



**KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**

**HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**  
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Policy, Research and Product Development

# **KZN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS DISASTER MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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## DEFINITIONS:

**'Department'** refers to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Human Settlements.

**'Disaster'** refers to the serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing or threatening to cause, widespread human, material or environmental losses which render the affected community unable to cope using its own resources. Disasters are only disasters because they impact and affect the way in which we live. They can be caused by the impact of a natural occurrence on human beings or by human beings themselves

**'Disaster Mitigation'** refers to structural and non-structural measures that are undertaken to limit the adverse impact of natural hazards, environmental degradation and technological hazards on vulnerable areas, communities and households. These efforts can target the hazard or threat itself.

Disaster mitigation efforts can also target people who are at risk, by reducing their vulnerability to a specific threat (for instance, promoting community responsibility for controlling fire risk in an informal settlement).

**'Disaster Response'** refers to the provision of assistance or intervention before, during or immediately after a disaster to meet the life preservation, property and basic subsistence needs of those people affected. It can be of an immediate, short-term or protracted duration.

**'Disaster Recovery'** focuses on the decisions and actions taken after a disaster to restore lives and livelihoods, services, infrastructure and the natural environment. In addition, by developing and applying risk reduction measures at the same time, the likelihood of a repeated disaster event is reduced.

**'Emergency'** can be seen as a local event within a community that affects a limited number of people or property. An emergency could require extreme measures to correct and cope with, but can usually be managed by the community itself, using its own resources.

**'Hazard'** can be defined as a potentially damaging physical event, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation. Typical examples of hazards can be absence of rain (leading to drought) or the abundance thereof (leading to floods). Hazards can be the creation of man or the environment.

**'Preparedness'** contributes to disaster risk reduction through measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of hazards, including timely and effective early warnings and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations. Preparedness enables organs of state and other institutions involved in disaster risk management, the private sector, communities and individuals to mobilise, organise, and provide relief measures to deal with an impending or current disaster, or the effects of a disaster. Preparedness differs from prevention and mitigation, as it focuses on activities and measures taken in advance of a specific threat or disaster.

**'Risk'** is usually associated with the human inability to cope with a particular situation. In terms of disaster management, it can be defined as the probability of harmful consequences, or expected losses, death, injury, damage to property and the environment, jobs, disruption of economic activity or social systems. Hazards will affect communities differently in terms of ability and resources with which to cope. Poorer communities will be more at risk than others.

**'Vulnerability'** can be seen as, the ability a person or community has, to predict, cope with, or avoid and recover from, the consequences of a hazard or disaster. Marginalised, poorer and over-populated communities are more vulnerable and less able to cope with disasters.

## **ABBREVIATIONS:**

COGTA	-	COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS
DMA	-	DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACT NO. 57 OF 2002
DMF	-	DISASTER MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK
DRA	-	DISASTER RISK ASSESSMENT
PDRA	-	PROVINCIAL DISASTER RISK ASSESSMENT
PDMP	-	PROVINCIAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN
KZNDHS	-	KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
MEC	-	MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
SAWS	-	SOUTH AFRICAN WEATHER SERVICES
SCM	-	SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, KwaZulu-Natal has been experiencing quite a significant number of disaster events of both natural and anthropogenic origins. These disasters are related to drought, floods, environmental degradation, epidemics and social unrest. For example, between 2017 and 2022, there were 3 major flood related disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic and social unrest. The recurrence of disaster events and the associated disaster impacts have placed enormous risk on vulnerable groups within the society and housing infrastructure. In the aftermath of disasters, communities often face situations that require creative short-term and long-term housing solutions for populations with different geographic, infrastructure and socioeconomic challenges. Effectively moving affected beneficiaries and communities into post-disaster housing is a critical step toward long-term recovery. Hence the urgent need to design a policy that would outline the development of standard instruments for disaster prevention, preparedness as well as response and recovery is crucial.

