Better Together: Showcasing Goonj’s Alliance to Provide Effective Disaster Response in India

Harmanpreet Kaur Bhullar  
Sabarathinam Selvaraj  
Harvard Kennedy School

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Better Together
Showcasing Goonj's Alliance to Provide Effective Disaster Response in India

SUBMITTED BY
Harmanpreet Kaur Bhullar
Sabarathinam Selvaraj
Masters in Public Policy
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PRESENTED TO
Client: Mr. Rahul Bishnoi, Advisor, Goonj
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Herman B. Leonard
Seminar Leader: Prof. John Haigh (BGP)

This PAE reflects the views of the author(s) and should not be viewed as representing the views of the PAE's external client(s), nor those of Harvard University or any of its faculty.
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Overview & Summary

One of India’s most impactful and successful non-profits, Goonj, has been working to advance the disaster relief ecosystem in India over several decades. Goonj has been working together collaboratively with several partners across the country and globally and decided to formalize this already ongoing effort into an alliance. To achieve this, Goonj initiated action to setup a formal cross sectoral alliance with precommitted resources to positively impact the ecosystem. This solution is unique and first-of-its kind, to bring together various actors involved, and those who need to be involved, to create exponential impact. This work is likely to be transformational, and expected to achieve a more coordinated, collaborative approach to rapid and sustained disaster relief.

The work that follows in this document is not original in its recognition for need to build an alliance for disaster response, or designing an alliance which has already been launched and executed by Goonj.

Our effort is focused on two objectives:

a) Document comprehensively the issues that precipitated the need for an alliance from Goonj’s perspective, and present Goonj’s solution.

b) Build a briefing book, as an external team on some elements of the organization.

In terms of methodology, first, we aim to establish the ideal disaster response landscape. Following this, we assess the gaps in the Indian ecosystem (grounded in Goonj’s existing efforts), contrast it to the ideal disaster landscape, to consolidate the problem statement. We crystallize the problems into needs to support the idea of an alliance and the solution (that Goonj already developed internally). We relied on literature to educate ourselves on the leading thinking on the best approach to responding to and preparing for disasters and expert interviews to understand bottlenecks. Based on our analysis, we support and reinforce Goonj’s proposed solution to build an alliance to solve the problem.

Based on the problem statement, we then document which stakeholders need to be involved in this effort. Goonj has already identified key stakeholders (like major donors, media organizations and other resource contributors) and initiated efforts to bring them on board. Our effort, through this exercise, is to ground the list of potential partners based on first principles and to achieve comprehensiveness. Building on this, in the second section, we document the scope of activities, building a value proposition for partners, governance, and operations. Goonj has already undertaken its own work for the alliance and initiated many of these efforts.

The briefing book is not comprehensive but is instead focused on documenting, supporting and showcasing Goonj’s alliance.
Context

4.1 About Goonj: What It Does?

This section is based on review of information on Goonj’s initiatives from public sources (like the Goonj website, annual reports, and information shared by Goonj with us).

Goonj is an India based not-for-profit that works with the communities that are among the most ignored, underserved, poorest, and have been the sufferers of the most disasters in the past few decades.

While disaster related activities have been a focus, Goonj’s theory of change is to “channelize material as a tool to address crucial gaps in rural infrastructure, water, environment, livelihood, education, health”. It focuses on excess/waste of the world as a sector agnostic tool to help address many development issues using two new alternate currencies – ‘underutilized urban material’ and ‘rural wisdom and labor’, to achieve at scale impact. The objective is to create a whole system of mutually beneficial relationships from the cities to the villages. This goes from common citizens in cities to common citizens in villages on a pan India level. Goonj achieves distributed scale, making and circulating value rather than using any new resources, creating a platform and source of exchange and value creation.

Goonj’s activities concerning disasters are undertaken through its ‘Rahat’ initiative. Every year Goonj works towards preparedness and relief, all the way to rehabilitation and recovery, in a myriad of disasters; big and small, across India. Goonj focuses on disasters that are mainly natural, including but not limited to, cloud bursts, floods, earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, extreme temperatures, and wildfires. Under the ‘Rahat’ initiative, Goonj channelizes essential relief materials to disaster affected families in the most far-flung and unreachable areas. This includes kits comprising of materials ranging from tarpaulins, ready-to-eat snacks, dry ration, utensils, essential clothing, solar lights etc. to the disaster affected people.

Apart from relief efforts, Goonj also works with the communities throughout to achieve longer-term rehabilitation, recovery, and preparedness for future disasters in prone areas. The initiatives under this umbrella include: a) creating livelihood with disaster wastage by creating products such as quilts, sitting mats, bags, cloth sanitary pads etc. b) ‘Vaapsi’ (bringing back to livelihood) connecting disaster hit people to local low investment rural occupations by providing occupational kits c) establishing ‘Chehak’ learning centers to act as stress free spaces for disaster hit children to address any post disaster trauma d) mobilizing and motivating disaster hit communities to repair and revive their own infrastructure; Goonj teams have mobilized the affected communities to undertake 2000+ largescale community rehabilitation projects in disaster-affected areas.

Goonj’s work is grounded in six pillars that allow its work to be effective:

1. Matching relief closely with urgent needs of the community and dignifying relief.
2. Approaching disasters as an opportunity to bring resources to underserved communities.
3. Building a culture of mindful giving among its contributors.
4. Amplifying its presence and reach via a ‘hub and spoke’ model.
5. Collaborating with local communities by mobilizing and motivating them to contribute to restoring their localities and preparing for future events.

6. Tapping into its network of collaborations to mobilize resources in times of need.

![Disaster Response Timeline](image)

**Figure 1: Goonj’s disaster response timeline**
*Source: Goonj*

Resultant of all Goonj’s work being grounded in the six pillars above, ‘Raahat’ has evolved into a reliable time-tested need-based disaster response initiative that delivers effective relief and rehabilitation during novel situations created by disasters. Through its work, Goonj has showcased that relief & rehabilitation are compliments, and one cannot be effective without the other. With a systemic approach to interventions, Goonj’s disaster work goes on throughout the year even in non-disaster time, building a deeper understanding about disasters among urban and rural masses; about mindful giving, building partnerships, mapping of needs etc. so that at the time of a disaster they can respond rapidly to a disaster.

Overall, courtesy of this continual approach to disaster management, Goonj has identified and established disaster response as a creative way to channel much needed resources and attention toward issues faced by the communities it engages with.

### 4.2 Goonj’s Alliance for Disaster Relief

_Goonj has already undertaken efforts to operationalize the alliance. The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of Goonj’s vision, based on information made available to us by Goonj. It is also to establish clearly the baseline from which this project starts._

As one of the leaders in the field of disaster response, Goonj has identified a series of needs and issues in the disaster landscape, which need to be solved for, to better serve the community.
The increasing scale and magnitude of the disaster due to climate change demands for increased capacities and varied competencies of the relief agencies.

Support for disaster pours in, in the initial period but contributions die down which derails the relief and recovery efforts.

Several disasters which are routine go unnoticed and receive no attention and resources. Goonj has been working on such ignored disasters such as winters and displacements.

Goonj works deeper and long-term, but the paucity of timely resources in some cases limits them from working deeper and longer.

To solve for these needs, Goonj came up with the transformational idea to formalized an alliance called the “Goonj Alliance for Rapid Response on Disasters” (GARRD). Whilst Goonj has successfully been responding to disasters for over two decades through both informal and formal alliances and partnerships with every leading organization in the country and globally, the key shift with GARRD is to have a pool of pre committed resources ready to be deployed when triggered by Goonj. The key elements of the alliance, as defined by Goonj are provided below:

A. A Formal Alliance with like-minded organizations from grassroots and varied industries such as logistics, FMCG, Media and other sectors precommitting resources to work with Goonj during disasters. These organizations will bring together cross sectoral expertise and resources to respond swiftly to any disaster. Goonj will seek to build a mechanism and response processes that swiftly activates and triggers essential resource mobilization pre or post disaster.

