro-actively address natural and man-made hazards and the cumulative risks that they pose and strengthen the understanding and implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives. Realizing the need to focus and invest in Disaster Risk Management and Financing through pro-active strategies, the Government of Pakistan established the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) in 2015 to generate and consolidate resources for risk reduction or mitigation and to ensure the optimal utilization of available resources in a proactive manner.

2. Purpose

Information and knowledge play an extremely important role in disaster risk reduction and response. Good communication and exchange of critical disaster risk information and knowledge can enhance coordination and integration of stakeholders' actions in disaster mitigation and response. NDRMF aims to address the current gaps of information through strategic communication and improved access to information.

NDRMF has developed a detailed Communication Strategy that aims to provide factual and clear information to the public about hazards and what actions can be taken at the Federal and provincial government levels as well as corporate, community and household levels to reduce the risks of disaster. Likewise, it aims to educate the public about the different types of risks they face, discuss and motivate them to manage those risks. To support NDRMF's communication and outreach, it is important for NDRMF to develop and implement an effective Media Policy.

The purpose of this policy is to guide NDRMF's media liaison activities and specify procedures and protocols for dealing with media requests with the intention of informing NDRMF stakeholders and to ensure positive message consistency. The company's policy will also establish a chain of command in order to assign certain people to speak on behalf of the organization in any event or emergency.

3. Aim

By having a media policy and establishing a designated media spokesperson and contact, NDRMF can help prevent potential story inaccuracies, press leaks, or conflicting messages.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Accurate, timely and consistent information is provided to the media.
- The most qualified and appropriate spokesperson and/or sources of information at NDRMF are identified.



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- NDRMF's integrity and professional image is preserved.
- Issues are monitored and handled in an appropriate manner.

4. Policy Statement

It is in the best interest of NDRMF to adhere to a media policy that supports the Government of Pakistan's National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) 2012-2022 and National Flood Protection Plan (IV) (NFPP-IV) and the overall business strategy of the Fund, while simultaneously maintaining optimal relationships with the media. Branding and promoting the public image of the Fund facilitate the Government of Pakistan's ability to be successful at reducing disaster risks in Pakistan and strengthen the national resilience towards disasters.

This policy applies to all staff members of NDRMF and to all forms of media interaction, including verbal, written or electronic.

4.1 Policy Pillars

The media policy is based on NDRMF's Communication Strategy and aims to support the strategy's three key pillars:

1. **Profiling NDRMF:** Define NDRMF's vision, establishing the Fund's institutional identity, and building trust in the Fund by communicating "reasons to believe" to stakeholders and target audiences. Also ensure that the Fund speaks with a single vision and unifying voice to all stakeholders and audiences ("one Fund, one vision, one voice").
2. **Positioning NDRMF:** Differentiate NDRMF in scale and scope from other organizations engaging and collaborating within the disaster risk reduction landscape, including donor communities, UN agencies, international and national development organizations and public and private sector. This also includes establishing a role for NDRMF in facilitating discussion between stakeholders on disaster risk reduction financing and communicating investment opportunities to target audiences and key stakeholders as well as offering innovative views on the future direction of disaster risk reduction financing.
3. **"Call for Action":** NDRMF to use communication as a tool to engage and mobilize stakeholders and target audiences to act and engage with NDRMF and its projects and encourage specific actions such as promoting the business case for disaster risk reduction and financing, engaging potential partners for co-financing sub-projects and engage media for public awareness campaigns on the importance of disaster risk reduction and related investments.

5. Implementation Mechanism

The Chief Executive Officer will always be the approving authority for all matters pertaining to official dissemination of information to media. Under the supervision of the nominated/designated spokesperson approved by CEO, the Media department will be responsible for the implementation, compliance and monitoring of NDRMF's Media Policy. All General Managers will ensure that the policy is disseminated and understood by their respective departments to ensure compliance across the organization.



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5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Spokesperson:

- The designated officer shall perform duties as a nominated/designated spokesperson for NDRMF and is the primary official representative, who can speak directly to the media. However, the CEO will be the approving authority for all matters being disclosed to the media.

Media department

- Responsible for coordinating all interactions with the media.
- Responsible for drafting all media releases following input from relevant departments and obtaining approval from relevant authority to issue releases.
- Advise and assist NDRMF management and relevant staff/FIPs in responding to requisite information.
- Formulate, lead, implement and monitor all pro-active media and communications opportunities/campaigns.

