

Sector Profile for Disaster Management

Background:

India is vulnerable to natural disasters due to its vast unique geo-climatic conditions. About 60% of the landmass is prone to earthquakes of various intensities; over 40 million hectares is prone to floods; about 8% of the total area is prone to cyclone; nearly 15% of landmass or 0.49 million Sq.Km. area is prone to landslides; 68% of the area is susceptible to drought and Tsunami is also a threat now after recent devastating Tsunami of 2004.

India has more than 1760 Major Accident Hazard (MAH) Units handling large number of chemicals as raw materials, in processes, products, wastes with flammable, explosives, corrosive, toxic & noxious properties. Any accident involving these may have an adverse impact on both business & environment. Large quantities of chemicals are also stored/ processed in industries that are located in densely populated areas. Inappropriate, haphazard construction and lack of awareness, preparedness on part of the community further enhances their vulnerability. Apart from MAH units numerous industrial clusters of Small & Medium Industries exists in India which are more vulnerable and every day in and out incidences of fire, accidents, casualties occur. Thus, it becomes imperative to strengthen prevention, preparedness and mitigation activities to minimize the incidences of chemical accidents/disasters in the country. It is also important to set up an effective mechanism to respond to such disasters, if at all occurred, in spite of implementation of safety measures identified in on-site/ off-site plans. The compound losses suffered by the industries including direct, indirect and secondary losses are colossal and virtually incalculable. At the global level too, the basic disaster frequency and the losses imposed by them are steadily mounting.

FICCI as an apex industry association in the country has chosen Disaster Management as a pronounced focus area not only for the attention of the industrial sector but also for Statutory Agencies, NGOs, District & State Authorities. Industries have large resources, capacity and can play a huge role in disaster management, especially to meet the challenges posed by increasing disasters in the country.

It was in September 2004, when FICCI formed a strategic alliance with National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and in 2006 with National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Government of India to build up capacity of the nation in Disaster Management. Since then FICCI had held conferences and exhibitions all over India spreading awareness and evolving new planning/policies for the disaster risk reduction.

Research and Development:

Indian Industry's perspective towards disaster management is changing, as the number of instances is increasing, from rescue relief and rehabilitation to prevention, preparedness and management. Some industries have developed products which can be used in prevention, preparedness, rescue, relief and rehabilitation of the disaster victims. Many medical companies are devising kits which can be used in different disaster situations. Industries are also researching on how to avoid biological disasters or how to safeguard from viruses/bacteria which may spread communicable diseases of mass destruction.

FICCI through its Centre for Technology Commercialization have marketed few technologies, equipment, instruments developed by DRDO, Industry for disaster management sector. Some of the technologies are : Sanjeevani – A technology device which can be used in rescue operations for finding out victims who are alive and buried under the debris, it senses their breathe and identify them. Foldable Kot - is a multipurpose floating stretcher. ThinkHealth has developed Multipurpose Rescue Kit/First Aid Kit as well as an automated CPR machine which can be of help during cardiac attacks. BCMS: Business Continuity Management System, which is an algorithm and software to monitor, track and automate DR drills and failovers for heterogeneous environments. Apart from these there are several other CBRN and CIDM technologies which do help to manage disasters effectively and efficiently.