B. Organizations pitch in to fill in immediate material and money need

- FMCG or other industries to commit substantial material contributions like ration, utensils, water storage containers, torch & batteries, working mobile phones & batteries, chappals etc.
- At the time of disasters, logistics support for inter, intra city along with channeling material to disaster hit areas acts as a great support for swift disaster response.
- Organizations commit monetary contributions for a Goonj Disaster Fund. Such organizations will receive regular reports enabling them to gauge the impact and invitations to forums/events where Goonj disaster relief experts share their field experiences
- Opportunities for organizations to volunteer for relief work and raise resources (Volunteering at the time of disasters requires specific skill set and fulltime engagement, thus Goonj calls for such volunteers). Large scale employee engagement will facilitate material mobilization
- Goonj will organize workshops with employees to sensitize them towards complexities around disaster and how conscious and collective efforts from each individual matters.

C. At the incidence of a disaster, immediate material and monetary contributions will be triggered on alert from Goonj. Goonj will set up operations and initiate interventions, thus in less time, together they can reach out to large number of families in need.

4.2 The Disaster Response and Management Landscape

To effectively undertake our objectives for this PAE, it is important to understand the context it functions in. This is the objective of the section below. We outline the characteristics that define disasters, types of disasters and how the characteristics vary, and the challenges and limitations of functioning in a dynamic and continually evolving situation that every disaster presents the respondents with.
Disasters versus Hazards and Why the Distinction Matters

The IFRC\textsuperscript{a} defines disasters as “serious disruptions to the functioning of a community that exceed its capacity to cope using its own resources. Disasters can be caused by natural, man-made and technological hazards, as well as various factors that influence the exposure and vulnerability of a community”. The IFRC distinguishes disasters from hazards. Hazards are naturally occurring or manmade phenomena that pose a threat to the regular functioning of a community/society in its purview. However, not every hazard has to turn into a disaster. While hazards are inevitable, disasters are not. Hazards turn into disasters when communities are not appropriately resourced or organized to withstand the adverse impacts of a hazard and the population is vulnerable because of poverty, exclusion or is disadvantaged in some other way\textsuperscript{vii}. Disasters, therefore, to an extent, can be prevented by making sure hazards don’t turn into them. This can be achieved by ensuring that prone communities are aware and prepared, reduce their risks of exposure, and become more resilient.

Moreover, with the onset of climate change, hazard frequency and complexity is only increasing, hence making it essential for disaster management efforts to focus on preparedness and resilience to minimize impact of unavoidable disasters.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure2.png}
\caption{Trends in climate related disasters globally}
\label{fig:climate_disasters}
\end{figure}

\textit{Source: IFRC, World Disasters Report 2020\textsuperscript{viii}}

Leading Thought on Effective Disaster Response and Management

When a layperson thinks of disaster response, the images invoked are that of immediate relief efforts activated in the short term post a disaster striking. However, communities that exist in hazard prone areas, have long known that there is a lot that can be done to ensure hazards don’t always turn into disasters. Organizations working in the space also acknowledge the same and have, over time, developed a structured approach to disaster management that involves steps to be taken:
• Pre-Disaster
  o prepare to mitigate its impact
• During Disaster
  o provide emergency relief in the short-term
  o help communities and areas return to normalcy and achieve full recovery and rehabilitation (where possible) in the medium to long term
• Post Disaster
  o distill learnings from experiences of repeated disaster response exercises to strengthen resilience of communities and prone areas as well as improve response management over time

A deeper look at the range of activities that are required to be carried out to achieve ideal (as per current thought) and effective disaster response and management highlights the expanse of the scope of disaster management activities.

Pre-Disaster

Mitigating the risk and impact of disasters via pre-emptive planning and preparation

• Building knowledge and expertise on disaster incidence and its effects to prepare for response better
• Building collaborations and communication channels to stay informed about impending and probable disasters and devise response mechanisms that can function relatively smoothly upon to deliver relief and recovery efforts post incidence
• Ensuring access to pools of resources needed for relief when disasters strike to save precious time after, in gathering the same, and jump immediately into relief activities
• Approaching development in prone areas with hazard probability in mind
• Involving communities in the preparation and response preparedness
• Pre-emptive action when an impending disaster is identified by meteorological agencies including evacuations and temporary relocation of at-risk populations

During Disaster

Responding with effective relief in the short-term post disaster incidence

• Identifying the scale and nature of the disaster and mapping the requirements for effective relief and response
• Raising awareness about the disaster to raise funds and other resources
• Directing available and new resources and materials required to affected populations and areas
• Coordinating efforts on ground via volunteer networks and local organizations
• Tracking the impacts and responding appropriately on an ongoing basis as the impact unfolds

Extending relief operations to rehabilitation and recovery once the incidence has subsided

• Assessing the scale of damage and possibility of rehabilitation and recovery
- Formulating and executing plans for rehabilitation, livelihood reinstatement, redevelopment of damaged infrastructure, communication and transit systems, and clean-up of debris
- Continual assessment of need for resources to reach full recovery and sourcing and directing appropriate resources to requirements
- Re-skilling and long-term resettlement of populations to other areas where damage is irreversible

**Post Disaster**

**Distilling learnings from response exercises to integrate into better preparation for future events**

- Evaluating performance of response to disasters to identify gaps for improvement for future events
- Collate results of above with existing pool of expertise and knowledge to develop it further
- Relay challenges faced to experts and managers of response to curate possible solutions and feed into preparation and response going forward

Moreover, the onus of achieving all the above is scattered across a multitude of sectors and organizations (and not just on the ones actively catering to disaster response) to achieve true resilience and expanded capacity. Probability of natural disasters can be mitigated to an extent when environmental management considers the possibility of natural forces instigating disasters and incorporates those events’ minimization into its planning for managing environmental resources under purview. Preparedness for impact mitigation can only be achieved fully if local communities are actively aware of hazards probable in their areas and development of infrastructure and other systems in the areas considers the probability of hazards into planning and execution and develops infrastructure resilient to natural forces. Infrastructure development entities, in turn, can only incorporate disaster resilience into plans and execution when they have access to learnings from past disasters from agencies that tackle them. Disaster response agencies and organizations
can effectively engage in anticipatory action only when they have access to information on impending weather conditions from relevant meteorological agencies in a timely manner. Given these interdependencies, cross sector and organization collaboration and communication is of essence in achieving mitigation of and management of disasters and their effects.

It is also important to note that not all hazards and disasters are the same. They differ across characteristics like source, frequency of incidence, scale, potential for impact on communities, potential for preparation for damage mitigation etc. Hence, studying hazards and disasters and their variations has important implications for building resilience, response preparedness and capacity for management post disaster.

**Differences across Disasters and Significance for Preparedness and Response**

With climate change on the rise, there are increasing natural hazards that we see routinely turning into disasters – like extreme weather, floods in prone basins, cyclones in coastal areas, droughts, wildfires etc. These events are increasing in frequency and predictability. However, there also remain naturally occurring hazards that are low on predictability but high in potential for turning into disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, and avalanches etc.

From a disaster management perspective, differentiating between disasters basis their probability of occurring and predictability has important consequences. Since most disasters turn into emergency events that require coordinated response to mitigate effects on affects communities, it is useful to evaluate and understand them from a lens of novelty using the framework postulated by Herman B. (Dutch) Leonardix.

Basis the element of ‘novelty’ present, emergency events can be classified into three types:

- **Routine**: emergency situations that are familiar and frequent and avail themselves to planning, training for coordinated response, and learning from experience. They are conducive to scenario based pre-emptive planning. Events like yearly flooding in prone areas, cyclone season, wildfires and extreme temperatures can all be categorized as routine emergencies in

- **Novel**: ‘True crisis emergencies’ that present anomalies from routine emergencies in terms of scale, frequency, nature, ferocity, contemporaneity with other ongoing emergencies and exposure of population. These emergencies require innovative and adaptive response in real time based in capability of respondents as the situation develops

- **Emergent**: Emergencies that start out as being diagnosed as routine but gain incremental novelty due to various factors. In these situations, the bias in initial diagnosis leads to ineffective response being set up which can cost precious time in responding with the right strategies. Given the differences in skills required to effectively address a routine versus a novel emergency, who gets assigned to handle is at first versus who is the right entity to address it as it ‘emerges’ can create operational complexity and delay in implementation in the middle of a time sensitive situation. Various biases can feed into the inappropriate initial diagnosis, including cognitive biases caused by over-reliance on experience, overconfidence in experience and escalation of commitments
As is clear from the above segmentation, it is crucial to differentiate between the kind of emergency arising because of a disaster. Failure to do so can have dire consequences for setting up the adequate response mechanisms and strategies. If no distinction is made then all emergencies look the same and similar responses are predicated, which can hamper the effectiveness of responses.

