

POSSIBILITIES AND CHALLENGES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESSES TO FACE THE NATURAL CATASTROPHE(CASE OF FLOOD IN SHKODER)

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Abstract

This paper is focused on the economic and social impact of the natural catastrophes. This paper confirms and analyses that how prepared, in the financial and spiritual way are we all to face, the situation like that of December 2010 in Shkoder, the floods, natural catastrophe. When there is a catastrophe that comes by nature or sometimes even by "bad management", how strong are we to face with it? How can we afford situation like this with the minimum pain and with the minimum cost? In December 2010, there were a lot of damages: lands were flooded; materials and food were destroyed, furniture and other domestic & business facilities were destroyed. There were considerable damages caused by this situation especially in Shkoder. The paper is treating the social- economic conditions in the area. This is a very difficult task, so much complex and in some cases quite confused issue. There is a need for a major reform by the local government, there is a necessity to grow up the efficiency and the quality of management. What should we do, to improve quality of life in those areas, reduce poverty and encourage businesses here. Nowadays, it is broadly accepted that local government in collaboration with the state government and with the businesses in the region can do a lot to improve the business life in these areas.

Key words: management, flooding, damage, insurance.

Introduction

It is obvious that the performance of a government is determined by economic and political factors. But sometimes this performance may be broken when there are some unexpected natural disasters.

Natural crises, typically natural disasters considered as "acts of God" are such environmental phenomena as, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tornadoes and hurricanes, floods, landslides, tsunamis, storms, and droughts that threaten life, property and the environment itself^{1,2}

Analysis of flooding is a very broad one. Usually, the analysis begins by examining the effects of floods and then different elements that have caused it. In modern times the floods come mainly from lack of attention to atmospheric observation, the main elements in the generation of hazardous heavy rainfall. From the official data it is confirmed that there were considerable damages caused by this situation especially in Shkodra. The heavy rains have increased the level over one meter in some areas.

There were a lot of damages caused by floods. Flooding and rainfall have created problems and sometimes difficulty economic situation of families and businesses. It was damaged the bed of Drini and Buna rivers, creating in this way serious problem not only for people affected by this situation but even for the city. The heavy rains have caused a critical situation so the authorities should supervise the situation in order to avoid an enormous catastrophe.

The history of flooding in Albania

Our country, from time to time is affected by flooding, but the problem is how much is done to protect them. In Albania, measurements of rainfall have been launched since 1888 in Shkodra, as one of the oldest cities of Albania. Later, in the early 30s of the twentieth century, have opened some climate stations, mainly for the measurement of rainfall. In period of the communist regime flood protection is one of the greatest achievements of our country.

The most over flooding periods were in these years:

In 1962-1963 there was a year of rainfall and a lot of flooding.

In December 1970 – January 1971 there was flooding from the Vjosa river.

In 1976 within a night from a very strong storm was damaged a lot the Adriatic beaches.

In 2003 there was flooding by the Gjader river.

In 2009, Gjanica river has caused a lot of damages. It has flooded twice.

Historically, politics and crisis go hand-in-hand.

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Demographic situation in Shkoder

Demographic indicators represent a powerful instrument of management, also urban and interurban management, between municipalities and within municipalities. Recognizing the city's population, its characteristic, means to recognize the elements of demographics management which are closely related with other economic and social variables. Demographics should occupy a significant place in the scientific field and within it

The presentation and analyzing of the situation of natural disasters caused by flooding will not be complete, if the actors will not do a demographic analysis of these areas. As a result of the new conception of the way of life we have a lot of movements of population. This population has created problem because they have broken up demographic structure because they have build their houses in places not suitable for living.

Management model

Successfully a situation like this requires an understanding of how to handle it in fact before it occurs.

Management planning of it deals with providing the best response of it.

- The diagnosis of the impending trouble or the danger signals

- Choosing appropriate turnaround strategy.

- Implementation of the change process and its monitoring.

Central and local government should take into account "risk assessment" of the flood that is a process scientifically based in several stages as: identification, assessment and risk characterization.

And also they should considered "risk management" that is a process separate from risk assessment, the evaluation of alternative policies in consultation with interested entities, considering risk and other acceptable factors.

The team members will act more quickly and effectively.

