



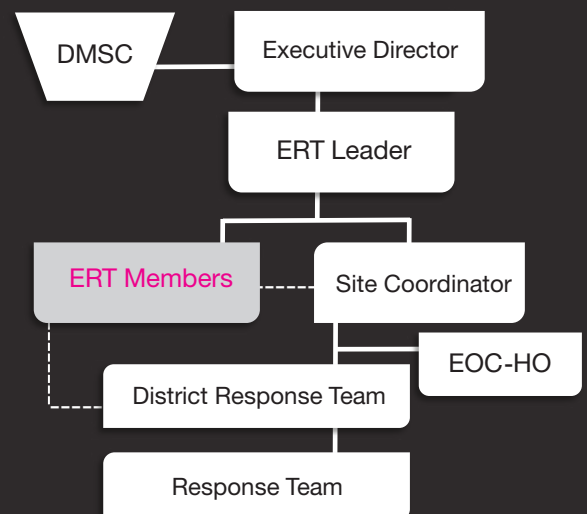
Emergency Response Team

Disaster Risk Management Programme

BRAC's humanitarian response seeks to support people affected by natural or human-made crises; to save lives and to build back better. It addresses affected populations' needs with quality and rationalised services irrespective of gender, age, race, class, and ability. The response is inclusive and prioritises in meeting the Core Humanitarian Standard. To achieve this, BRAC Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Programme ensures that emergency response is rolled out within 72 hours after disaster strikes, and for this organisational readiness is key. Skilled, motivated and self-driven human resources are critical for effective humanitarian response. During disaster response, quick mobilisation of human resource, taking lead, decision and directing necessary actions require close coordination among key actors of the responding agency. This coordination is best achieved if some key players and support staffs are in a centralised location with direct lines of communications. The DRM programme thus formed BRAC's Emergency Response Team (ERT), a first responder body with necessary knowledge and skills, equipped to be deployed and roll out effective emergency operations. This trained team will be responsible for the response nationally, and globally.

ERT Structure and skills

BRAC ERT consists of 25-30 mixed professionals with technical expertise in their own field which include medical doctors, paramedics/nurses, engineers, logisticians, and technicians. The members are hand-picked with criteria of being sensitised on country, region, religious, culture, have language and dialect capacities, are gender-sensitive, and most importantly have experience and ability in handling any adverse situations inflicted by natural and human hazards. The representation is also made diverse by involving staff of BRAC's humanitarian programme as well as development programmes such as microfinance, education, technology, health and even BRAC International.



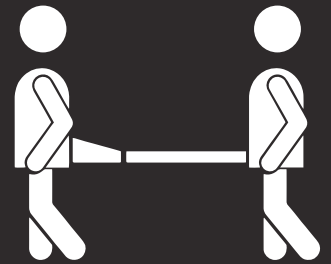
Responsibilities of the ERT

According to the organisational standard operating procedure for emergencies, BRAC's district and upazila level disaster management teams take the lead at local level. Meanwhile, ERT is mobilised at the central level to coordinate the response holistically. They strategise, coordinate, and ensure quality and continuity of a comprehensive response to medium and large-scale emergencies. This emergency team is also the connecting body between decentralised responders at affected ground, and top management decision-makers known as BRAC's disaster management steering committee (DMSC).

Emergency response team members have been trained with knowledge and skills, and appropriate equipment using which they catalyse response design, operations, communication and coordination with community, government, partners, donors, and other stakeholders. The team, when activated during emergency, ensure the following:

- Assess needs and damage of the crisis;
- Develop response strategy, implementation plan and exit plan of a response;

- Mobilise fund for the response;
- Ensure timely mobilisation of emergency staff;
- Liaise and coordinate with government and other stakeholders, at local, national and global level;
- Inform DMSC about the progress and situation at crisis ground for catalysing informed decision-making process;
- Timely monitoring, reporting and dissemination of the response activities;
- Ensure that emergency response personnel understand individual and collective responsibilities for safety and security;
- Provide leadership support to the site response team (district and upazilas) and ensure smooth implementation of response;
- Operate Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at head office;
- Technical support and coordination across sectoral response, especially for food, non-food items, health, water and sanitation, shelter, and protection.



Building Capacity of ERT

ERT regularly go through rounds of training for improving its ability to function pro-actively and effectively during the harshest crisis. These trainings comprise a mix of theoretical and hands-on teamwork that comprehensively brought about a strong and confident team that is sturdy and ready for any emergency. Emergency response experts, academicians, and trainers have come forward to strengthening BRAC's ERT.

- Theoretical lectures on technical knowledge on disaster and its management
- Desk-based and outdoor team building activities to improve communication and bond between members in preparation for crisis
- Indoor and outdoor simulation of natural disaster to improve team coordination during stressed situation.

Way Forward and Future of BRAC ERT

BRAC's emergency response team continues to grow. During the pandemic, ERT members have refined the inter-programme coordination during the country-wide response to assist poor households. Involving experts of the field, BRAC DRM programme is persistent in arranging specialised training and refreshers for the ERT members. Experience sharing and feedback from each are taken into account for strengthening the ERT structure, functions, and performance. Through this learning cycle, BRAC ERT aims to take leading position in Bangladesh's emergency response sector, and hopefully extend its capacity to respond to crises on international grounds.