**Best Practices in Managing Different Kinds of Disasters and Related Risks**

As is clear, identifying the kind of disaster one is dealing with is crucial to effectively respond to it. Hence, identifying the disaster when it occurs correctly, before kicking in response efforts can make the difference between an effective and ineffective disaster management exercise.

Also, in the above-mentioned cycle of activities, while the activities in the ‘Post Disaster’ stages are mostly similar for all kinds of emergencies, the ‘Pre-event’ planning and preparation stage can differ in significant ways for emergencies falling across the novelty spectrum depicted above. The difference in preparation for the various emergencies can mainly be attributed to the level and kind of risks and consequences that can be predicted for the possible emergencies. When it comes to types of emergency situations, there is uncertainty around two main features – frequency (and hence predictability of occurrence) and consequences. These combined can lead to a risk assessment of the emergency as possessing:

- **Tractable risk**: emergencies that are low on uncertainty on frequency as well as consequences
- **Intractable risk**: emergencies that are high on uncertainty regarding frequency as well as consequences

While routine emergencies tend to have risks that are likely to be tractable, as the novelty factor in an emergency increases, the intractable risks associated with it tend to increase, calling for a calibration of response strategies to suit the situation at hand.
Irrespective of the kind of disaster emergency at hand, the first important step in addressing it effectively is identifying the nature of the emergency. Post that, the appropriate response can be dispatched. However, before the emergency occurs, the following can be thought of when strategizing to prepare for and improve disaster response and management via the lens of risks associated:

a. Manage already-identified *(tractable known unknowns)* risks better
   i. Ensure more accurate estimates
   ii. Achieve more cost-effective management
b. Identify additional, previously unidentified or identified but unanalyzed risks, get estimates of their probability and consequences *(known and knowable unknowns -- make them tractable)* and manage them
c. For risks whose probability or consequences remain uncertain *(known but unknowable unknowns)*, or that cannot be identified *(unknown unknowns)* — that is, for novel, intractable risks — build resilient, adaptive, nimble response and recovery structures, processes, teams, and skills

*Basis the context established above, we will now shift to Goonj’s initiative.*
5.1 Issues

In this section, we aim to document the key issues in the broader disaster response and relief landscape in India, to effectively address and mitigate the loss of lives and livelihood due to disasters. This documentation is an effort to summarize, consolidate, and substantiate the issues that Goonj has identified as the reasons to establish an alliance. The purpose is to document in a comprehensive manner and present the need for an alliance. It highlights top-of-the-line issues that practitioners face, in comparison to the ideal response scenario presented in the section earlier.

Incidence of disasters is increasing.

What is the issue?

Globally, disasters are increasing exponentially. According to UNDRR, “In the period 2000 to 2019, there were 7,348 major recorded disaster events claiming 1.23 million lives, affecting 4.2 billion people (many on more than one occasion) resulting in approximately US$2.97 trillion in global economic losses. This is a sharp increase over the previous twenty years. Between 1980 and 1999, 4,212 disasters were linked to natural hazards worldwide claiming approximately 1.19 million lives and affecting 3.25 billion people resulting in approximately US$1.63 trillion in economic losses”xi.

India is one of the most disaster-prone areas of the worldxii and is exposed to many natural hazards including floods, cyclones, droughts, and earthquakes. Natural and human induced disasters have been causing tremendous loss of life and property and damages to public and private infrastructure, also leading to mounting expenses on relief and rehabilitation. There are projections that disaster risks are likely to increase more under changing climatic conditions, increasing urbanization and other factors like environmental degradation, disease outbreaks, internal displacements etc. India’s National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has estimated that 12% of India’s total land area (~40 million hectares) is exposed to floods, 68% is vulnerable to droughts and landslides while 58.6% is earthquake and cyclone prone.xiii

However, despite the scale of the problem, there is a severe lack of committed resource allocation and effort for disaster relief, both from the government as well as non-government entities (individuals, donors, corporations etc.)xiv.

What are the implications?

- Raise more resources and source adequate capacity to effectively address the gap.
- Dedicate resources to elucidate and quantify the scale of the problem, and the gaps in skills and funding through dedicated research and reports. Currently, we severely lack any credible repository to review the incidence and scale of disasters, funds that were dedicated and shortages.
• Raise widespread public awareness about the urgency and scale of the problem of rising disasters, to both issue a clarion call to organizations to join the effort as well as enlist more dedicated contributions. This effort needs to be undertaken year-around and in a sustained manner, since the number, scale and complexity of disasters are only going to increase.

1. **Several disasters go unnoticed and unattended due to lack of media attention.**

    **What is the issue?**

    Each year large number of disasters go unnoticed since they find no coverage in the mainstream media, and most times fail to trend on social media as well beyond the region. This is especially true of routine disasters which impact some communities regularly and causes limited local devastation. Large part of the country suffers through such disasters like cyclones, droughts, and floods regularly, be it annual floods in Assam, Bihar & WB or drought in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra & Andhra Pradesh\[^{xv}\].

    Very few of these get attention as unfortunately disaster impact is often measured in terms of loss of lives in media coverage. A very recent example in 2018 was while the nation responded to the floods in Kerala with huge resources, at the same time Odisha received negligible support for the cyclone which affects the state annually\[^{xvi}\]. When such incidents are not highlighted, they fail to muster resources. Similarly, winters and displacements have never been considered disasters despite a deep impact on life\[^{xvii}\].

    Most disaster response organizations rely on ad-hoc contributions, triggered by media attention, to initiate efforts which delays the response and limits their ability to act. Organizations need pre-committed resources to raise awareness and trigger action for these ignored disasters where individual and institutional contributions do not flow due to low visibility.

    **What are the implications?**

    • Raise pre-committed resources to fund increased capacity as well as necessary materials to provide relief and response for these unattended disasters.
    • Convince more individual, organizational, and corporate donors to plan and pre-commit resources annually to disaster relief and response.
    • Increase media attention towards such routine, unattended disasters.

2. **Response is focused mostly on just relief and needs to be deeper and longer towards rehabilitation.**

    **What is the issue?**

    As a country, state, and non-state actors in India, until recently, have been “reactive and only responded to disasters to provide relief from calamity” \[^{xviii}\](relief-driven disaster management system). While there has been increasing recognition that we need a paradigm shift to also focus on prevention, mitigation and preparedness, progress has been slow.

    As explained earlier, the scale and magnitude of the disaster demands for increased capacities and varied competencies from organizations. Based on on-ground experience, for the initial 15 days post a disaster
support pours in, but after month contributions die down. Further, failure in generating enough material during the initial phase derails the medium-to-long term relief and rehabilitation efforts. For example, due to the lack of resources once residents return to their homes, they are forced into debt cycles to survive or are forced to migrate for livelihood without thinking through the consequences fully.

Goonj attempts to go beyond event-based response to outcome-based, which covers the complete lifecycle up to recovery of livelihood. However, for systemic change, Goonj needs increased resources to be pre-committed for disaster response, for long-term rehabilitation and mitigation which currently do not receive attention. This effort also needs actors with varied expertise, for e.g., experts in skill-building and reskilling who can engage disaster-stricken communities with alternative skills to survive during transition period before they can return to their old occupations.

This needs to be supported by a mindset shift, as well as a growing body of research to ensure evidence-based approaches which leverage local knowledge are implemented to achieve sustained success. To generate awareness about this need, media and civil society actors to step up.