The KZN Department of Human Settlements developed the following Disaster Management Policy in line with the Disaster Management Act of 2002 and the National Disaster Management Framework to provide a structured and streamlined procedure of attending to housing related disaster situations in the Province.

## **2. PURPOSE**

The main purpose of the policy is to enable the Department to:

- a) Provide a structured and streamlined process and procedure to effectively respond to disaster events.
- b) Establish communities, housing developments, beneficiaries and informal settlements most vulnerable and at risk of disasters.
- c) Provide temporary sheltered accommodation, clothing and feeding arrangements for persons evacuated, or made temporarily homeless.
- d) Restore normality to the affected community within a reasonable timescale, dependent on the seriousness of the incident.
- e) Focus on strengthening community capacities by creating awareness.

## **3. POLICY PRINCIPLES**

The principle and the objectives of the KZNDHS Disaster Management Policy will enable the Department to be more prepared and participative in the prevention of disasters and disaster risk management with the aim to:

- a) Promote disaster risk management as a multi-sector responsibility.
- b) Allocate necessary resources for disaster risk reduction and management.
- c) Enforce the implementation of disaster risk management plans.
- d) Facilitate participation from civil society and the private sector.
- e) Protect and reduce the loss of human lives and properties.
- f) Contribute to the wellbeing and safety of citizens and their properties.
- g) Determine ways to prevent disasters from affecting impoverished and vulnerable households.
- h) Minimize the loss of homes and livelihoods through identification of best practices.
- i) Develop proactive solutions in preparation for disasters (natural, pandemic, civil unrest).

#### 4. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The policy shall apply to the various categories of disasters tabled below. One of the prevalent disasters experienced in KwaZulu-Natal is climate-related which is the main focus of this policy.

<b>DISASTER CATEGORIES</b>		
<b>Broad Hazard Category</b>		<b>Specific Disaster Risk Category</b>
<b>Hydrometeorological</b>	Climate-related	Extreme weather (Flooding, hail, hurricanes/heavy winds)
	Hydrological	Riverine flooding Estuarine flooding Coastal flooding/storm surges Urban flooding Hydrological drought Agricultural drought
<b>Geological</b>		Seismic risks and earthquakes Rock falls and landslides
<b>Biological</b>	Fires	Urban fringe fires, Veld fires
	Epidemic	Humans, Livestock
<b>Civil unrest</b>		Social unrest, looting, criminal

In line with the Emergency Housing Programme, the policy will apply to emergency situations of exceptional housing need, such situations being referred to as “Emergencies”. An emergency exists when the MEC, on application by the Department, agrees that persons affected owing to situations beyond their control:

- a) Have become homeless as a result of a declared state of disaster, where assistance is required, including cases where initial remedial measures have been taken in terms of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002) by government, to alleviate the immediate crisis situation;
- b) Have become homeless as a result of a situation which is not declared as a disaster, but destitution is caused by extraordinary occurrences such as floods, strong winds, severe rainstorms and/or hail, snow, devastating fires, earthquakes and/or sinkholes or large disastrous industrial incidents;
- c) Live in dangerous conditions such as on land being prone to dangerous flooding, or land which is dolomitic, undermined at shallow depth, or prone to sinkholes and who require emergency assistance;
- d) Live in the way of engineering services or proposed services such as those for water, sewerage, power, roads or railways, or in reserves established for any such purposes and who require emergency assistance;
- e) Are displaced or threatened with imminent displacement as a result of a state of civil conflict or unrest, or situations where pro-active steps ought to be taken to forestall such consequences;
- f) Live in conditions that pose immediate threats to life, health and safety and require emergency assistance.

- g) Are in a situation of exceptional housing need, which constitutes an Emergency that can reasonably be addressed only by resettlement or other appropriate assistance, in terms of this Programme.

## 5. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The policy is informed by the following legislation:

### 5.1 THE NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACT (NO. 57 OF 2002)

The Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002 defines the roles of national, provincial and local government in disaster management. The Disaster Management Act focuses on speeding up response times to ensure that disasters are dealt with efficiently and effectively by providing clear guidelines for the classification of disasters and the declaration of a state of disaster. In simple terms, the Disaster Management Act is about all spheres of government, all sectors within government, communities and businesses working together to reduce the risk of disasters and to ensure that arrangements are in place to minimise the impact of disasters on the community.

