



Event Report  
On

**Two-Day  
Academia Conference on  
Disaster Reporting and  
Mass Communication Curriculum**

Islamabad  
30th – 31st August 2013

*Organized by:*  
Society for Alternative  
Media and Research  
(SAMAR)

*In Collaboration With:*  
Oxfam Novib

**Compiled By: Gohar Khan**





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## 1. Background

The need for engaging the faculty of mass communication departments of the universities emerged from recent disasters in Pakistan; to use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels and also include seeing possibilities and value for use of such knowledge in curriculum and linking it with academic activities. This may strengthen the faculty for its role to produce a community of young and fresh professionals for media sector; for reporting and preparing analysis on impact of disasters on life and society in economic, social and cultural context throughout all stages of the disaster i.e. pre, post and during the disasters. This also aimed to sharpen skills and capability of students for generation of knowledge to feed and influence policy processes. Mainstreaming Disaster and Risk Reduction (DRR) in journalism training is essential for engaging future journalists/media persons with the support of their teachers.

Society for Alternative Media and Research (SAMAR) has been engaged with different mass communication/Journalism departments in the country to streamline DRR in journalistic practice and education. From its engagement with these journalism departments and subsequent feedback from the faculty and students, SAMAR is of the view to streamline/institutionalize disaster education for future media professionals in the Mass Communication/Journalism departments in the country and design a consultative and comprehensive policy/framework for disaster reporting syllabus for journalism students.

## 2. Objectives

The object of Academia Conference was to develop a draft of recommendations for improvement of Mass Communication Curriculum by inclusion of Disaster reporting related topics and contents in the curriculum by connecting the academia from different universities nationwide. Whilst ensuring the representation of the universities located in the disaster prone regions of the country. In order



*Participants engaged in discussion*

to achieve this objective, SAMAR, in collaboration with OxfamNovib, organized a “Two-day Academia Conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum” on 30<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> August 2013 in Islamabad.

The main objective of the conference can be summarized as follows:

1. Identify the areas where Disaster related topics can be included.
2. Propose disaster curriculum for further discussion among senior academia of universities for approval.
3. Suggest procedure for further consultation on relevant inter-university forums.
4. Develop recommendations for formal process to approve the curriculum by the Universities.

### 3. Participants

The conference was chaired by Prof Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh, Chairman, HEC's National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication, Other Participants included Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Khan, Secretary, National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication, Dr. Seemi Naghmana, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Federal Urdu University, Karachi, Dr. Noor Muhammad Jamali, Dean, Faculty of Commerce and Business, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Dr. Tauseef Ahmed Khan, Chairman, Department of Mass Communication, Federal Urdu University, Karachi, Dr. Rizwana Chang, Chairperson, Department of Media and Mass Communication, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Dr. Tahir Masood, Chairman, Department of Mass Communication, University of Karachi, Ali Imran Bangash, Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication, University of Peshawar, Dr. Baram Ghouri, Assistant Professor, Department of Media and Journalism, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Babrak Niaz, Lecturer, Department of Media and Journalism, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Dr. Mohammad Wasim Akber, Chairman, Department of Mass Communication, Gomal University, D.I. Khan, Dr. Ghulam Shabir, Chairman, Department of Media Studies, Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Dr. Farish Ullah Yousafzai, Chairman, Centre for Media and Communication Studies, University of Gujrat, Irfan Aziz, Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication, Federal Urdu University, Karachi, Prof Shamim Arif Qureshi, Director Colleges, Prof. Akram Mirani, Superior Science College, Multan, Dr. Shamim Mahmood Zaidi, Chairperson, Communication and Media Studies, FJWU, Rawalpindi and Mr. Mohammad Ali, Lecturer, Communication and Media Studies, FJWU, Rawalpindi. While the representatives of civil society organizations and media persons also joined the discourse. The SAMAR team was comprised of Mazhar Arif, Ashraf Kakar, Adam Malik, Arshad Rizvi and Jaffar Mehdi.

### 4. Resource Person

Mr. Zafar Ullah Khan, Director, Centre for Civic Education

### 5. Proceedings of Day-One

#### 5.1. Core Themes

The proceedings of day-one were based on following core themes:

- Objective of the conference

- Role of Media in Disaster Reduction
- Investigative Media Products by university Students and Journalists on DRR
- Exhibition of Media products/documentaries
- Draft Syllabus of Disaster Reporting
- Discussion

### 5.1.1. Objective of the conference

Mazhar Arif, Executive Director, SAMAR, after his welcome note, said that SAMAR with the collaboration of Oxfam-Novib decided to start this endeavor from the departments of mass communication of different universities which provide the basis for learning to the media professionals. He said that after frequent interaction with the students of mass communication at different universities it was learnt that the students need information on the concept and nature of disaster which is a crucial and wide-ranging subject and should be taught accordingly. He said that the academia cooperated with SAMAR by assigning related projects to their students, which will be shown in this conference. After our visits to different universities it was finally proposed to engage the academia for a discourse on this theme in order to chart out a way forward to make it the part of curriculum, he added. He expressed gratitude to all the worthy participants for their response and requested them to educate their students about disaster and disaster reporting, so that when they leave to serve in the field as a professional, they must be having the in-depth understanding of all the related aspects. He further added that *“information is life”* is one of the many other definitions of information, as if timely communicated it can save the life, livelihood, belongings and villages from the aftermath of disasters, but the question arises is how such information should be communicated; as such a course of information can be divided into three parts namely as *“pre -*



Participants of the conference





Mr. Mazhar Arif (Executive Director, SAMAR, Islamabad) introducing objectives of the conference

*disaster*”, “*during disaster*” and “*post-disaster*”. And a Journalist must know what and how to inform during all these phases of disaster, he concluded.

Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Khan, Secretary, National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication, while sharing his perspective about the conference said that the basic purpose of this discourse is to find out the ways to educate and prepare our students for future disasters, as the region all of us are living in is frequently hit by natural disasters like heavy floods, earthquakes and land sliding, besides the students should also be educated about man-made disasters which include industrial, chemical, biological and many other forms of disaster. He said that this conference has provided us the opportunity to interact and share our perspective with each other which will end to a productive outcome.

Prof Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh, Chairman, HEC's National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication, and the Chairperson of the conference in his inaugural address said that *it is the time to revisit our curriculum, as by looking in the history of communication studies from late 50's up to early 80's we can hardly find any potential enhancement in this field, and this period is considered as the dark age in the history of communication studies when the people had been relying on the same theories and paradigms for decades and decades*". He added that 21<sup>st</sup> century is the age when the technology changes after six months and the newer body of knowledge replaces the older one making it very challenging for the young professionals especially the teachers to cope with. He said that the basic motive of this discourse is to design the curriculum in a form of capsule which can be inducted in the departmental curricula in an appropriate fashion for a degree, diploma, certificate or any other suitable programme.

He further added that the phenomenon of disaster whether natural or man-made has become a universally agreed notion equally acknowledged by the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> world scholars and there is no

more controversy on this reality. He while expressing his remarks on the draft of proposed curriculum for disaster reporting by Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Khan termed it a viable outline and urged for adding importance of alternative media by calling it a best underutilized substitute. He further highlighted the duties of journalists and the responsibilities of the media owners towards disaster reporting and related aspects and also suggested basis for the designing of curriculum to the faculty members. He concluded his inaugural address on a rare note of appreciation for SAMAR and Oxfam-Novib and termed the conference as the first ever event of its kind in the academic history of Pakistan.

### 5.1.2. Role of Media in Disaster Reduction

Mr. Zafar Ullah Khan, Director Centre for Civic Education, while sharing his views about the role of media in disaster reduction said that media generally reports about disaster in a disastrous manner, and by and large ignores the issues which lead to disasters. He further stated that when we talk about disaster reporting it should be civilizational reporting as well, *“as we are talking about a society where a thousands of years ago in Mohenjodaro the inhabitant knew the zoning policy, that how residential area to be differentiated from the commercial districts, and look at the reverse civilizational journey as today the residential areas have been converted in to commercial markets in all the urban districts, which is a disaster in its self, a disaster in our neighborhood, making us vulnerable, so for me disaster reporting also mean the civilization which include how we live, our zoning policies, irrigation and agriculture system”*.

He said that we have to think about the state of preparedness in case of disasters like fire, blast, high rainfall, floods and earth quake, and the scope of disaster reporting should be expanded to risk,



From left to right: Dr. Seemi Naghmana (Dean Faculty of Arts, Wafaqi Urdu University, Karachi), Prof. Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh (Chairman HEC’s National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication & Dean, Department of Mass Communication, Superior College, Lahore) and Dr. Muhammad Ashrak Khan (Secretary, HEC’s National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication & Chairman, Department of Mass Communications, BZU, Multan).



environment, agriculture, governance and institutions, which are the related aspects and should be covered through investigative reporting. He further said that he post disaster situations should also be taken in account by highlighting the discrimination against women during the relief work and civic indiscipline growing as a modern cultural practice in our societies should also be discouraged through media. He concluded his address on the remarks that the public service messages should be given the appropriate space in state-owned and private media in accordance with the PEMRA regulations.

### 5.1.3. Investigative Media Products by Students and Journalists on DRR

Ashraf Kakar, Communication Manager, SAMAR, while focusing on the media products produced by the students of Mass Communication from various universities and working journalist of disaster prone areas said that six documentaries and four investigative reports have been produced overall. He said the Media Initiative in Disaster Reduction has been initiated by SAMAR with the collaboration of Oxfam Novib, to broaden and strengthen the role of media in disaster risk reduction in Pakistan. *SAMAR has been carrying out this project from last six months by engaging faculty and students of three public sector universities in the country namely as, Bahauddin Zikriya University, BZU, Multan, Federal Urdu University, Karachi and University of Sind, Jamshoro.* He added that SAMAR conducted seminars, held meetings in these universities and granted fellowships to the students for producing investigative reports and documentaries regarding disaster reduction and disaster reporting while related guidelines for conducting research work were also provided by SAMAR.