**What are the implications?**

- Raise awareness about the need for funding for long-term recovery and rehabilitation efforts beyond the first few weeks of the disaster.
- Create a sustained flow of resources through a pre-committed pool of resources, with varied capacities and strong local experience to address different parts of the lifecycle (relief to recovery).
- Source varied expertise to attend to different parts of the lifecycle.

**3. Lack of research experts and institutions engaged in learning from current efforts, to help improve preparedness and generate awareness.**

**What is the issue?**

To enhance the current state of disaster response, we need targeted research to undertake research which ranges from Needs Assessments (What does the community need to effective rebound from disaster?); Monitoring and Evaluation (Did we effectively do what we promised to do?); Learning and Best Practices (What did we do right and continue doing?); Mitigation Techniques (How can we prevent what happened today from occurring or at least occurring with same intensity?); Threat Assessment (What are imminent threats to an ecological system/region from a disaster perspective and the emergency?); Risk and Vulnerability Mapping (What is the risk of disaster in a region and how vulnerable are the people there?). Further, increasingly there are novel disasters such as covid-19, or the novelty and complexity in routine disasters are increasing (disease spread within natural disasters, drought in flood prone regions due to climate etc.). This requires cutting edge expertise beyond what organizations currently possess.

However, currently, aid or developmental organizations involved in disaster response have been hesitant to undertake the research that can answer these questions, since research is costly and time consuming. Most of their funds are provided dedicated to relief efforts and even if they could divert them, they fear the cost and believe instead it is best spent in relief and recovery efforts.
What are the implications?

- Raise dedicated funding for these activities
- Enlist global and nationally eminent research experts or institutions to dedicate effort to accelerate the learning curve from current disasters to undertake prevention efforts, better prepare for routine disasters and eventually mitigate the losses.

4. Resources contributions are inadequately matched to the demand.

What is the issue?

Based on experience, at the incidence of a disaster, urgent need emerges at three major levels i.e., material, monetary and manpower. Although the impact may vary considerably from one disaster to another, typical needs that arise include food, essential items such as blankets, toiletries, medical care, safe drinking water, sanitation, waste disposal, etc. Apart from material, the urgent need is for monetary resources. This is used to meet the demand for critical purchases, expenses on manpower, warehousing, and logistics.

In most cases, organizations must tackle with huge surpluses of some items and gross inadequacy of others – for e.g., while they are inundated with rations, there are often no utensils to cook in; put simply, very often, there is case of too many toothbrushes and too few toothpastes to provide. This is also true of efforts, where organizations ended up duplicating effort when capacity could be more efficiently leveraged.

What are the implications?

- Effective co-ordination between organizations to efficiently match resources, and possibly technology-based solutions such as marketplace
- Build a corpus of proportional pre-commitments that allows matching and procurement of what is missing to enable relief and subsequent recovery.

5.2 Needs

In this section, we crystallize the needs from the disaster response ecosystem to effectively address the issues. This section builds on Goony’s work, to support it, document it and map the issues to crystallized needs.
Increase monetary resources and donations in a sustained year around flow to tackle the rising disasters, their unpredictability (or novelty), quantify the problem and gaps, undertake efforts beyond immediate relief towards recovery and rehabilitation, and research to facilitate effective learning and mitigation of future disasters.

Pre-commit these monetary and non-monetary resources to tackle unattended disasters which do not receive attention, cover activities in the lifecycle which do not receive attention as well as efficiently match.

Create more capacity in human resources to tackle unattended disasters, as well as varied expertise amongst this capacity to tackle the entire lifecycle of activities.

Raise awareness through media and advocacy on the need for increased resources, about unattended routine disasters, need for lifecycle intervention etc.

Undertake research and benchmarking to bring best-in-class cutting expertise to better address the need, learn from experience and mitigate where possible.

Co-ordinate resource allocation efficiently at the incidence of disasters to increase impact.
6 Proposed Solution

6.1 What is needed?

Goonj has already created a solution to solve for the issues it has identified. This section consolidates, documents and supports the same for an external audience.

To solve for the issues above, following efforts are needed:

1. Increase fund-raising efforts exponentially.
2. Ensure these funds and non-monetary resources are pre-committed, not tied solely to relief and are available to flow in a sustained manner.
3. Create expertise and capacity to cover more disasters and entire lifecycle.
4. Enlist expertise in advocacy and media/PR to raise awareness and enlist effort from actors.
5. Source varied competencies to undertake research for preparedness, mitigation and improve effectiveness.
6. Co-ordination of on-ground efforts in terms of resources and avoid duplication.

6.2 Who can address it?

This section aims to go back to the root causes to assess if any one organization can solve for it without the need for an alliance, be it civil society, multilaterals, or state. The analysis supports Goonj’s solution, that a group of actors working together through an alliance is best placed to achieve this combined impact.

The lens for this analysis is an individual organization. However, it is important to note here it may not apply to a systems-based organization such as Goonj.

Why the need for an alliance?

- To undertake the entire scope of activities, one needs monumental effort to raise the exponential number of resources required to achieve the breadth of the activities outlined above.
- This effort requires increased clout, connections, and capacity to raise resources required above, which needs many organizations to come together to galvanize the entire ecosystem with media and advocacy efforts.
- Donors and multiple organizations need to pre-commit their resources to one organization, and alliance provides them with recognition and independence in their efforts.
- Varied competencies and expertise required to undertake the lifecycle of activates and research. If they are all employed in one organization, it will create a mammoth organization, increased overheads, and lead to inefficiencies. Organizations risk doing what they do well, when they try to achieve everything that the landscape needs. We need them to continue to hone their expertise to solve parts of the problem while increasing their scope of activities in adjacencies. We need organizations working together towards a common purpose but playing distinct roles to avoid this
Can the state or multilateral agencies play this role?

In the case of India, the government disaster management authorities, though continually improving, are severely resource crunched and lack the effort and capacity and processes required to lead an alliance. Further, the state has constraints about which disasters it acts or and does not, as they need not fall under their defined criteria or need special changes which often delay action. They instead need to focus on achieving effective disaster management across all emergencies that occur each year to play their defined role of evacuation, assistance, and long-term rehabilitation of infrastructure.

As far as multilateral and global agencies, they are already large in structure with constant questions of inefficiencies created by their size. In their current form, they also lack the ability to focus on one region or country with such dedicated, precise efforts. Further, there are competing needs across regions for their intervention.

6.3 How do we then address it?

For the reasons outlined above, it is clear that an alliance is necessary. We support Goonj’s approach to bring together key actors in the form of an alliance to solve for the issues above. To summarize Goonj’s solution, to address these issues and enhance India’s disaster response landscape, there is a need to “create an alliance with partners who are willing to co-ordinate and deliver their varied expertise to address the resource and information needs across the disaster lifecycle; and those who can pre-commit monetary, material and manpower resources”. Based on Goonj’s solution identified above, the three distinct features of this proposed initiative will be as follows.

![Figure 6: Brainstorming a solution](image-url)
• **An alliance of organizations:** Recruit organizations that are country wide as well as region-specific. These organizations will be cross sectoral, may currently play a role and read to amplify that or willing to start a role in disaster response. They will bring expertise, manpower, resources (monetary and non-monetary), local knowledge and community engagement, needed to plug the gaps and achieve the objectives. The objective is not to create a merger of organizations to create a super-organization which will inherently create inefficiencies. The objective instead is to merely create a structure for efficient co-ordination, increased clout and share learning, without limiting any organization’s individual strengths.

• **Pre-commitment of resources:** Organizations will commit to resource contributions (all cross sectoral members of the alliance). These resources will be deployed automatically when disasters strike (subject to qualifying criteria), for relief and rehabilitation and efficiently matched by in-house manpower. Important consideration here is to leverage the combined clout of organizations to raise more resources for the organizations (and the alliance) than just merely pooling the current resources. This is to ensure that the aggregate supply of services and resources from the alliance would be more than sum of extant supply from organizations (individual organizations and their resources already committed to disaster response).

