

Public Perception on Existing System of Urban Flood Hazard Management in North Colombo Region of Sri Lanka: A Case Study of 2016 Flood Affected Kolonnawa Urban Council

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Floods are one of the hydro-meteorological hazards that often record as severe catastrophic natural hazard in the world. Flooding ranks as the most damaging forms of natural disaster in Sri Lanka. Since the most of the populated urban spaces are being subjected to the flood hazard, urban flood hazard management has come to the fore in the field of disaster management. Many urban areas of the Western Province in Sri Lanka, especially North Colombo Region were severely affected due to the flood hazard in May 2016 and many issues occurred in different stages in flood hazard management process. By focusing on this hazard event as a case study, the main objective of this study was to identify the public perception on existing system of the urban flood hazard management in North Colombo region by focusing the four main stages of flood hazard management in Kolonnawa Urban Council. Mainly among the affected 9111 families belonging into 13 Grama Niladhari Divisions (GN Division) in Kolonnawa urban council area, two GN Divisions were selected purposively in terms of mostly affected GN Divisions. By giving 5% of quota for each GN Division altogether 50 sample size was defined and respondents were selected by using snow ball sampling technique. Collected data through observation, questionnaire and informal discussions were analysed descriptively. The research findings shows that, even though there were high preference of the respondents for flood hazard preparedness, awareness of the flood risk was reported less than 34% and mode of awareness of the people was reported almost based on self-experience of the people. The idea of the people about availability of the flood early warning system was negative as well as the confidence of the respondents on early warning system was varied from low confidence to no confidence. Although the respondents had positive perception on different institutional activities in the stage of emergency response, high level of negative responses were reported regarding the institutional activities mainly in the stages of rehabilitation and mitigation. For a Proper flood hazard management process in Kolonnawa urban council, the suggestions and recommendations were also emphasized in this study.

Keywords :urban; flood; hazard management; public perception; Sri Lanka