He discussed four research studies conducted by the students of Department of Mass Communication, BZU, Multan. The first study *“The case studies of vulnerable communities of*



Mr. Zafarullah Khan (Executive Director, Center for Civic Education, Islamabad) and Mr. Ashraf Kakkar (Communication Manager, SAMAR)



*District Muzaffargarh (Post Disaster)*”, has been researched by Mohammad Azam Gil, the second study was *“Resilient characters during disaster”* conducted by Sher Mohammad Khan, the third study was *“Women role in coping with the disaster”* by Palwasha Khan, and the fourth study was titled as *“Vulnerability assessment of Muzaffargarh (Pre-disaster).”* All of these studies, supervised and coordinated by Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Khan, represented Pre, during and post disaster situation and highlighted the resilience of the community members and the role of women in disaster. He further discussed on three documentaries from Department of Mass Communication, University of Sind, Jamshoro, and one from Federal Urdu University, Karachi, titled as *“Cyclones on coastal areas”*, *“The heroes of Nation, the hidden people”*, *“Role of women in coping with the disaster”* and *“Baldia town factory fire”* correspondingly.

#### **5.1.4. Exhibition of Media products/documentaries**

Ashraf Kakar, Communication Manager, SAMAR, circulated the copies of four research studies conducted by the students of BZU among the participants of the conference and subsequently projected the documentaries produced by the students of University of Sind, Jamshoro and Federal Urdu University, Karachi, respectively.

#### **5.1.5. Draft Syllabus of Disaster Reporting**

Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Khan while presenting the proposed draft of Curriculum for Disaster Reporting expressed that Pakistan is among one of the most vulnerable countries in terms of disaster and there is a prevalent need to introduce disaster reporting as a permanent study in the departments of Mass Communication nationwide, so the syllabus designed by him is being presented to the participants in order to engage the academia from all the universities to contribute their share through a comprehensive discourse followed by the formation of three working groups to propose related recommendations for the discussion. He further added that the proposed draft syllabus will provide a base for the discussion and deliberation for finalizing a course outline with the mutual consensus of all the participants of this conference.

#### **5.1.6. Discourse**

Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh, Chairperson opened the house for discussion by emphasizing on specific suggestions for assigning themes to each working group in order to avoid the unnecessary recurrence of topics, so that each group may further concentrate accordingly on the given theme to suggest recommendations for the final draft.

Dr. Tahir Masood said since Pakistan is facing a worst wave of terrorism and has a greater threat from terrorism as compare to the natural disasters as the loss of lives in result of many terrorist activities reaches to hundreds, so should such incidents may also be attributed as disasters; an unambiguous definition of disaster is essential to provide the basis for course outline, he added.

Dr. Mohammad Wasim Akber stated that the disaster reporting is generally never carried out in the normal circumstances, so the security and protection of the journalists and media persons must be incorporated in the outline.

Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh while responding to Dr. Waseem, said that we are here to design a normative module, so we have to be specific and precise. He said that this topic relates to media



From left to right: Dr. Noor Muhammad Jamali (Dean, Faculty of Commerce and Business, University of Sindh, Jamshoro), Dr. Shamim Mahmood Zaidi (Chairman, Department of Communications and Media Studies, FJWU, Rawalpindi) and Mr. Muhammad Ali (Lecturer, Department of Communications and Media Studies, FJWU, Rawalpindi)

ethics which can be added in the ethics section.

Dr. Ashraf Khan added that the topic of Media ethics is already included in the checklist mentioned in the proposed draft.

Dr. Tauseef Ahmed believed that the case studies in the course outline must also incorporate the case studies of industrial disasters.

Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh said that we will emphasize on the disastrous effects of disaster rather than discussing the philosophy and politics of disaster.

Dr. Ashraf Khan shared a definition of disaster by an international organization named as IFRC, which states that; “Any incident or event in which more than 5 persons are killed and hundred persons are injured is called as disaster”. IFRC compiles the world disaster reports, he added.

Dr. Rizwana Chang alleged that the industrial disaster in Karachi could be an act of terrorism.

Prof. Akram Mirani said that the State's ideology itself is contributing to the threat of disasters in the country, he supported his argument by quoting some examples, and stressed on introduction of neutral ideologies in the curriculum.

Dr. Farish Ullah suggested for assigning, *pre, during and post disaster* themes to the three working groups, respectively.

Irfan Aziz said that the proposed outline lacks the context, since the disaster reporting is not a new syllabus in rest of the world and has a historical context as well; *Annenberg Washington Program, The Tempere Declaration on Disaster Communication and IDNDR Yokohama Conference* must also be incorporated in the syllabus, which are being studied as a starting context worldwide. He further said that three steps are mentioned in the syllabus as *pre, during and post disaster* while the *non-disaster* step which submits to the identification of those areas which can be hit by the disasters, should also be made the part. The basics of reporting must also be included in the syllabus and it should be started by elementary stage, he further added.

Dr. Noor Muhammad Jamali stated that if this course will be included in the compulsory or optional subjects as a chapter then students will take more interest and it is up to the chairmen and faculty members to introduce it as a subject or chapter.

Dr. Seemi Naghmana said that because the name of the course is *disaster reporting*, it differentiates it from the other forms of reporting and there is always an element of tragedy attached to report the disaster so the language, style and diction of disaster reporting must also be incorporated in the syllabus.