• **Capacity and resources for advocacy, awareness, and research:** The organization will create in-house and partner capacity to undertake, allocate and deploy resources for learning, preparedness in prone areas, awareness generation, and capacity building, leading to eventual mitigation. This capacity will also be leveraged to engage with state and multilateral partners who also play a significant role in the landscape.

• **Support activities with a Secretariat:** For the alliance to function effectively, it needs to be supported with a nimble and efficient secretariat which will play the roles of co-ordination, governance, administration, and support activities such as member enlisting and onboarding, organizing the pre-committed resources, capacity for advocacy, awareness, and research etc.

### 6.4 Goals of the alliance

An alliance as outlined above with pre-committed resources will help deliver an effective outcome which addresses all the bottlenecks: need for funds to tackle increasing disasters, especially unattended ones; provide efficiently matched resources to needs and outcomes; increase capacity and co-ordination to provide disaster response; engage organizations with varied competencies and expertise to adopt and promote a holistic approach to disaster management, beyond relief.

The goals of the alliance, as defined by Goonj are:

• **Deliver agile, rapid, and expedited response to disasters, especially those that do not receive attention.**
  - Pre-commit resources to deploy faster when disasters strike.
  - Ensure commitments are well-defined from each member, to deploy efforts and resources rapidly instead of spending precious time in raising funds (shorter the deliberation-approval-disbursement cycle).
  - Create a technology solution and backend to effectively match and co-ordinate resource deployment.
• Act in a coordinated and collaborative manner to deliver increased impact.
  o Provide comprehensive, complementary, and more effective allocation of resources with the recipient in mind, avoiding gaps and duplications.
  o Seek to achieve the maximum value out of the accessible pool of knowledge, experiences, expertise, and resources of different actors, typically needed to solve complex disaster
  o Build a collaborative network of rural and urban stakeholders with deep experience working together in disaster and non-disaster time.
  o Create a governance structure that facilitates this, to effectively leverage combined knowledge and create space for organizations to do what they do well.

• Achieve outcomes that are sustained and sustainable for the disaster affected community.
  o Reduce debilitating impact of successive disasters
  o Link disaster relief to development and involve community
  o Make sure resources are available for long term and deeper work
  o Support the building of systems and structures to create resilience

• Deliver increased and well-matched resources.
  o Leverage the combined clout of the network to raise exponentially higher resources for the organizations, that what would be possible by merely pooling the current state of resources.
  o Co-ordinated in real-time to ensure efficient allocation according to need and demand.

• Engage in learning from current responses to achieve better future mitigation.
  o Make progress in non-disaster time to strongly mitigate impact if/when the outcome of extreme disaster occurs, instead of waiting until the next disaster strikes.
  o Implement a process of constant learning and course correction (from disasters) on a systemic societal level.
  o Consider technology-based solutions to document learnings and easily cross-facilitate learnings

• Raise awareness about the need for more attention, resources, and better delivery to alleviate disaster losses.
  o Focus on bringing disaster response into the mind-set of wider public (and each member of the alliance for their own organizational work and approaches).
  o Incorporate the mindset of disaster preparedness into different segments of society.

• Engage in effective advocacy and collaboration with state and multilateral agencies.
  o Leverage learnings, community engagement to advocate for increased and efficient output from the state and multilateral actors.
  o Collaborate with them where possible, to achieve amplified impact.
6.5 Potential Alliance Partners

Given the scope of work outlined for the proposed alliance above and the goals that it will strive toward, there are multiple partners that will need to be included in the alliance for its successful functioning and achieving its purpose because of each partner contributing to the alliance’s scope. Gooni has identified key stakeholders like donors, resource contributors, partner grassroots organizations, and media partners, as stated in the context. Our aim here is to go back to the challenges identified earlier, ground it in first principles and map them.

Pre-Committed Monetary Resource Partners (Donors)

What challenge will they solve for?

One of the leading constraints identified in disaster response reaching its potential is the crunch for timely monetary resources available to responders to be used rapidly toward relief. Moreover, for smaller scale, non-state actors, most of the contributions flow in once disaster has stricken and the news of loss and damage evoke public empathy. Crowdfunding, though a valuable source of resources, is time consuming post disaster and amounts unpredictable. For disasters that do not receive significant media attention, this source cannot be relied upon. Hence, raising funds for disaster relief ex post not only takes up precious time once an emergency arises post disaster, but also inhibits the capacity of responders to attend to disasters that escape public attention and plan/prepare for routine and predictable emergencies pre-disasters. Having a pre-committed pool of monetary resources dedicated for disaster management can help alleviate some of the above-mentioned challenges, at least for routine and predictable disasters.

Who are the potential partners?

Potential organizations that can be brought under the foray of the alliance include:

- Corporations with CSR funding dedicated to disaster relief and other adjacencies like livelihood development, WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene), healthcare and education. Since all the mentioned areas require funds to be re-established, either immediately after a disaster strikes or in the medium to long term, the funds can be used to provide the required support to communities in the form of either relief or recovery support.
- Foundations and trusts to support funding the more longer-term preparedness, learning and organizational development work that will need to be undertaken to establish the alliance as a functioning entity.

Pre-Committed Non-Monetary Resource Partners

What challenge will they solve for?

While monetary resources are useful to adapt to the needs of response to each unique disaster, many resources required for providing immediate relief are known beforehand, regardless of the nature of disaster. These include basic supplies for nutrition and cooking, hygiene, temporary lodging for displaced families, bedding supplies, and first aid. While all these are contributed by the community at large for disasters that are covered by the media, there is insufficient supply for disasters that escape public attention and there are issues
with matching the donations made to the actual need in an emergency. Pre-committed resources of the categories above would go a long way in not just ensuring their supply for all relief operations but also ensure better matching of resources to need in emergencies. Moving the relief supplies to the site of disaster poses another challenge that requires coordination and contributions.

Who are the potential partners?

- FMCG giants
- Transport and logistics firms
- Contributors of medical supplies
- Contributors of sanitation equipment
- Contributors of supplies needed for temporary lodging

Time, Expertise, and Information Partners

What challenge will they solve for?

Apart from resources, to achieve effective and incrementally improving disaster response over time, the alliance needs to draw upon expertise in the area to build its own preparedness and response routines and help communities it works with become resilient to repeated disasters in prone areas. Moreover, there is a need to make sense of, and translate into practice the learnings from each response effort. There is also a need for personnel to help the alliance function during response periods (for example coordinating various activities) and build itself stronger during dormant periods (for example record, synthesize and analyze experience, fundraising beyond formal partners, run awareness campaigns etc.). To be able to do this, it needs time commitments from experts in the fields of crisis management and organizational management and governance.

As a disaster response effort can use all the help it can get, it is crucial to spread awareness about incidence of disasters (big and small) to trigger contributions from the larger populace. Media personnel can play a pivotal role in this. Also, delivering response effectively as an external entity cannot be achieved without drawing on and understanding local context and volunteers.

However, since these roles are not consuming of full-time roles and keeping the overheads of the core of the alliance in mind, partnering with institutions and organizations that can volunteer expertise and time resources can be explored.

Who are the potential partners?

- Experts on crisis management and organizational management (from academia, think tanks and professional services)
- Media house personnel
- Large corporations with significant workforces that can afford staff to volunteer time to help the alliance in tasks mentioned above (like IT companies, banks etc.)
- Grassroots organizations (working on community development through skilling, livelihood restoration, health and sanitation, education etc.) from prone areas that can contribute local context
and knowledge for better planning and preparedness, help with relief efforts as well as raise awareness among communities

6.6 Other Stakeholders

While the formal partners associated with the alliance have been mentioned above, there exist some other important stakeholders that do not fit into the purview of the alliance but are nonetheless important to engage with.

State disaster response agencies at various levels

Since these agencies are the first responders in the case of most disasters, carrying out rescue work, it is crucial to maintain a working relationship with them and collaborate on information sharing and coordination for on-ground efforts following a disaster.
The state also has the largest resource capacity to address disasters effectively. Hence, engaging with these agencies to advocate for a holistic approach to disaster response can contribute to improving the disaster response landscape in India.