#### 5.1.1 The Act provides for:

- a) An integrated and co-ordinated disaster risk management policy that focuses on preventing or reducing the risk of disasters, mitigating the severity of disasters, preparedness, rapid and effective response to disasters, and post-disaster recovery.
- b) The establishment of national, provincial and municipal disaster management centres.
- c) Disaster risk management volunteers; and
- d) matters relating to these issues.

The Act identifies three categories of disasters, namely a Local, Provincial or National disaster. These are explained below:

A **local disaster** is one that affects a single metropolitan, district or local municipality only and the municipality concerned, or, if it is a district or local municipality, that municipality either alone or with the assistance of local municipalities in the area of the district municipality, is able to deal with it effectively.

A **provincial disaster** is one that affects:

- a) more than one metropolitan or district municipality in the same province;
- b) a single metropolitan or district municipality in the province, and that metropolitan municipality, or that district municipality with the assistance of the local municipalities within its area, is unable to deal with it effectively; or
- c) a cross-boundary municipality in respect of which only one province exercises executive authority, and the province concerned is able to deal with it effectively.

A **national disaster** is one that affects–

- a) more than one province; or
- b) a single province which is unable to deal with it effectively.

Until a disaster is classified, the disaster must be regarded as a local disaster.

### 5.2 THE NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The national disaster management framework is the legal instrument specified by the Act to address such needs for consistency across multiple interest groups, by providing a coherent, transparent and inclusive policy on disaster management appropriate for the country as a whole' (section 7(1)).

The national disaster management framework recognises a diversity of risks and disasters that occur in South Africa, and gives priority to developmental measures that reduce the vulnerability of disaster-prone areas, communities and households. Also, in keeping with international best practice, the national disaster management framework places explicit emphasis on the disaster risk reduction concepts of disaster prevention and mitigation as the core principles to guide disaster risk management in South Africa.

The national disaster management framework also informs the subsequent development of provincial and municipal disaster management frameworks and plans, which are required to guide action in all spheres of government.

### **5.3 KZNDHS COMPLIANCE WITH THE ACT AND FRAMEWORK**

The following physical controls and measures must be in place in order to demonstrate compliance:

- a) Establish a Disaster Management Technical Committee;
- b) Classify and record disasters;
- c) Prepare disaster management plans;
- d) Establish a unit for volunteers for disaster management;
- e) Identify threats and risks in a community;
- f) Identify vulnerabilities in a community;
- g) Prioritise risks;
- h) Develop risk treatment actions and incorporate into the integrated development plan for action;
- i) Train communities to ensure community awareness and engagement;
- j) Ensure that contingency plans, protocols and procedures are in place to address incidents and disasters;
- k) Develop plans and actions for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of communities at risk; and
- l) Develop excellent co-operation and relationships between all parties.

## **6. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

### **6.1 DEPARTMENT OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS (COGTA)**

COGTA would play a key role in providing assistance and support during times of disaster:

- a) Issuing of notices to KZN Human Settlements.
- b) Coordinating disaster response efforts across different government agencies, as well as working with local communities to ensure that they have the resources they need to respond to disasters effectively.
- c) Providing funding for emergency services, coordinating the deployment of rescue teams, and assisting with the provision of basic necessities such as food, water, and shelter.
- d) Assisting KZN Human Settlements to develop and implement disaster management plans that can help to mitigate the impact of future disasters.

### **6.2 KZN DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**

- a) Effectively implement disaster management plans. KZN Human Settlements is responsible for developing and implementing disaster management plans that can help to mitigate the impact of future disasters within its jurisdiction. This might involve working with local communities to identify potential risks and vulnerabilities, and developing strategies to address these issues and ensure that everyone is prepared in the event of an emergency
- b) Coordinating emergency response efforts: During a disaster, KZN Human Settlements will be responsible for coordinating the emergency response efforts of different government agencies



and stakeholders within its jurisdiction. This might involve working closely with local municipalities, emergency services, and other relevant organizations to ensure that resources are deployed effectively and efficiently.