Dr. Ashraf Khan added that the section of drills is already included in the proposed syllabus which refers to writing style, conceptualization and language; the teachers can guide and assign the students accordingly.

Dr. Baram Ghouri shared that there is another important aspect of disaster, not covered in the proposed syllabus, known as internal or external migration which is a massive and continuous human tragedy; Pakistan has undergone two of such tragedies so far, one from India and the other from Afghanistan, so it is imperative to integrate the socio-cultural and human impacts of disaster in the disaster reporting, he stressed.

Dr. Seemi Naghmana seconded Dr. Baram Ghouri, by adding that as an aftermath of war on terror in Afghanistan more than a million people migrated creating a demographic upset in Balochistan and ultimately re-shaping the ethno-political issues in the region, which have their long term human and political implications. Since we are trying to focus on disaster in terms of development not politics but its political dimension cannot be completely ignored, she added.

Dr. Baram Ghouri further added that when we cover the disaster, it affects the government and politics in the country and at times when media highlights the corruption in foreign aids, it certainly creates political issues. Thousands of Bugti tribesmen migrated from their region after the assassination of Nawab Akber Khan Bugti, and are still living in troubled conditions but media has abstained from covering their sufferings, he said. He again stressed on integration of this issue in the curriculum, by terming it as a *basic human concern*, he stated that the students must be aware of the ground realities and their impacts otherwise they will merely be following the popular commercial values and trends of media.

Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh while responding to the standpoint of Baram Ghouri said that the discussion on migration issues might create many problems and according to Social Sciences consensus a Social Scientist must remain objective and not go beyond his or her value norms while interpreting a data, otherwise the outcome will be attributed as biased.

The discussion was formally concluded by Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Khan after announcement of the names of Group Leaders and members for three working groups.

### 5.1.7. Working Groups

Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Khan announced the names of Group Leaders for three working groups; the groups were lead by Dr. Seemi Naghmana, Dr. Thair Masood and Dr. Faraish Ullah respectively. While the members of Dr. Seemi Naghmana's group included Prof. Chang Rizwana Dr. Mohammad Waseem Akber, Dr. Ghulam Shabbir and Babrak Niaz, Dr. Tahir Masood's group comprised of Ali Imran Bangash, Dr. Noor Mohammad Jamali, Dr. Akram Mirani and Dr. Shamim Arif Qureshi, whereas Dr. Farish Ullah's group included Dr. Baram Ghouri, Dr. Tauseef Ahmed Khan and Irfan Aziz. These working groups after a detailed session of consultation finalized the recommendations with regards to their respective topics, which were presented on the second day of conference.



## 6. Proceedings of Day-Two

### 6.1. Core Themes

The proceedings of Day-Two were based on following core themes:

- Recommendation by the faculty for curriculum
- The Recommendations
- Conclusion

#### 6.1.1. Recommendation by the Faculty for Curriculum

Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Khan opened this session with the permission of Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh and requested the Group Leaders of three Working groups to present their proposed recommendations before the participants of the conference, correspondingly.

##### (A). First Working Group

Dr. Tahir Masood, the group Leader, while presenting the recommendations made by his group said that only a few additions in the proposed draft had been made where needed, *the context of disaster reporting and ethics of media* had been added along with the *role and responsibilities*, while the *ethics and responsibility* had been placed separately in order to grasp more emphasize on the responsibilities and requirements. However it should be the responsibility of the teacher to further explain the requirements in detail to the students, he added. He conveyed that *the terrorism* had also been added in the definition of the disaster by keeping in view the current wave of terrorism in the country. In addition to it, *follow up* of disaster reporting had been incorporated to highlight the need of persistent follow up of the disastrous incidents, as generally such incidents get out of focus on main stream media in a couple of days or were replaced by new issues and incidents, he concluded.



Participants engaged with group work



Participants engaged with group work

## Comments

Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh commented on the recommendations presented by the first group and stated that, as these recommendation are related to the establishing contextual part of the curriculum so it's appreciable to integrate the context of disaster reporting in this section, however the chapters of *meaning and parameters of disaster reporting* should also be placed in the same section, moreover before going to the reporting a topic titled as “*Why disaster reporting*” should be incorporated to highlight the significance of the topic. He further added that the topic attributed as “*follow up*” may be made the part as a drill or component of *checklist* rather than a separate topic, because there are different requirements and parameters of *follow up* for different types of disaster, which make it non-viable to design related content.

Dr. Seemi Naghmana while responding on the comments of Dr. Mughees Uddin stressed on the significance of *follow up* and urged for its incorporation as an integral topic.

Dr. Tahir Masood while seconding the suggestions of Dr. Seemi Naghmana added that all the parameters of *follow up* referring to different forms of disaster should be drafted appropriately in order to be included as a comprehensive topic.

Irfan Aziz in his comments on the remarks by Dr. Mughess Uddin Sheikh stated that the *follow up* as an activity needed drilling and training. As after every incident an activity was carried out in which the journalist analyzed the continuous after affects of that particular incident, in the same pattern related drills and assignments could be chalked out for the students as well. He further added that there was sufficient literature available on different aspects of *follow up* within the country and abroad which might be suggested to the students for in-depth study.