Humanitarian aid multilaterals

With considerable resources in their tow and experience spanning decades in responding to multitudes of disasters across the globe, these agencies are an important stakeholder in the ecosystem of disaster response. Coordinating with them during ongoing response and collaborating with them for learning during dormant periods can be useful. The alliance can enhance their effort by providing crucial local context and insight for during active operations.

Meteorology departments

Timely information pertaining to impending predictable disasters conveyed to the last mile can play a pivotal role in averting the worst of the impact by providing time for evacuation and other preparations by responders. While governments relay this information, it might be helpful for the alliance to work with the
As Goonj attempts to envision operationalizing the vision for the formal alliance, grounding it in some key values that the organization holds central is important and that is what they strive to accomplish. These values, if embodied in the governance of the formal alliance, are likely to ensure steep success and impact. These values, as defined by Goonj, are:

- Disaster relief and response should be recipient centric (as against donor or service provider centric)
- Listen, learn, and leverage system changing actions
- Begin work now and do not wait
- Access, Assurance and Ability – access to resources, assurance that people will get these resources again, ability in providing skills to people to convert access into investment (nurturing and building the ability of people to rehabilitate themselves)
- Make recovery and rehabilitation more inclusive, comprehensive, and sustainable by putting people and nature at the center and making local central (circular economy principles)

### 7.1 Organizational Structure

While an alliance that works to ensure effective response and management to disasters shaped out to be the solution for the challenges Goonj identified, the exact organizational structure that the alliance can take varies. The aim of this section is solely to undertake an exercise as an external team, looking at the same problem, to consider possible solutions, assess them based on criteria, and provide analysis. To do so, we undertook a careful study of other alliances and similar initiatives, and expert interviews, we have crystallized three distinct options to structure this proposed alliance.

This analysis is not binding, and may have overlooked key operational considerations visible to Goonj.

Please note here that Goonj has already launched the alliance with its own unique structure. They developed these plans, based on an internal analysis which may have included additional criteria and weights not visible to us and not included in our analysis. Goonj’s alliance already has many elements from all the options here, and well placed to succeed.

**Option 1: New Umbrella Organization**

This will be a formal alliance under a new umbrella organization (registered not-for-profit), which will raise dedicated funding from member organizations to fund a secretariat with dedicated staff. This is the ideal state defined in the solution earlier. The organization will align pre-commitment from all member organizations to dedicate capacity, expertise, resources (monetary and non-monetary), or some/all the above. These resources, especially monetary contributions may be absorbed centrally into the new organization and channeled or exist physically within individual partners.
Option 2: Hub and Spoke Model

Like the previous model, this will be a formal alliance where participating organizations sign off on pre-set commitments. However, the umbrella will be virtual and will exist as a program under one organization. All internal organizational building, administrative and capacity building activities will be performed and coordinated by that one organization which may draw funding from alliance members for its services or raise dedicated funding from outside. In essence, this will strictly be a hub and spoke model with one organization at the center supporting all the participating partners in the alliance.

Option 3: Status Quo+

An informal alliance that comes live and is activated only at the time of crises/incidence of a disaster. Members who decide to act on a disaster will co-ordinate their relief and recovery activities. Organizations may allocate resources in their annual planning for these activities and may even have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), but there will be no formal pre-set commitments. This will essentially remain a formalized informal mechanism to achieve better co-ordination and efficiency on ground.

Note: Option 1 can further be crystallized into two options (1a and 1b), distinguished by the extent to which the new organization insources the disaster services it is producing. Option 1a will be a pre-commitment in which partners commit to resources (monetary or non-monetary or logistics/people). Then, they are essentially contracted to provide that service when disaster strikes, with activities coordinated by the secretariat. Option 1b will insource the production of the relief, recovery services, and even mitigation and advocacy activities, absorbing resources and undertaking activities centrally.

We will assess these three options based on a set of criteria we have crystallized based on the organization’s focus areas.

- **Efficiency Gains**: Does the new organizational structure enable the alliance to achieve envisioned gains in efficiency?
  - Does it allow for effective matching of resources for relief and recovery?
  - Will the response remain nimble and agile?
  - Does it help avoid duplication of efforts among organizations?

- **Capacity Gains**: Does the new organizational structure enable the alliance to enlist varied expertise and competency to the disaster response efforts?
  - Will the setup allow organizations with varied competencies to effectively co-ordinate and stretch the timeline of activities across the entire disaster lifecycle?
  - Can the new organization effectively create necessary awareness generation and advocacy activities outlined earlier?
  - Does the organizational setup allow for effective pre-commitment of resources to ensure a sustained flow of funds to the alliance and participating organizations to attend to increased disasters as well as stretched timeline?

- **Other gains**: Does the new organizational structure allow other gains to be realized?
  - Does it appeal to a wider set of organizations and create incentives for them to participate in the alliance?
  - Does it allow for effective participatory governance necessary for effective functioning?
- Ability to setup and get started quickly to create impact

To study how these options hold up against the criteria, we perform a simple fit analysis as below. While this is not comprehensive and analytical, it provides a useful starting point to identify solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria &amp; Description</th>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Option 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency Gains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervene rapidly and agile to disaster needs</td>
<td>Highly</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match resources efficiently to needs and deliver as per demand</td>
<td>Highly</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Gains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work longer and deeper stretching the timeline</td>
<td>Highly</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to raise dedicated pre-committed resources for deployment</td>
<td>Highly</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Gains</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase uptake and ability to bring in all necessary partners</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective governance to act in a coordinated and collaborative manner</td>
<td>Highly</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setup quickly to act now</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 8: Organizational Structure Analysis](image)

- Based on above analysis, it is clear that option 1 would be preferrable to other options. It is also evident that Status Quo+ does not dramatically change the landscape to achieve incremental impact enough to warrant the effort.

- While option 2 delivers lower positive impact in the long-term, it lends itself to setup and launch in the short-term. Starting with option 3 will require extensive time and effort to build the organization, establish governance structures and launch.

- Option 2 also lends itself well as a pilot opportunity to attempt an alliance-based approach to disaster relief. This is especially important, as the improved gains and public value to be gained are theoretical. As a virtual umbrella and a program, the barriers to exit are lower for partners if the initiative does not achieve the desired impact.

- However, as the organization scales to undertake deeper work which spans the entire lifecycle of disaster response, option 3 is better.

Our analysis leads us to posit that the alliance can be launched under a varitation of option 2. Based on an impact assessment after 12-18 months, founding partners can either decide whether to “upgrade” to option 1 or scale down to option 3. Essentially, it will be a developmental path that first works by trying to organize...
pre-commitments (moving to a virtual organization in option 2) and then after a clear impact assessment and evaluation of partner dynamics, decide whether to further upgrade to full advance commitments (moving to a real contract-based organization in option 1 or scale down to option 3.

7.2 Scope of Work

Goonj has already outlined its own vision for the scope of activities that the alliance will undertake. The aim of our work is to provide a comprehensive briefing by building upon Goonj’s work. Below, we have outlined all the activities that the alliance will envision undertaking, under each of the verticals of the ideal disaster response lifecycle. Please note that these are the activities that the alliance would hope to undertake in its ideal state and fully actualized form.

How did we arrive at this?

![Figure 9: Arriving at Scope](image)

**Pre-Disaster and Year-Round**

- **Internal**
  - Socialize the alliance idea through experts/evangelists, media, and conferences/events
  - Organization building: raising funds, signing commitments, enlisting partners etc.
  - Fundraising to support secretariat and help support individual member’s fundraising
  - Regular administrative and compliance activities
- Creation of preparedness plans for routine disasters which the alliance targets, including refining internal alliance processes to be more agile and effective

- External
  - Engage partners to develop concept papers/case studies on best practices as well as advocacy pieces on our focus areas
  - Building collaborations and engaging in advocacy with government and multilateral agencies
  - Needs assessments, risk, and vulnerability mapping of routine disaster communities
  - Raise commitment for monetary and non-monetary resources with partners; leverage technology marketplace to ensure resources are adequately matched and ready to be triggered at incidence
  - Building collaborations and communication channels to stay informed about impending and probable disasters
  - Promote the need for increased attention to disasters, need to dedicate sustained resources and aspects of the alliance work through media partners, national and global conferences etc.

