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Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency's Performance: Issues, Challenges and Panaceas

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Abstract

This study examines the performance of the Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency (KADSEMA) in managing disasters and emergencies within Kaduna State. Kaduna State experiences both natural and man-made disasters, including flooding, banditry, ethno-religious conflicts, bomb explosions, and communal clashes. These disasters have resulted in loss of lives, destruction of property, displacement of persons, and disruption of socio-economic activities. Using the ecological theory as a framework, the study assesses whether KADSEMA has significantly improved disaster management in the state. Through qualitative document analysis of secondary data from journals, official reports, NEMA documents, IOM DTM reports, newspaper articles, and policy documents, findings reveal that although the agency was established to complement the National Emergency Management Agency, its operations are largely reactive rather than proactive. Major challenges identified include inadequate funding, poor logistics, weak institutional capacity, limited inter-agency collaboration, and insufficient training for internally displaced persons. The study concludes that while KADSEMA plays a vital role in emergency response, its effectiveness is constrained by structural and operational limitations. It recommends a shift toward preventive and proactive disaster management strategies, improved funding, stronger collaboration with relevant agencies, enhanced public awareness campaigns, and improved logistics and capacity building to ensure better protection of lives and property in Kaduna State.

Keywords: Disaster Management, Emergency Management, Flooding, Banditry, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Disaster Risk Reduction, Proactive Governance, Institutional Capacity, Ecological Theory.

Introduction

Contemporary disasters are complex, systemic events driven by climate shocks, poverty, and weak infrastructure, shifting emergency management from reactive relief to proactive risk reduction. The Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2025 and the Sendai Framework emphasize preparedness, resilience, and building back better (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction [UNDRR], 2015, 2025). Developing countries, facing extreme weather exacerbated by climate change (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC], 2022), are particularly vulnerable. Specifically, Nigeria battles floods, erosion, and drought, intertwining disaster governance with broad development challenges like food insecurity and displacement (World Bank Group, 2021). Highlighting this urgency, the 2024 Annual Flood Outlook identified 148 Local Government Areas (LGAs) across 31 states including Kaduna as high flood risks between April and November 2024 (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation, 2024), demanding robust early warning systems and sub-national coordination.

Kaduna State presents a dual-disaster profile, enduring recurrent floods and severe human-induced emergencies like armed banditry and communal violence. Flood impacts are persistent: the International Organization for Migration (2024a) reported 16,078 affected individuals (2,526 households) across six Kaduna LGAs in September 2024. Furthermore, a December 2024 joint post-flood assessment identified another 9,616 affected individuals in seven LGAs, demonstrating prolonged impacts (International Organization for Migration, 2024b). Simultaneously, violent insecurity drives slow-moving humanitarian crises. Nigeria Watch (2024) ranked Kaduna among the states most affected by rural banditry fatalities in 2024, a crisis Ojewale (2024) attributes to borderland insecurity, armed group mobility, and weak state presence in the northwest. Consequently, displacement is severe; the International Organization for Migration (2025) recorded 117,989 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kaduna during its Round 16 assessment, primarily sheltering in host communities rather than formal camps.

Nigeria's disaster framework relies on the National Emergency Management Agency (National Emergency Management Agency, 1999) for federal policy and coordination, while State Emergency Management Agencies, such as the Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency (KADSEMA), manage localized risk assessment, response, and rehabilitation. However, emergency management in Nigeria frequently struggles with inadequate funding, poor logistics, personnel deficits, fragmented data, and an over-reliance on post-disaster reactive measures (Ajimuse, 2020). For KADSEMA, these constraints are amplified by the simultaneous, compounding pressures of flooding, insecurity, and mass displacement.

Given this context, this paper assesses KADSEMA's role and performance in managing these intersecting emergencies in Kaduna State, evaluating whether the agency has transitioned from relief-centric responses to proactive disaster risk reduction, early warning, and community resilience. The study is structured into eight sections: (1)

introduction and background, (2) statement of the problem, (3) research objectives, (4) conceptual clarifications, (5) theoretical framework, (6) methodology, (7) assessment of KADSEMA's performance, and (8) conclusion and recommendation

Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following specific objectives:

- To assess and evaluate KADSEMA's performance in disaster management within Kaduna State;
- To identify the challenges constraining the effectiveness of KADSEMA in managing disasters and emergencies; and
- To recommend strategies for improved proactive disaster management in Kaduna State.