Dr. Mughees while responding on the comments of Irfan Aziz said that if there was sufficient literature available which could cover this topic in detail then we should first produce a specific teaching module on this topic.

Ali Imran Bangash articulated that the topic of migration and demographic shift was still missing in the syllabus despite the recommending by a fellow participant.

Dr. Tahir Masood responded to the question of Ali Imran Bangash by saying that after a detailed discussion on this issue it had ultimately been decided with the mutual consensus not to include migration as a topic for disaster reporting curriculum. He further explained that it had been learnt that there are many shapes and patterns of migration, discussing most of which might result in creating severe controversies, whereas the coverage of IDP's had been incorporated in the syllabus, he added.

Dr. Farish Ullah while discussing the media ethics stated that ethics and responsibilities were already being taught thoroughly by us while the *follow up* should be done in accordance with the news values, to avoid unnecessary *follow up* of an event.

Dr. Baram Ghouri added that the *follow up* stories in the context of disaster reporting were very crucial in order to cover different socio-economic aspects related to post disaster scenario, so its exclusion will create a vacuum in the syllabus of disaster.

Mazhar Arif commented that *follow up* in disaster reporting referred to rehabilitation and other similar activities and was already a component in post disaster.

## Comments

Irfan Aziz responding to the recommendation suggested that a lot of research work has been done on the nexus of “disaster and development” and “development and corruption worldwide” so disaster and development should be incorporated as a separate topic. While disaster management and preparedness are two different concepts referring two different phases of disaster which cannot be replaced with each other, he juxtaposed.

Mazhar Arif while commenting on preparedness stressed for incorporating risk identification within the context of preparedness by highlighting its importance and relevance through examples.

Ali Imran Bangash suggested replacing the word “Nexus” with any other appropriate synonym; he supported his suggestion with the argument that “Nexus” is mainly used to refer negative liaison.

Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Khan responded to the suggestion of Imran Ali Bangash and proposed word “Relationship” to be replaced with “Nexus”, and finally changed the title of the topic by naming it “Disaster and development”.

Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Khan concluded the debate on the recommendation presented by the first working group by elucidating that the *follow up* as an integral component of post disaster phase was already a part of the proposed draft syllabus which addresses all the related aspects stressed out by the different participants, since the topics could also be expanded or interpreted consequently by the teachers themselves.

### (B). Second Working Group

Dr. Farish Ullah, Group Leader of 2<sup>nd</sup> working group presented the recommendations proposed by his group. He said that for the concept of preparedness, the word “preparedness” may be altered with “management”.



## Comments

Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Khan while commenting on the proposed recommendations by Dr. Seemi Naghmana appreciated the set of proposed elaborations and concluded the session on the suggestion to integrate the proposed case studies as an annexure of the draft syllabus.

### (C). Third Working Group

Dr. Seemi Naghmana, Group Leader of the third working group said that a few topics in the proposed draft syllabus had been further elaborated during the group discussion. Non disaster phase underscoring certain preemptive measures had been incorporated in the draft by keeping in view the need for pre disaster exercises on potential disaster areas, she juxtaposed. She stated that pre disaster phase had also been convoluted by adding liaison with related departments, International security protocols for the journalists and related socio cultural norms in addition to rescue operation with special focus on outbreak of crimes in disaster hit areas during disasters, whereas the post disaster phase had been supplemented by the components of psychological and physical rehabilitation with specific focus on women and children.

The checklist had been further elaborated with additions the journalist must make ensure before leaving for field including food, clothing, first aid kit, identity documents and mobile with batteries, as all of these are essential for field reporting during disaster, while in the section of drills and assignments the student had been asked to develop at least a single story or feature article regarding any disaster, she added. Besides, she also stated that the suggested case studies which had been specified with the context of Pakistan, relate to all types of disasters which included Drought of Sind and Balochistan (Natural Disaster), The recent incident of Jail break at D.I. Khan (Terrorism), Crash of Air blue, Islamabad (Accidental disaster), incident of fire in Baldia town, Karachi (Industrial Disaster), Floods of 2010 and Earth quake of 2008 (Natural Disaster), assassination of Benazir Bhutto and Nawab Akber Khan Bugti (Political Disaster).

### 6.1.2. The Recommendations

The follow up of this conference was recommended as extremely substantial for the way forward, however the main recommendations for way forward are as under:

1. It has been the first visible activity on Disaster Reporting so far, thanks to SAMAR for creating this opportunity; the follow ups of this conference are recommended as highly substantial for the way forward.
2. This academic conference was a starting step and as many universities were missing in this conference; it is recommended that all the universities nationwide should be divided into two zones in order to initiate a comprehensive framework consistent interaction among the faculty members and students. Separate meetings for these zones are recommended to tackle the proceedings more effectively.
3. At later stage, a combined session for all the universities nationwide should be arranged in order to design 'Teacher Training Modules' and finalizing the course outline for disaster reporting in accordance to the specific geographic perspectives of different zones / areas.