- c) Ensuring the provision of basic shelter: KZN Human Settlements is responsible for ensuring that people affected by the disaster have access to shelter which involves setting up temporary shelters, providing emergency supplies, and coordinating the distribution of relief aid.
- d) Educating and raising awareness: KZN Human Settlements is responsible for educating and raising awareness among communities within its jurisdiction about the risks and potential impacts of disasters. This might involve providing information about emergency preparedness, evacuation procedures, and other key aspects of disaster management.

### **6.3 MUNICIPALITIES**

- a) Developing and implementing disaster management plans: Municipalities are responsible for developing and implementing their own disaster management plans, in line with national and provincial frameworks. These plans should identify potential risks and vulnerabilities within their jurisdiction, as well as outlining the measures that will be taken to mitigate the impact of disasters and respond effectively in the event of an emergency.
- b) Coordinating emergency response efforts: Municipalities are responsible for coordinating emergency response efforts within their jurisdiction, including the deployment of emergency services, search and rescue operations, and the provision of relief aid to affected communities.
- c) Providing public information and education: Municipalities are responsible for providing the public with information about the risks and potential impacts of disasters, as well as educating communities about emergency preparedness and response measures.
- d) Ensuring the provision of basic necessities: Municipalities are responsible for ensuring that people affected by disasters within their jurisdiction have access to basic necessities such as food, water, shelter, and medical care. This might involve setting up temporary shelters, providing emergency supplies, and coordinating the distribution of relief aid.
- e) Conducting post-disaster assessments: Municipalities are responsible for conducting post-disaster assessments to determine the extent of the damage caused by a disaster, as well as identifying any additional needs for relief and recovery efforts.

## 7. KZNDHS DISASTER RISK AND RESPONSE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

Disaster management has mainly been dealt with as a post disaster activity focusing mainly on rescue, relief and rehabilitation, however a proactive approach must be implemented to facilitate a paradigm shift from rescue and relief operations to disaster prevention and preparedness. This section of the policy outlines the two main categories to ensure an effective disaster management procedure.

### 7.1 PREVENTION, MITIGATION AND PREPAREDNESS

#### 7.1.1 DISASTER RISK ASSESSMENTS (DRA)

KZNDHS must undertake a Provincial Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA) in conjunction with sector departments and local municipalities. (Disaster Risk Assessments requires an in-house specialist to provide on-going input and the Department must define the terms of reference that specify feedback, consultation, skills transfer and capacity-building processes by the specialist commissioned).

A PDRA must be undertaken in the following instances:

- a) As part of the planning process for a housing development, for example, assessing the likelihood of weather, flooding, subsidence and other threats damaging the structure, so that these can be factored into the construction specifications.
- b) As part of environmental impact assessments for large-scale developments that may increase disaster risk.
- c) In all informal settlements characterized by recurrent small and medium-size disaster losses that undermine assets and livelihoods.
- d) In rural housing projects, to identify communities and households most at risk and to focus or target preparedness and response actions.

**The process tabled below must be followed for assessing disaster risks:**

<b>STAGE 1</b>	The Department must identify the specific disaster risk to be assessed in a specific area. For example, an assessment of all informal settlements must be done to identify potential risks that may affect the dwelling such as flooding, fire, mud slides etc.
<b>STAGE 2</b>	The second stage involves analyzing the disaster risk concerned to determine whether the resulting risk is a priority or not.
<b>STAGE 3</b>	The third stage requires an evaluation of the disaster risk being assessed – usually in relation to other risks. It involves undertaking much more comprehensive assessments of specific threats and establishes priorities for action.
<b>STAGE 4</b>	The fourth stage is required to inform ongoing disaster risk assessment and planning. It involves monitoring disaster risks and the effectiveness of risk reduction initiatives. It also involves updating disaster risk assessment information and disseminating this information to all stakeholders.