The balance of damages

Because of these heavy grounds there were flooded lots of lands and a lot of damages were caused

- The inhabitants were isolated in their houses and they used boats to get out.
- The families did not accept to leave their houses and the situation was aggravated as the rains kept on falling
- They did not left their houses as they were afraid of the burglars,
- They had problems with their health, because it was wet and very cold
- They had lost all the material and food that they gathered during summer time.
- The materials and food that was used for the animals during the winter was destroyed.
- The children were in difficulties because of the cold weather.

Responsible actors and potential collaborators are: Ministry of Economy, Commerce and Energy; Ministry of Environment, Forests and Water Administration, Ministry of Agriculture and Food and other local actors.

Flooding was caused mainly by the:

- ✚ Impact climate
- ✚ Intensive and prolonged rainfall
- ✚ Human impact relating to the management
- ✚ Interventions in Buna river and even in other rivers like Drini and Kiri river.
- ✚ Intervention in the periphery of the lake

What is the role of insurance in these circumstances?

In such cases insurance companies pay almost no damages, leaving the burden entirely to state. In fact not actually indemnified man because nobody actually is insure.....

Let's paraphrase, Milton Freedman the economist, would say that nothing is free. Compensation as insurance, as it has cost state and these costs should be paid. The only change between two models are:

- What is the cost, as distinguished Turgoja, visible and what invisible;
- Which is, in aggregate, the cheapest solution, and
- Who pays the compensation, those who benefit or third parties that have no connection at all?

Actually we have an insurance market that functions only for vehicles, or health, but not of such a major event, which have been the main reason in the world of creation of this industry.

Albanian people is very generous in such cases. The funds raised voluntarily, have contributed to the improvement of the situation. These aids come in time and actually serve.

The practice is proving dramatically that only government intervention can afford the fiscal burden, leaving aside the

economic theories. In Albania the insurance against natural disasters is low. In the world actually has laws for insurance against natural disasters, it protects governments not to use contingency funds.

Methodology

The aim of this paper is to show that how important is to be prepared and well organized to face different difficulties in communities.

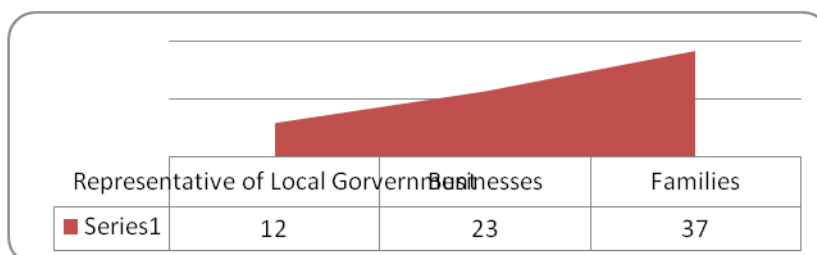
The methodology of study consists in a combination of the primary and secondary method research.

Primary research consists in interviews with representatives by the local governments or let say representatives by the public sector, or representatives by the different businesses and some of the families that had really suffer by the flooding. The interview is done contacting directly, face to face to them or with some of them we have use even e-mail.

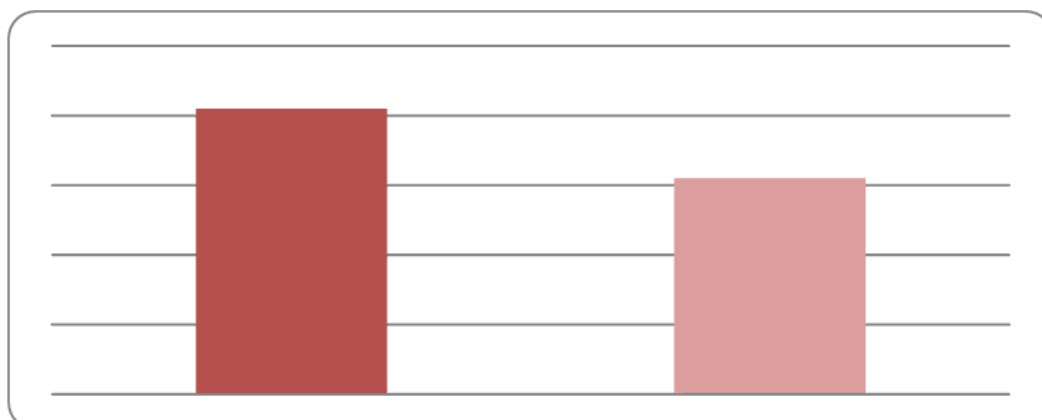
Secondary data consists on literature such as books, magazines, newspapers, previous studies,

Analyses of the questionnaires

1. In this study there were interviewed 76 people, 38 of them were female and 38 men, but we've got answers by 72 people. 12 of them were representative by the local government, public sector, with different statuses, while 23 were from different businesses, most of them small and medium businesses, and the others 37 people from different areas.