*Dr. Mughees Uddin Sheikh and Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Khan*

4. Mechanism for the training of 'In service Journalists' is also imperative, Mass Communication departments of all the universities can extend their support to SAMAR.
5. Disaster Reporting should meanwhile be initiated as a Topic/Optional subject in the curriculum of Mass Communications in all the universities, while it can also be introduced as a certificate course (if feasible) in accordance with the need of university.
6. The departments must design diverse projects to develop field interest among the students; such projects may include Field Stories, Audio/Visual Reports and Documentaries etc.
7. Periodic lecture sessions / workshops by SAMAR should be organized for the academia in different universities or for a select group of faculty members from various departments of Mass Communication.
8. The senior faculty members must develop a strong relationship with the co-members and students for the promotion and sensitization of the importance of Disaster Reporting as a crucial topic/subject.
9. Annual awards for the journalists working on disaster reporting must be initiated by SAMAR with the assistance of donors / partners.
10. Books and inclusive literature regarding Disaster Reporting in Urdu / local languages must be produced through coordinated efforts.
11. Finally, the participants of this conference recommend the SAMAR and Oxfam-Novib to organize the follow up conferences to finalise all purposed activities with much more productive strategies.



### 6.1.3. Conclusion

Dr. Muhghees uddin Sheikh, Chairperson concluded the Two-day Academic conference by expressing appreciation for SAMAR and affirmation of trust in its team and leadership for prospective liaison. He added that this conference was a starting point which played an important role to sensitize the academia about the significance of this crucial aspect of reporting and also provided us the opportunity to interact and learn from each other. He hoped that this effort would lead towards a productive outcome in the form of curriculum, trainings and academic synchronization nationwide.

Mr. Mazhar Arif, Executive Director SAMAR in his concluding remarks uttered gratitude for the members of academia for their participation and valuable recommendations. He said that SAMAR had started working on disaster reporting five years back, with a dream to engage academia for this purpose, which had ultimately materialized today in the shape of an inclusive draft syllabus and concrete recommendations for way forward. He expressed that the rapidly evolving media trends stipulate the academia and civil society to promote media literacy among the students and masses in order to confront the negative trends. He added that unfortunately the curriculum of Mass media had largely been designed to harmonize market values, which has resulted in decline of journalistic ethics and humanitarian principles, he phrased disaster reporting as “*humanitarian reporting*” and urged for nurturing the ethical responsibilities among the students and in journalistic practice.

## 7. Outcome of The Conference

- Finalization of proposed draft syllabus for the curriculum of disaster reporting
- Draft of recommendations for way-forward
- Production and circulation of media products/documentaries
- Productive interaction among the academia for potential outcome Sensitization regarding the significance of disaster reporting

# Annexure 1 - Draft of Proposed Course

## PROPOSED COURSE ON DISASTER REPORTING

### Objectives of the Course

This proposed course outline provides basic concepts and case studies that can be customized as a module in a course as part of the overall curriculum of a journalism course in universities and institutes. This content also provides conceptual and technical aspects of disaster reduction reporting and methods/material for journalism students to cater the need of reporting disaster and disaster preparedness.

### Content

It includes the following content:

- Historical Perspective: Context of Disaster Reporting: Annenberg Washington Program, The Tempere Declaration on Disaster Communication and IDNDR Yokohama Conference. National Disaster Management Ordinance 2006; National Disaster Management Commission, National, Provincial and District Management Commissions.
- Introduction of disaster reporting, role and responsibility and ethics of media while reporting disasters
- Definition of disaster, types of disasters; natural and non-natural, brief description of various natural and non-natural disasters;terrorism , flood, drought, cyclone, earthquake, wildfires and landslide, chemical/industrial and coverage of IDPs and accident and biological related disasters etc. and their impact.
- Disaster and development
- Conceptual and technical aspects of disaster management, elements of disaster management, role of media in disaster preparedness.
- Reporting disaster; before, during and after disaster phase reporting, check list of reporters to cover different phases, drills and assignments on different disaster issues.
- Case studies- Lessons to learn;
- Drought in Balochistan and Thar
- D.I. Khan jail break
- Air blue crash
- Fire in Baldia Town
- Floods in 2010
- Earthquake 2005
- Assassination of Benazir and Nawab Akbar Bugti
- etc

Suggested readings:

Kaur, Harpreet; Firdaus, Nagma; Chatterjee, Patralekha.Reporting Disaster and Disaster Preparedness: A Training Handbook. Deutsche GesellschaftfürInternationaleZusammenarbeit (GIZ), Germany. 2012

Sahdeo, Arun. Course Module on Disaster Management for NDRF Commanders. National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), Ministry of Home Affairs, India. 2012

Brigitte Leoni and Tim Radford. Disaster Through a Different Lens-Behind every effect, there is a cause-A Guide for Journalists Covering Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations

Disaster Programme Information and Reporting. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. June 2000.

Disaster Needs Assessment Module, IFRC Disaster Preparedness Training Programme, 2000.

Reporting Disaster on Deadline: A Handbook for Students and Professionals. Lee Wilkins and Martha Steffens by Routledge. 2012.

Reporting on Risk: How the Mass Media Portray Accidents, Diseases, Disasters...