**Scope of the disaster risk assessments:**

- a) An audit of past significant events and events classified as disasters must be done. A review of previous small and medium-size events as well as declared disasters, where relevant, can identify areas and communities most at risk and help focus more detailed disaster risk assessment efforts.

- b) Consult with community members and traditional leaders in areas affected by past events for information on frequency and severity of events classified as disasters, significant events and recurrent small-scale occurrences. Locate these events on a user-friendly map and record them on a graph to show seasonality/change over time.
- c) Consult with long-standing members of emergency services and sector departments, the South African Red Cross Society, or other humanitarian assistance organisations who can remember or have recorded ten years or more of past disaster responses.
- d) Consult with specialist research commissions, universities and the private sector and obtain existing or past research reports.

### **7.1.2 PROVINCIAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN (PDMP)**

A comprehensive Disaster Management Plan must be developed for the province. The scope of the plan must include the following:

- a) The allocation and co-ordination of responsibilities to the various role players.
- b) Prompt disaster response and relief.
- c) Disaster recovery and rehabilitation focused on risk elimination or mitigation.
- d) The procurement of essential goods and services.
- e) The establishment of strategic communication links.
- f) The dissemination of information.

### **7.1.3 AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION**

Public awareness and education regarding the realities of climate variability, status of natural resources and vulnerability, must be created as a mitigation measure.

- a) Awareness programmes for communities must be performed on a quarterly basis by the Consumer Education Directorate that will focus on disaster risk awareness, disaster risk reduction, volunteerism and preparedness. Communities must be given the opportunity to modify and enhance awareness programmes through the inclusion of indigenous knowledge, practices and values, and the incorporation of local experience of disasters and disaster risk management. Awareness programmes developed during quiet periods will form a sound basis for the development of early warning systems.
- b) The GIS Directorate must prepare risk maps, updated regularly and maintained, that may be used to keep communities informed.
- c) It is imperative that traditional leaders, as custodians of indigenous knowledge, play an active role at the local level and that they be made aware of disaster risk management.
- d) The role of the media during disasters must be defined and managed through a consultative process involving the media, role players involved in response and recovery efforts, and communities routinely affected by disasters or impending disasters. The Communications unit must establish and manage ongoing relations with relevant local and national media. Communication must be done in line with the Departments Communication Plan.

### **7.1.4 FLEET MANAGEMENT**

Acquisition of appropriate vehicles must be prioritized to ensure that essential Departmental officials are able to effectively reach destinations affected by disasters. At least two (2) appropriate vehicles must be available. This will allow for officials to attend to a call-out in a timely manner and perform their tasks efficiently.

### **7.1.5 ANNUAL UPDATE OF SUPPLIER DATABASE**

The Supply Chain Management (SCM) Directorate must annually invite a minimum of 2 TRU service providers and/or suppliers to register on the Department's Built Environment Database. This will ensure that there will be sufficient suppliers to meet the material supply demand during the recovery period.

### **7.1.6 IDENTIFICATION OF LAND AND SUITABLE RELOCATION FACILITIES PRE-DISASTER**

The Department of Rural and Land reform offers information of State-owned land for acquisition through their land inventory data base system. The Provincial State Land Disposal Committee (PSLD) must be consulted in cases where a tribal or community authority own the land desired for acquisition. It is important to route consultation through the PSLD when land is owned by the National Department of Public Works.

### **7.1.7 EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS**

Early warnings are designed to alert areas, communities, households and individuals to an impending or imminent significant event or disaster so that they can take the necessary steps to avoid or reduce the risk and prepare for an effective response.

Although weather warnings are issued by the South African Weather Services (SAWS), the Department must communicate precautionary measures on their social media platforms to inform individuals, beneficiaries and communities of any such impending disaster and the method of communication should they be affected.