NDRMF Staff/Employees

- Responsible for directing all media queries to NDRMF's Media department.
- Coordinate with Media department for all content/relevant information for official dissemination.
- Raise any potential media issues with the Media department.
- Comply with the department's code of conduct when dealing with the media.
- Identify and refer opportunities for pro-active and positive media stories and engagements to the Media department.
- Disseminate and sensitize FIPs on NDRMF's media policy and SOPs.

6. Guiding Principles

6.1 Dealing with Media

The Media department will coordinate and deal with all media queries and articles and rebuttals to be published:

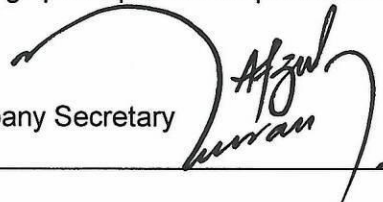
- All information that is provided to the media should be truthful, accurate, unambiguous, clear and factual, avoiding subjective contributions. Media responses are hence always "on the record".
- All media queries to departments or individual staff members are to be referred immediately to NDRMF's Media department, so that they can log the request, ascertain the nature of the query, seek relevant approval and organize the most appropriate response in liaison with the approving authority as well as log the response.
- Where a media organization requests information on a specific topic, the response will be provided to them exclusively in coordination with the relevant department and subject to approval from the approving authority.

6.2 Authorized Spokespersons

To ensure clarity in NDRMF's messages and the most appropriate responses to issues, the following guidelines are provided in selecting spokesperson for particular issues:



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Type of issue	Definition	Authorized Spokesperson/Chain of Command
Political issues	Involve matters of policy, NDRMF position, external liaison or dealings with government bodies or advocacy on behalf of the Ministry of Finance.	Nominated/Designated spokesperson approved by CEO
Policy and strategic issues	Issues involving NDRMF's dealings with external parties and NDRMF's long term vision for Disaster Risk Reduction and Financing in Pakistan	Nominated/Designated spokesperson approved by CEO
Operational issues	Issues relating to the day-to-day operation of NDRMF that do not involve Government policies. This includes NDRMF's normal programs and services.	Nominated/Designated spokesperson approved by CEO with input from relevant General Manager/Subject Specialist
Technical/Corporate issues	Issues requiring very specific, technical or detailed information to provide understanding on a complex topic. This does not apply to matters related to funded projects.	Nominated/Designated spokesperson approved by CEO with input from relevant General Manager/Subject Specialist
Special interest issues/human stories	Stories that typically focus on human interest matters, analysis or background that lend a human face to a story. These do not usually delve into operational issues or matters of NDRMF policy.	Nominated/Designated spokesperson approved by CEO with input from Subject Specialist (DM-level)

Table 1: Authorized Spokespersons

- NDRMF's media resources and support will be provided to the abovementioned authorized spokespersons as per requirements.
- Spokespersons have the opportunity to be briefed or have research conducted by all departments before any media engagement or public speaking.

6.3 Staff and the Media

NDRMF staff is encouraged to interact with the media, subject to the guidelines in this policy:

- NDRMF employees may speak to the media or use media platforms, write journals, articles and letters to the editor as private individuals with following guidance:
 - Their comments are not seen to represent NDRMF's position or policy.
 - Any content written related to NDRMF business, policy, activities or Fund Implementing Partners (FIPs) in the media, shall require approval of the CEO and nominated/designated spokesperson approved by the CEO in advance.



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- Relevant departments will work with the Media department to determine key messages and ensure any timelines or deadlines to meet media requests are delivered upon.
- NDRMF staff should not respond to public criticism of NDRMF, NDRMF staff, policy or activities through use of any media, unless approved by the approving authority.

6.4 Speaking Off the Record

- NDRMF Staff should be aware that all conversations with a member of the media, whether an interview is agreed upon or not, are treated as on the record, and can be attributed to them.
- Speaking off the record can be useful to provide information for the purposes of briefing on an issue in which NDRMF is not involved. However, this must be agreed to by the staff member and journalist prior to the discussion and subject to permission/approval from the approving authority.

6.5 Approaching the Media

- The Media and Communications department is responsible for issuing NDRMF's media releases, rebuttals and contacting journalists about potential stories.
- Staff members must refrain from approaching the media directly.
- If a FIP becomes aware of a potential media opportunity or issue, they are encouraged to contact and brief NDRMF's Media department. The department will work with relevant staff and FIPs to prepare any necessary information (such as media releases, background papers and kits) for approval before they are distributed or disseminated through any media platform.