By Eleanor Singer, Phyllis Mildred Endreny

Disaster Communications in a Changing Media World

By Kim S Haddow, George Haddow

- Crisis Communication: Practical PR Strategies for Reputation Management ...  
By Peter Anthonissen
- Constructing the heartland: television news and natural disaster  
Katherine Fry, Hampton Press, 2003 - Language Arts & Disciplines
- Mass Media Operations in a Quick-onset Natural Disaster  
Everett M. Rogers, Rahul Sood
- Disasters, Relief and the Media  
Jonathan Benthall, Sean Kingston Publishing, 2010 - Language Arts & Disciplines
- Disasters 2.0: The Application of Social Media Systems for Modern Emergency ...  
By Adam Crowe
- Response to Disaster: Fact Versus Fiction & Its Perpetuation : the Sociology ...  
By Henry W. Fischer

## Annexure 2 - Draft of Proposed Final Recommendations

### **Final Recommendations from the Members of “Two-day Academic Conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum”**

**Presented by: Dr. Mughess Uddin Sheikh (Chairperson)**

1. It has been the first visible activity on Disaster Reporting so far, thanks to SAMAR for creating this opportunity; the follow ups of this conference are recommended as highly substantial for the way forward.
2. This Academic conference was a starting step and as many Universities were missing in this conference; it is recommended that all the universities nationwide should be divided into two zones in order to initiate a comprehensive framework for consistent interaction among the faculty members and students. Separate meetings for these zones are recommended to tackle the proceedings more effectively.
3. At later stage, a combined session for all the universities nationwide should be arranged in order to design “Teacher Training Modules” and finalizing the course outline for Disaster Reporting in accordance to the specific geographic perspective of different zones/areas.
4. Mechanism for the training of “In Service Journalists” is also imperative; Mass Communication departments of all the universities can extend their support to SAMAR.
5. Disaster Reporting should meanwhile be initiated as a Topic/Optional subject in the curriculum of Mass Communications in all the universities, while it can also be introduced as a certificate course (if feasible) in accordance with the need of university.
6. The departments must design diverse projects to develop field interest among the students; such projects may include Field stories, Audio/Visual reports and Documentaries etc.
7. Periodic Lecture sessions/workshops by SAMAR should be organized for the academia in different universities or for a select

group of faculty members from various departments of Mass Communication.

8. The senior faculty members must develop a strong relationship with the co-members and students for the promotion and sensitization of the importance of Disaster Reporting as crucial topic/subject.
9. Annual awards for the journalists working on disaster reporting must be initiated by SAMAR with the assistance of donors/partners.
10. Books and inclusive literature regarding Disaster Reporting in Urdu/local languages must be produced through coordinated efforts.
11. Finally, the participants of this conference recommend the SAMAR and Oxfam-Novib to organize the follow up conferences to finalize all purposed activities with much more productive strategies.

**Agreed and signed by: (on behalf of all the participants)**

- **Prof. Dr. Mughees-Uddin Sheikh**



Chairman & Convener  
National Curriculum Revision Committee in Mass  
Communication by HEC

- **Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Khan**



Secretary, National Curriculum Revision Committee in Mass  
Communication by HEC

Dated: 31 August, 2013

# Annexure 3 - Select Press Coverage

**Academia Conference on Disaster Reporting & Mass Communication Curriculum by SAMAR**

**HAYYAN GOVWIM**

**T**HEIR is also need to disaster reporting with... (text continues with details of the conference and the role of SAMAR in revising the curriculum for disaster reporting and mass communication.)

**مہمانت کوہ پور، پیر تھانوں سے ہم آہنگی کے باوجود کی اہم ضرورت**

سوات کی ڈراما تھیٹر گروپ نے پیر تھانوں کے ساتھ ہم آہنگی کے باوجود کی اہم ضرورت کو اجاگر کیا۔ (text continues with a report on the drama group's performance and the importance of disaster reporting.)

**The Financial Daily**

**Two-day moot on disaster reporting kicks off**

**ISLAMABAD:** The Two-Day Academic Conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum organized by Society for Alternative Media and Research (SAMAR) with the collaboration of Qafan-Navab commenced Friday in Islamabad.

The "Two-Day Academic Conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum" formally started with the welcome address by Muzhar Anif, Executive Director, SAMAR, in his address he expressed gratitude to all the participants and gave an account of the background and objectives of the conference.

Prof. Dr. Mughes Ud Din in his address called it a rare endeavor, he seconded the perspective shared by Muzhar Anif, expressing that there was a dire need to revamp the curriculum and to streamline the disaster reporting with addition of a comprehensive curriculum in the areas of Mass Communication and Media studies nationwide. He also encouraged the members of academia for their support towards this cause.

Zafar Ullah Khan, Director Centre for Civic Education while addressing the conference explained the tasks and importance of the disaster reporting in its historic perspective and also highlighted the socio-economic and political impacts and implications of disasters and disaster reporting.

Moreover the video presentation was produced by the students of Mass Communication and Working Journalists studies ranging of related investigative research conducted by the students of different universities were also shared and appreciated to the worthy participants of the conference.

Followed by the formation of three working groups for discussion on draft of recommendations for a comprehensive curriculum for the journalism education, these groups will present their recommendations to the committee's session.