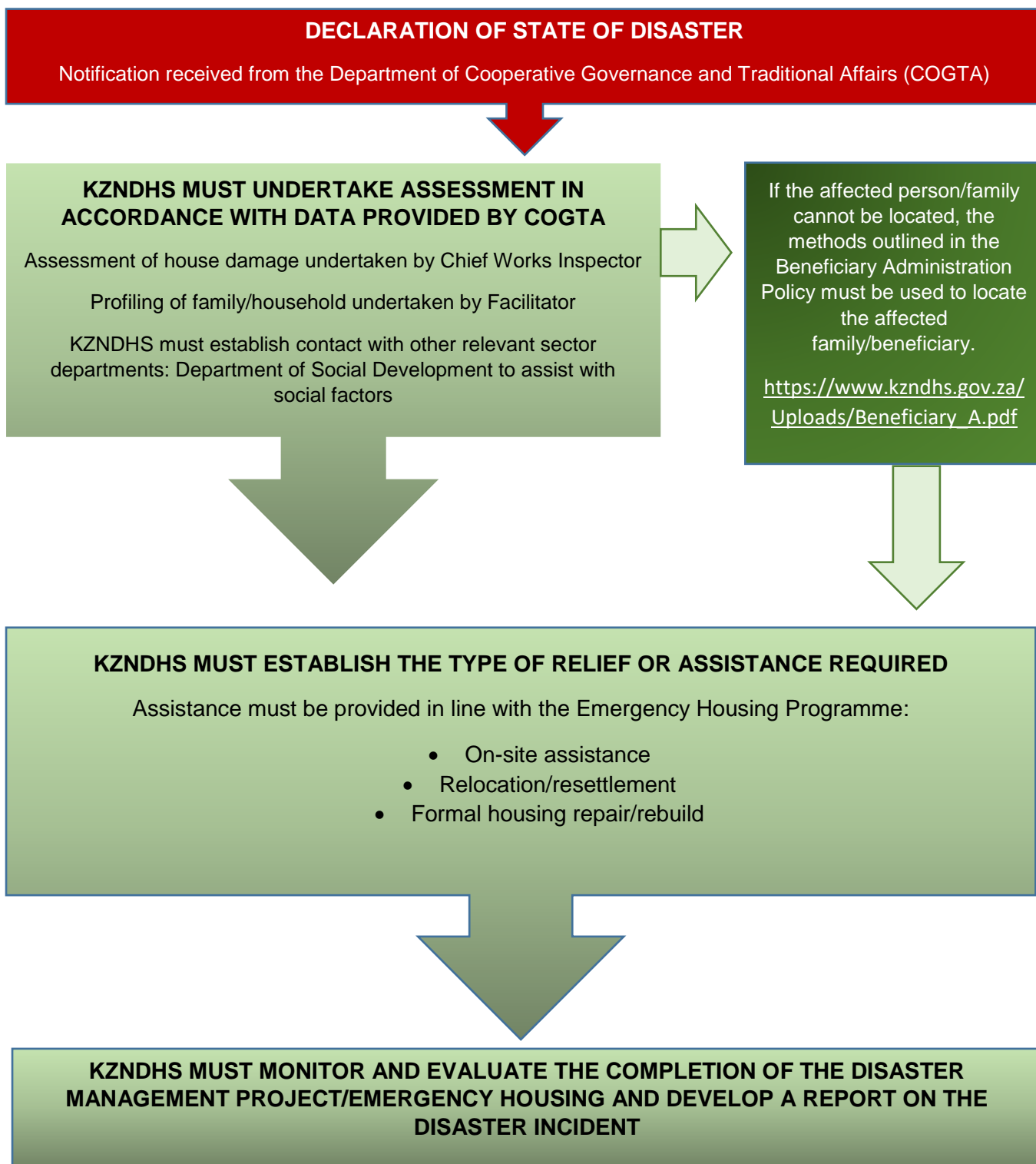
### **7.1.8 EXTRA-ESSENTIAL RESOURCES**

- a) As a method of preparedness, the Department must consider the procurement and use of camera drones to monitor the extent of damage to a development or informal settlement prior to visiting the site. Satellite imagery, geospatial data, and crowd-sourcing from localities and partners to gather initial estimates of disaster impact is also recommended.
- b) An application (APP) compatible with mobile, tablet or iPad devices should be developed and implemented to allow for works inspectors to rapidly and efficiently document incidents. The APP should incorporate the following functionalities:
  - ✓ Capture real-time data (date and time of inspection)
  - ✓ Capture the beneficiary/household details
  - ✓ Capture the GPS coordinates of the site and unit
  - ✓ Capture a description of the damage
  - ✓ Capture and upload on-site images of the damage to the APP
  - ✓ Set up automated notifications - Receive and send automatic notifications to relevant personnel regarding the incident investigation

This will also aid in the record keeping of disaster events and disaster damage that can be used to inform policy development.

## 7.2 DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

### 7.2.1 STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)



## **8. ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROVINCIAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (PDMC)**

As per the Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002, it is mandatory for a Provincial Department to establish a dedicated Disaster Management Committee for the Province. It is the responsibility of the Disaster Management Committee to ensure the compilation and maintenance of a corporate disaster management policy, as well as the relevant supportive hazard specific plans.

The Disaster Management Committee will consist of a representative from each of the below-mentioned Directorates and must convene at least quarterly.

The Disaster Management Committee shall be responsible to make recommendations for changes that are considered appropriate and the verification of the required support documents, resources, training, and facilities to ensure that the Disaster Management Plan is maintained. The PDMC will also have the responsibility of assigning project teams to address specific risks and develop risk-specific plans.

### **8.1 POLICY, RESEARCH & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**

The Policy, Research and Product Development Directorate will be responsible for the following:

- a) Assisting in the development of the Disaster Management Plan.
- b) Undertaking research related to disaster management
- c) Developing policies and guidelines to guide the implementation of disaster management programmes in the province.