**Relief (Post Rescue; Rescue mostly falls under purview of state and Red Cross etc.)**

- Assessment of incidence, and resources needed to be triggered and action plan
- Raising awareness about the disaster to raise funds and other resources
- Coordinating efforts on ground via volunteer networks and local organizations to avoid duplication
- Short-term provisions for sustenance (food, water, clothing etc.) provided as efficiently matched kits
- Temporary camps and living arrangements for safe stay in the short term (focus on safe and sanitary conditions)
- Treat injuries and illness; attend to needs of vulnerable groups such as pregnant women/mothers, older populations, children (first-aid ++)

**Recovery & Rehabilitation**

- Create a short to medium term plan to ensure recovery and rehabilitation, with defined roles for alliance partners
- Plug gaps through temporary structures/infrastructure for rehabilitation
- Co-ordinate and advocate need to relevant authorities for restoration of basic services and rebuilding of personal and community infrastructure. This includes a continual assessment of need for resources to reach full recovery and advocating for appropriate resources to requirements.
- Access to quality short-term credit to avoid debt traps for affected communities as they replace personal infrastructure and household items (apart from government support)
- Focus on livelihood regeneration for affected population to avoid forced migration including skilling, funding for entrepreneurial activities such as occupation kits, job matching etc.
- Mental health assistance and support for continued education/learning for children

**Post-Learning and Mitigation**
7.3 Getting Desired Partners onboard

Goonj is already in the process of reaching out to an initial set of partners to join the formal alliance. Our efforts in the section below aim to provide support to this. There is possible duplication of efforts.

The various potential partners, while all important, vary in their missions and purpose. Hence, their reasons for joining the alliance will vary too. To be able to construct convincing value propositions for all of them, multiple facets of the possibilities viable due to the alliance need to be highlighted. Since an identical argument, beyond the opportunity to partake in an initiative for the collective good, is unlikely to convince all desired partners, the value propositions for different partners will have to be constructed by picking the relevant characteristics of the alliance. as detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alliance feature</th>
<th>Monetary Resource Partners</th>
<th>Other Resource Partners</th>
<th>Expertise Partners</th>
<th>Time Volunteers</th>
<th>Community Organizations</th>
<th>Media Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased impact due to coordinated efforts</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased visibility/clout</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to expertise and information</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider footprint (more disasters catered to/covered)</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficient use of resources</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to expand skills and competencies via cross training</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

✔️ Will appeal  ✗ Unlikely to appeal  ☐ Potentially appeal

*Figure 10: Value Proposition Brainstorming*
The above assessment of incentives is basis our preliminary understanding of the various desired partners’ missions and purposes. More robust value propositions can be devised basis deeper consultations with partners to understand their interest and willingness.

7.4 Triggering Criteria for Action

Goonj has already undertaken its own efforts to define what triggering criteria to use, to act upon disasters. We aim to support and build upon this.

Unfortunately, despite best intentions, due to the scale in a country like India with its wide and complex disaster landscape, the alliance cannot and will not be able to attend to every disaster. In this pragmatic scenario, partners inside the alliance are likely to view one disaster as more important vs another, based on their values, experience, connections to the community etc.

Hence the alliance can have a pre-defined, objective and largely quantifiable set of criteria which is co-created and co-signed by all partners annually. This criterion can then be used to trigger action for relief and rehabilitation for disasters.

Below is a proposed framework to define this triggering criteria:

![Figure 11: Triggering Criteria](image-url)
A combination score of level 1 and level 2 criteria can be used to arrive at the decision. For all the above categories, the alliance can set limits and qualifying criteria and continue to update them as the organization grows.

This exercise is important to ensure the alliance remains strong and avoid discontentment (to the extent possible) amongst partners. In the short-term, such tension can occur to the lack of resources to act even on significant disasters. In the medium-term, while hopefully the alliance will be present in all major disasters, tension can possibly arise on which unnoticed, routine disasters to attend.

### 7.5 Governance

*Goonj* has developed a robust governance structure for the alliance and already codified them. Our aim is to look at the same objective as an external team, review literature and case studies on governing alliance, to identify important aspects under governance which will make the alliance successful. These are recommendations merely based on best practices and are not grounded in internal considerations *Goonj* may have.

Literature\textsuperscript{xxvi} shows that governance is one of the key successful elements for successful functioning of an alliance, to “enable continuity and enablement of the partnership”\textsuperscript{xxvii}. It helps alliance partners co-ordinate and co-operate better. Lack of strong governance structure can cripple its functioning and act as a bottleneck to achieving intended goals and impact.

There are four dimensions to consider under governance\textsuperscript{xxviii}:

- **Stewardship**: setting strategic direction, priorities, and reviewing effort against those priorities
- **Resource allocation**: allocation of internal funding, secretariat capacity as well as resource commitments from partners towards activities in the lifecycle, and which disasters to tackle.
- **Decision facilitation**: agile and nimble decision-making structures for different priorities which continue to build trust; ensure that decisions are not made reactionary or continue to linger
- **Culture and purpose management**: ensuring all organizations in the alliance are working towards larger purpose and mission, while balancing their individual priorities; achieve transparency in decision making

After carefully reviewing the wide extent of literature and studying successful alliances, we propose the following three tier governance structure for the alliance to address all four dimensions mentioned above:

**1. Steering Committee or Board of Governance**

**Purpose**

Provide stewardship and resource allocation, as defined earlier. The steering committee sets the direction and reviews progress, working closely with the management function described below.

**Composition**

- A Chairperson for the Alliance elected from amongst all members.
• CEO/Manager of the alliance who will represent the management function on the steering committee.

• 5-6 participating organizations from the alliance, with a designated representative from each organization. These 5-6 organizations will be elected to serve for 1–2-year term, on a rotating basis on the steering committee. 5-6 organizations can proportionally represent the varying kind of organizations who are part of the alliance: resource partners (monetary and non-monetary donors), implementing organizations (local and national organizations which execute relief and recovery efforts on ground) and organizations which provide year-round expertise (towards awareness, learning, advocacy, and mitigation).

Functioning

• Will meet quarterly to review priorities and progress reports from management committee.

• Strategic directions will be taken at this level, to ensure agility vis-à-vis running every strategic decision and shifts for voting or unanimous agreement among all participating members.

• Function like a board of governance for most organizations.

2. General Council

Purpose

The purpose of the general council is primarily the culture and purpose management of the alliance. This is an instrument to build broad consensus on mission, purpose, and strategic priorities for the alliance, and enable transparency.

Composition

• Representative from each organization

• Chairperson

• Management Committee

Functioning

• Will meet annually to align on resource allocation, priorities, and mission for the year, set by the steering and management committees.

• Facilitate discussion, debate, and eventual feedback to the steering committee to make changes as appropriate.

3. Management Committee (or Secretariat)

Purpose

Responsible for overall day-to-day functioning of the alliance, growth, as well as supporting the alliance members in different workstreams detailed further in operations. This structure addresses the decision
facilitation dimension of the alliance. All members of this structure will be dedicated solely to serving the alliance as a whole vis-à-vis individual members or workstreams.

**Composition**

- CEO/Manager of the alliance who will represent the management function on the steering committee.
- 1 member each for the following functions: Fundraising, Member Induction & Engagement, Finance & Admin, Awareness & Advocacy, Field Operations (Recovery & Rehab), Mitigation (Research and Evaluation).
- Note: As the alliance expands, there may be more members who report to these functional leads and expand capacity. However, they will not be represented on the management committee, to ensure efficiency in decision making.

**Functioning**

- Will meet weekly, or as need arises
- Crystallize short term goals from larger priorities set by steering committee, set work tasks and monitor individual execution.