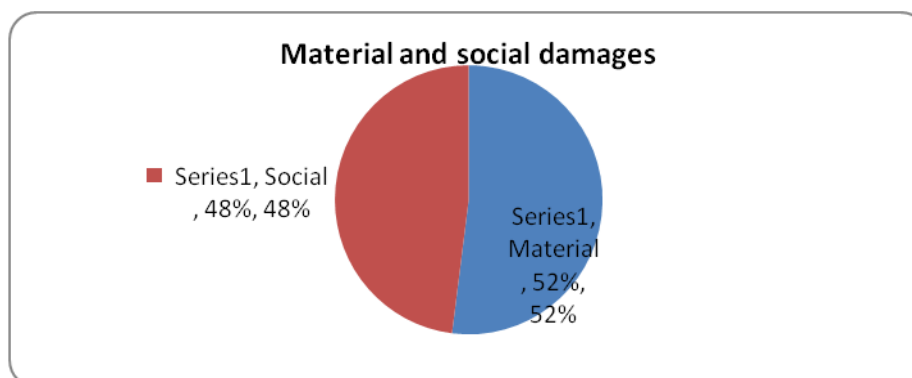


Graph 1. The graph above shows us how many people were interviewed by local Government, businesses and others



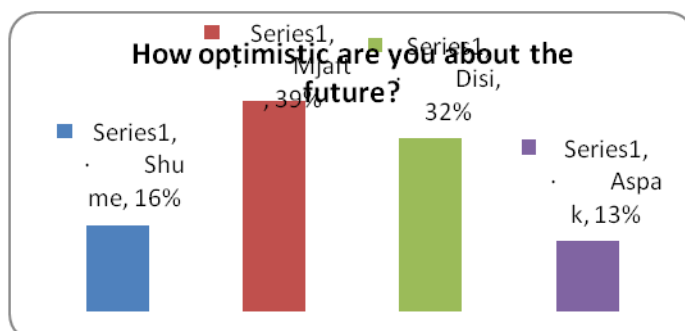
Graph 2. This graph clearly shows that how ready is the community to face the situations like this one?

Almost 56 % of them, 41 to 72 were capable to face situation like this,, but the rest of them said that it was so hard for them to confront with similar situation like that of December 2010. Pertaining to the first group they said that they can support situation like this because already they are prepared that similar situation maybe repeated so by themselves they have take measurements, they had invest in their houses and businesses and also have left aside, financial assets to be able to support. But for the others was hard, because they had spent a lot of money in their new houses that were build without any approved plan



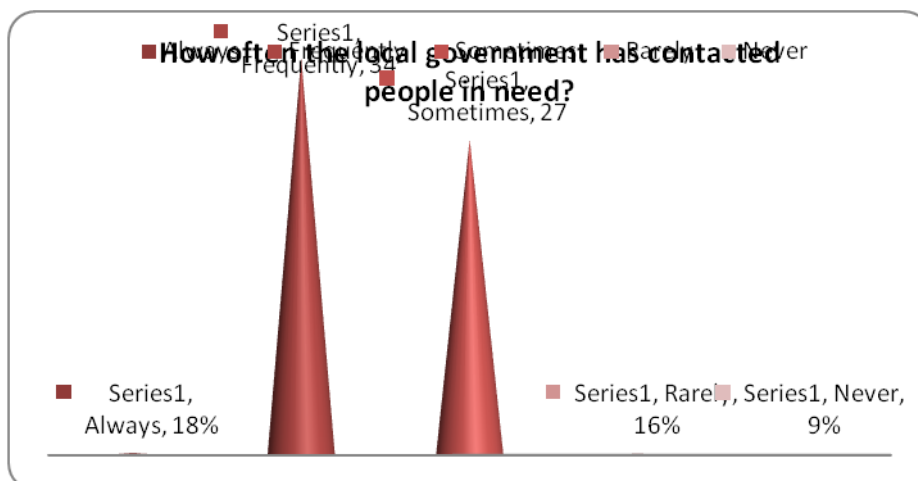
Graph 3. Material and social damages

The graphics below shows if people think that were there more material damages compared with that of social damages? According to the survey it resulted that 100 % of interviewers asked answered that there were a lot of material and social damages. As we can see, the mostly accept material damages, 52 percent of them accept that for them is hard to support all their lost. For some of them almost 48% but the situation like that in December 2010 it was really hard. As some of them mention, when you see your children, your family, your house and your important things surrounded by the water it was really stressing.