6.6 Media Releases

- Only identified spokespersons (Table 1) will be quoted in media releases.
- To ensure maximum media coverage, media conferences or events of any sort should be scheduled between early to late afternoon (preferably before 17:00) between Mondays and Saturdays.
- At times it will be necessary for a large amount of information prepared by various departments to be released in a joint press statement on the same day. The Media department will discuss the immediacy of the information with the relevant departments and will determine the most appropriate date of release. If necessary, the timing of the releases will be referred to the CEO.
- NDRMF and FIPs should treat all media organizations equally and avoid preferential treatment. Media releases will be distributed to all media organizations at the same time.

6.7 Media Conferences

A media conference can be useful to stimulate interest and create awareness of a particular cause or to make an important announcement.

- Media conferences will be organized by NDRMF's Media department and approved by the CEO.
- A media invitation will be prepared announcing the media conference, the subject of the conference, brief background details, who will be speaking, time, date and location.
- If required, a media kit will be prepared for release at the commencement of the conference.



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6.8 Development of IEC Material

NDRMF's Media department will take lead in developing content for promotional and information purposes via an agreed relationship with media, advertising and communication agencies, which can be in the following forms:

- Regular radio and TV spots (Authorized spokesperson guidelines apply).
- Written special interest columns, feature/human stories, press releases, op-eds etc.
- Articles and press ads for newspapers, magazines or online news services.
- Other formats as agreed to by the CEO and Media department.

Editorial content relationships with media agencies must be organized and approved by the Media department. Additionally, preparing and disseminating communication material must be identified and included in NDRMF's annual media work plans.

6.9 Social Media

The Media department will take a lead in implementing a social media strategy with possible support from a selected advertising/communication firm for content development and campaigning. The key guiding principles are:

- Have a clear goal and strategy –For example, set goal to increase followers and audience engagement on Facebook by 25% in the next 6 months.
- Create an inclusive human voice using personal, engaging and positive voice/tone.
- Post regularly - Social media are built around frequent updates. There should be one post a day, however it is more important to post when there is interesting content.
- Encourage comments and reply quickly – Create posts that encourage users/followers to respond with own comments or questions about NDRMF's work or a topic that's of interest to them and relevant for NDRMF. When they do post, respond quickly - within 24 hours is best.
- Use pictures and videos to keep the audiences engaged.
- Promote NDRMF's social media pages on all NDRMF's official communication material, including letterheads, email signatures, website etc.

7. Media Archiving

The Media department is responsible for ensuring that all communication material, produced by NDRMF or FIPs, or other material relevant for NDRMF's work are logged and archived in a systematic manner. This will create a knowledge and information library for NDRMF, its partners as well as others who require access to reliable and useful information about Disaster Risk Reduction. The material will include media productions, photos, videos, news clippings, articles, toolkits, reports, research papers etc. The media archiving is part of NDRMF's Information and Knowledge Management strategy.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System

Monitoring and evaluation of NDRMF's communication and media engagement initiatives is an important mechanism to gauge, design and monitor NDRMF's communication and stakeholder engagement plan and its impact. This will initially be done through a perception survey to be carried out by August 2019. The survey will work as a baseline and enable NDRMF to:



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- Collect information to understand the current level of awareness and perception among key stakeholder groups about disaster risk reduction and financing.
- Explore awareness and social attitudes of the various stakeholder groups regarding NDRMF's establishment, mandate and role in developing national capacities towards making Pakistan resilient.
- Help understand the thinking and concerns of the stakeholder groups and how best to communicate by identifying gaps of information and recommending targeted messaging to specific stakeholder groups and use of most effective communication channels.
- Justify the need and budget for media and communication.
- Identify gaps and potential need to change NDRMF's media strategy.

NDRMF will carry out follow up surveys to continuously monitor and evaluate its media and communication work.

9. Privacy and Confidentiality

Personal or contact details of staff, FIP, spokesperson, or board members will not be provided to the media without prior consent. This also applies to the release of any information.

It should be noted that staff members, FIPs or contractors committing deliberate or negligent breaches may be subject to NDRMF's disciplinary processes or regulatory/criminal actions (where applicable and/or appropriate). Any such action will remain consistent with NDRMF's HRs and confidentiality policies and Govt. of Pakistan regulations².

² Article 14 (1) of the Constitution of Pakistan; Section 36 of Electronic Transactions Ordinance (2002); Section 17 of Freedom of Information Ordinance (2002); Pakistan Electronic Cybercrime Bill Pakistan (2015).



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