This leadership provided by the CEO and management team is equally important to the success of the alliance, “given that alliances tend to be extraordinarily complex to manage — to make them work organizations need to regularly overcome significant organizational difference”xxix.

### 7.6 Alliance Operations

*Based the scope of work outlined above, below we aim to outline some key considerations for the operations of the alliance as an external independent team. The alliance’s operations cover a broad range of activities – those focused internally on building the alliance, those focused externally on rallying support and resources for the alliance, and those directly contributing to disaster management. While the former two can be termed supporting operations, the latter forms the core of operations of the alliance.*

_Goonj may already have processes for the alliance developed based on its working experience and expertise. Our effort may also be duplicative of efforts already undertaken or planned by Goonj._

**The Role of the Secretariat**

The execution of the scope of the alliance’s work, while decided and agreed upon by the general body, is allocated to relevant partner organizations, monitored periodically, and coordinated by the secretariat. Hence, the secretariat needs to employ a full-time team to achieve the same. The team would consist of

- Personnel responsible for coordinating core operations (pre, during, and post disaster) by facilitating collaboration and coordination among the relevant partner organizations and entities involved in a response effort, mitigation, and learning.
• Personnel responsible for administering and coordinating the internal affairs of the alliance’s organization management affairs like coordinating with representatives from partners regarding objectives for the year, progress, challenges that need the alliance’s input, engagement with current partners etc.
• Personnel responsible for coordinating the alliance’s external organization building activities, via partners and by self, like fundraising, engagement with potential partners, promoting the alliance’s work to build visibility and clout etc.

It is also crucial that the Secretariat function with the core values identified by Goonj (as mentioned above) as its central guiding principles to ensure impact.

Core Operations: Addressing Disaster Management Needs

**Pre-Disaster**
- The secretariat shares the alliance’s mitigation, contribution and preparedness goals with different relevant partner organizations’ representatives and knowledge and expertise partners for the year post the general body finalizes the same
- The relevant organizations engage in internal strategizing, planning and execution of objectives and relay concerns and challenges to the secretariat, where alliance input/help is needed. The secretariat coordinates required response

**During Disaster**
- Once the board triggers response to a disaster, the secretariat and CEO decide on drawing in relevant experts and community organizations (other on ground personnel) to assess the nature of the disaster and decide upon the appropriate plan of action, along with deciding upon resources to be drawn from the pool
- An executive committee comprising of representative of all active orgs is set up to plan coordinate efforts. A chief is elected who is supported by personnel from the secretariat to coordinate efforts. The committee also appoints a spokesperson and a government liaison for coherent communication with important external stakeholders

**Post Disaster**
- The secretariat collates information from the ground and coordinates the drawing of a plan for recovery in conjunction with relevant partners and the communities affected.
- The secretariat coordinates the adoption of learnings collated by time volunteers/experts from a response experience into the preparedness plan and routine response plans for future cycles

*Figure 12: Core Operations – Addressing Disaster Management Needs*
7.7 Risks

In this section, we aim to outline some risks that may threaten the alliance from achieving the intended public value and impact. These risks straddle domains, from potential operational inefficiencies, purpose misalignments, and governance issues. As external participants, we are likely to have missed key elements, or over emphasized on some elements. Goonj, with its expertise and experience, will have a clearer view of the risks and may have already done extensive risk mapping.

- As the organization scales, the steering committee may need to carefully invest in the secretariat. While it is currently envisioned to play a central to support the alliance, it cannot not grow large enough to become a super structure. This will create inefficiency, replacing the work which partners would undertake, thus eventually leading to lower investments from participating organizations.
- Through various stages of the growth, the triggering criteria for disasters – where to act and where not to act will continue to remain an area of tension. The leadership needs to engage in constant temperature checks to ensure this tension remains moderate. The management committee also needs to continue to update and revise the triggering criteria based on feedback and elicit buy-in from the steering committee and general counsel.
- Constant monitoring and evaluation of the impact is necessary to ensure the alliance continues to create net public value and impact vis-à-vis the tension and problems that are bound to arise when several organizations with varied objectives and competencies are working together.
- The governance structures also need to continually evolve to effectively address any potential tension which are bound to arise from the autonomy of organizations getting impeded and as they adjust to a new way of intense collaboration and feedback loops. Governance is also important to constantly align interests towards common purpose, while creating space for organizations to achieve their own mission and donor targets.
- Another key risk here as the organization scales is when the ‘free rider’ problem arises – organizations joining for the clout, information, and resources without contributing towards the
larger mission. Monitoring and evaluation of efforts is key to effective tracking and maintaining the morale within the organization.

- The alliance needs to leverage its clout and visibility to ensure the organization raises more resources for the entire ecosystem – to serve alliance activities as well for individual members, while bringing new players into the ecosystem. If the alliance fails to do this, it will only agglomerate current resources to achieve efficiency gains in better coordinating the current resources and capacity within the ecosystem.
Launch and Scale

8.1 Approach

The following section details the framework adopted by Goonj to scale the alliance.

As detailed above in the scope of activities, the alliance will seek to achieve end-to-end transformation of India’s disaster response landscape. However, with a bias for action, the alliance would like to act as soon as possible and create effective impact on the landscape. Goonj has decided to adopt the following approach to the organization for scaling, designed and rooted in Goonj’s work, which will be centered on Goonj and founding ‘champions’ current expertise and strengths.

To achieve momentum, the alliance will start with what it does well and where action is needed to reduce suffering (pre-disaster, when disaster occurs, relief and rehabilitation as defined earlier in scope of work). The alliance will then later scale in the medium-to-long term to incrementally respond in a manner that encompasses the entire lifecycle and wider stakeholders that can amplify impact via further deliberate preparedness for response and continuous learning from consecutive cycles. This applies to disasters as well, where the alliance can work, in types of disasters and in regions where it has experience and expertise, scaling to others over time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What we do well</td>
<td>What we do but don’t do that well yet</td>
<td>What new things will we start doing this year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will do more of</td>
<td>Will improve in the Short Term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(build on strengths)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over time, we transition from box 3 to box 2 and then box 1. And new areas will populate box 3.

*Figure 13: Approach for Scaling*

In summary, the alliance will focus on starting with activities and projects which are ‘low hanging fruits’, which help deliver the biggest change in value of performance – delivering ‘bang for the buck’. The impact in the initial stages will primarily arise from efficiency gains. As the organization scales in the medium term, it will start achieving increased capacity gains to expand to high impact areas in the lifecycle and tackle more disasters. Over the long-term, it will achieve the ideal state.
8.2 Dimensions for Scale

In this section, we outline the key dimensions for scaling.

There are three key dimensions to achieve scale over time for this initiative. This builds on Goonj’s approach in the section above, to gradually scale in intensity on all dimensions to eventually achieve ideal state along all three in the long-term.

- **Disaster Response Lifecycle**: The Alliance will further undertake a breadth of activities across the entire disaster response lifecycle to solve for the issues and be effective. This is a key dimension to phase and incrementally add organizations with varied competencies.

- **Geography**: For a country of India’s sheer scale, size, and complexity in terms of topography, the alliance must intentionally add capacity and participation from organizations with a focus and expertise in specific regions and terrains. It will be impossible to achieve this end-to-end capacity across regions without intentionally focusing on geography as a factor, and geographical focus can be a key factor for our scaling plan.

- **Types and Quantum of Disasters**: Important factors to consider here are types of disaster (floods, droughts etc.), novelty of disaster (routine vs novel), unattended vs attended, to decide where the alliance can further develop its activities. It is also important to quantify the extent of disasters it wants to play in.
References

5 “Annual Reports.”
6 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Organizations – the world’s largest humanitarian network
9 Professor Herman B. (Dutch) Leonard, George F. Baker Jr. is Professor of Public Management at the Harvard Kennedy School and Eliot I. Snider and Family Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School
10 This framework for thinking about disaster management from a distilled lens of risk mitigation in preparation and response has been conceptualized by Professor Herman B. (Dutch) Leonard.