**Daily Express**

**Academy conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum begins in Islamabad**

The 2-day conference will conclude on August 31.

The 2-day Academic Conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum organized by Society for Alternative Media and Research with the collaboration of Qafan-Navab commenced on Friday in Islamabad.

The conference is being chaired by Prof. Dr. Mughes Ud Din Shukh, Chairman, National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication, HEC. Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Khan, Secretary National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication, Dr. Saam Naghmana, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Federal Urdu University, Karachi and faculty members from 16 Universities are attending the conference. Speaking on the occasion Muzhar Anif, Executive Director, SAMAR, said the main objective of the conference is to cater the need emerged from recent disasters in Pakistan, to use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels which includes seeing possibilities and value for use of such knowledge in curriculum and linking it with activities in that area. He further added that the Faculty for the media professionals in community of young and fresh professionals for media sector for reporting and preparing analysis on impact of disasters on life and society in economic, social and cultural context throughout all stages of the disaster. Zafar Ullah Khan, Director Centre for Civic Education while addressing the conference explained the tasks and importance of the disaster reporting in its historic perspective and also highlighted the socio-economic and political impacts and implications of disasters and disaster reporting. Moreover the video presentations produced by the students of Mass Communication and working journalists and media

**SAMAR holds academic conference on Disaster Reporting**

**Mass communication curriculum to be revised for effective disaster reporting and analysis**

The two-day academic conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum organized by Society for Alternative Media and Research (SAMAR) with the collaboration of Qafan-Navab commenced on Friday.

The conference is being chaired by National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication Chairman Professor Mughes-ud Din Shukh, Higher Education Commission (HEC), National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication Secretary Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Khan, Federal Urdu University, Karachi Faculty of Arts Dean Dr. Saam Naghmana and distinguished faculty members from sixteen universities nationwide. Other participants include representatives of donor agencies, members of civil society organizations and media persons.

SAMAR Executive Director Muzhar Anif in his welcome address expressed gratitude to the participants and gave an account of the background and objectives of the conference.

He said that the main objective of this conference is to cater to the needs of those affected by recent floods in the country and to educate people and promote a safety culture by incorporating such knowledge in the mass communication curriculum and through academic activities and other various innovative measures.

Muzhar added that this may strengthen the role of faculty in producing a community of young professionals for the media sector for reporting and preparing analysis on impact of disasters on life and society in the economic, social and cultural context throughout all stages of the disaster.

He also suggested to develop a draft of recommendations for improvement of Mass Communication Curriculum by inclusion of Disaster reporting related themes and substance in the course and to streamline Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the journalistic practice and education by designing a consultative and comprehensive framework.

Professor Mughes-ud Din in his address appreciated the initiative taken by SAMAR and called it a rare endeavor and seconded the perspective shared by Muzhar Anif, expressing that there exists a dire need to revamp the curriculum and to streamline disaster reporting with addition of a comprehensive curriculum in the

**Academic conference on disaster reporting**

Saturday, August 31, 2013 - Islamabad — The two-day Academic Conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum organized by Society for Alternative Media and Research (SAMAR) with the collaboration of Qafan-Navab commenced Friday here.

The conference is being chaired by Prof. Dr. Mughes Ud Din Shukh, Chairman, National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication, HEC, other participants include Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Khan, Secretary, National Curriculum Revision Committee for Mass Communication, Dr. Saam Naghmana, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Federal Urdu University, Karachi and distinguished faculty members from 16 Universities nationwide. Other participants include representatives of donor agencies, members of civil society organizations and media persons also joined the discourse.

The "Two-Day Academic Conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum" formally started with the welcome address by M. Muzhar Anif, Executive Director, SAMAR, in his address he expressed gratitude to all the worthy participants and gave an account of the background and objectives of this conference by SAMAR.

He said that the main objective of this conference is to cater the need emerged from recent disasters in Pakistan; to use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels which includes seeing possibilities and value for use of such knowledge in curriculum and linking it with academic activities.

Academia Conference on Disaster Reporting and Mass Communication Curriculum



## Annexure 4 - Web links of Media Coverage

1. <http://www.radio.gov.pk/newsdetail-51945>
2. <http://sachtimes.com/0en10300idcontent.htm>
3. <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2013/08/30/city/islamabad/samar-holds-academic-conference-on-disaster-reporting/>
4. [http://dnanews.com.pk/two-day-moot-on-disaster-reporting-kicks-off/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=two-day-moot-on-disaster-reporting-kicks-off](http://dnanews.com.pk/two-day-moot-on-disaster-reporting-kicks-off/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=two-day-moot-on-disaster-reporting-kicks-off)
5. <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=216769>
6. <http://sachtimes.com/0en10330idcontent.htm>
7. <http://thefinancialdaily.com/NewsDetail/167362.aspx>
8. <http://statesman.com.pk/index.php?page=5&edition=peshawar&date=2013-08-31&type=newspaper>
9. <http://www.dailyiht.com/index.php?action=epaper&id=main&page=7>
10. <http://epaper.jehanpakistan.com/E-Paper/isb/080913/p16.html>



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