- d) Reviewing the Disaster Management Policy and other related policy guidelines/plans as and when required.
- e) Hosting a minimum of two (2) Alternative Building Technology (ABT) sessions per annum to keep updated on new market trends and products that may be considered to assist the Department identifying creative housing solutions.
- f) To represent the Department in meetings, workshops and forums and provide reports.
- g) To assist other components in making provisions for disaster management within their existing policy and practices.

### **8.2 INTEGRATED PLANNING**

The Integrated Planning Directorate will be responsible for the following:

- a) During the planning stage, assessing the likelihood of weather, flooding, subsidence and other threats damaging the structure, so that these can be factored into the construction specifications.
- b) Ensuring that environmentally sustainable measures are considered and included during the planning and designing phases of a project.

### **8.3 PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

- a) The Project Management Directorate must plan accordingly for disaster relief projects and take into account the rapidly changing environment.
- b) They will be responsible for working with sector departments and municipalities to undertake disaster risk assessments within their jurisdiction.
- c) Provide input in the development of Disaster Management Plans.

### **8.4 MUNICIPAL SUPPORT AND CONSUMER EDUCATION**

The Municipal Support and Consumer Education Directorate will be responsible for awareness and educational programs on disaster management to municipalities and communities including traditional leaders.

## **8.5 SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT**

The Supply Chain Management Directorate will be responsible for the following:

- a) Updating the Supplier Database on an annual basis to ensure that there are sufficient suppliers to meet the material demand during disaster events.

## **8.6 COMMUNICATIONS**

The Communications Directorate will be responsible for ensuring that there is clear communication with various role players, media and the public.

## **9. EFFECTIVE DATE**

The effective date of this policy will be the date of signature by the Honorable MEC.

## **10. MONITORING & EVALUATION**

The Policy, Research and Product Development Directorate will undertake policy reviews after every three (3) years and/or when the need arises to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and to ensure that the policy is updated with the most recent information necessary for compliance and implementation.

## **11. IMPLEMENTATION**

The policy must be implemented through the use of a Disaster Management Plan for KZN Human Settlements and must be regularly updated as and when required.