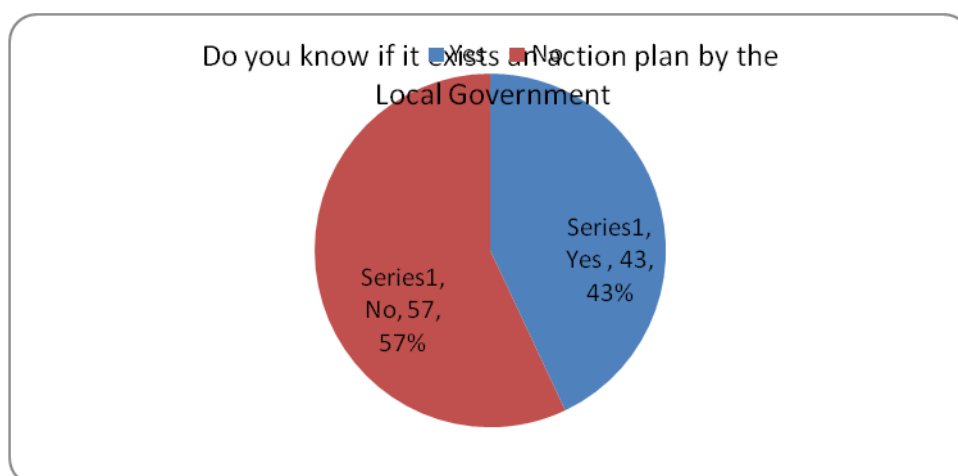
Graph 4. Optimistic about the future

The graphs above shows us that most of the people hope that in the future the situation will be improved. There were almost 13 % of the respondents that were really discouraged by consequences that they had last winter, so for them was no hope. But most of them, almost 39% of them were optimistic, while 16 % of them were a lot of optimistic about the future because they in groups with even with some other actors such as representatives from the local governments, businesses even in the other areas, they were part of the action plan in situation of the natural disaster, for Shkoder District. So knowing the plan that is prepared for elimination and reduction of flooding they feel optimistic. The problem is to act before the problems are created, otherwise it would be even more difficult to support people in need in these situations.



Graph 5. Contact that local government had with people of flooding areas.

As we can see by the chart above, it is clearly that representatives from the local government were present in the days that were flooding. They helped people in need with necessary staff. They were present even with some representatives by the central Government. Their presence helped them even to be secure and safe for the future.



Graph 6. The existence of the action plan.

As it can be noticed by the chart, it shows that people, almost 43 % of them have no knowledge about the

action plan that exists. This shows the lack of dedication of the public sectors to involve people from the

community in improving the situation and implementing the action plan in collaboration with other actores. Most of them knows that there is a commitment of all actors like public sectors, private businesses, journalists, engineers and others, that are involved in projects. Lets

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMANDATIONS

Based on the best experiences in the world, that in these cases all actors discuss and made plans how to improve the situation and how to act in the future, and to find the best solutions. Effective management of the consequences of catastrophes would appear to be a more significant factor than whether catastrophe insurance hedges the economic impact of the catastrophe.

Policies should be accompanied by social agreement with education and awareness of its population.

- Has to be a strong collaboration through all actors as center and local Government, businesses, experts engineers etc.

- Building a list with essentials problems that have to be given a solution and also preparing a short plan (emergence) and long plan to accomplish them in time fulfilled

hope that this plan will be applied and improve the situation.

- The local government has to identify all building, to evidence the construction made without permit ion and then has to do the deterioration of the authentication.

Intervene in the embankment along the flow of Buna, Drini and Kiri or other rivers in Albania. Must be done the cleaning of the flows of Buna River from solid.

Cleaning of existing drainage channels, restoration of those damaged and construction of new drainage channels.

Retaining and increasing the potential pumping stations.

Moving the part of populations from the areas with the high risk of flooding.

Those who take the decision must have in their structure a specialist. Things shouldn't be done in the last stage and then to remind to specialists.

Establishment of a guaranteed basic for the successful implementation of the plan.

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