Conceptual Clarifications

Before proceeding to the empirical assessment of KADSEMA's performance, it is essential to clarify the key concepts that underpin this study.

Disaster

The term "disaster" encompasses a range of natural and human-induced events that disrupt normal human activities and cause significant loss of life, property, livelihoods or environmental stability. Contemporary disaster scholarship increasingly treats disaster not simply as the hazard itself, but as the social outcome produced when hazards interact with exposure, vulnerability and limited coping capacity (Kelman, 2020; Coppola, 2020). This emphasis is important because the vulnerability of people, settlements and institutions determines whether an adverse event becomes a disaster. Some examples of natural disasters that led to extensive destruction of lives and property include the earthquakes in Albania in 2019; 2019 floods in Iran; Cyclone Idai that struck Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Malawi in 2019; and the 2019 Sunda Strait tsunami in Indonesia respectively (ReliefWeb, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2019d).

In a similar vein, natural disasters such as droughts remain a concern, with Australia experiencing a severe drought throughout 2019, which led to widespread bushfires, and Europe that was hit by intense heat in 2019, affecting public health and agriculture (Bureau of Meteorology, 2019). Other disasters that readily come to mind include epidemics, pest infestations, desertification, and road crashes. In the realm of man-made disasters, examples from 2019 include the Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka, which were a tragic instance of terrorism (BBC News, 2019a). In terms of industrial hazards, the 2019 chemical explosion in Xiangshui, China, had severe environmental and health consequences (The Guardian, 2019). Human-induced disasters also include violent conflict, kidnapping, terrorism, industrial accidents, technological failures and other crisis events whose impacts are intensified by weak preparedness, poor governance and social vulnerability (Coppola, 2020; Haddow et al., 2020). The foregoing discourse on natural and man-made disasters underlines the

multidimensionality and complexity of disasters, which requires comprehensive management and policy interventions.

Emergency

The term "emergency" is generally understood to describe situations that require immediate attention and action to prevent harm or loss of life (World Health Organization, 2017). These scenarios can arise from various causes, including both natural and man-made disasters (National Fire Protection Association, 2019). In other words, emergencies are situations that demand swift action to mitigate harm and are characterised by a variety of triggering events, both natural and man-made (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2019). For example, medical emergencies such as cardiac arrest necessitate immediate intervention and are a common reason for emergency room visits (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.). Transportation emergencies are another category, with car accidents accounting for a significant portion of trauma-related hospital admissions (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2019). Chemical spills, like the styrene gas leak in Visakhapatnam, India, in 2020, highlight the immediate health threats posed by industrial accidents and underscore the need for rapid response.

Utility failures, such as the widespread electrical blackout in New York City in 2019, present another form of emergency requiring immediate restoration of services to prevent societal disruption (New York Independent System Operator, 2019). Acts of terrorism, like the Christchurch mosque shootings in New Zealand in 2019, are also classified as emergencies given the urgency to respond and restore order (New Zealand Police, 2020). Moreover, pandemics like COVID-19 have necessitated global emergency responses involving unprecedented public health measures (World Health Organization, 2020). Similarly, food crises, such as the locust infestation in East Africa in 2020, pose severe and immediate risks to food security (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2020).

Disaster Management

Disaster management refers to the planned set of policies, institutions, capacities and operational activities used to reduce disaster risk, prepare for likely hazards, respond to emergencies and support recovery after impact (Coppola, 2020; Haddow et al., 2020). Its scope encompasses phases such as mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015). In Nigeria, disaster management has gained importance due to recurring natural and man-made disasters, but recent scholarship shows that implementation is still constrained by weak funding, poor coordination, limited stakeholder involvement and the persistence of response-driven practice (Adefisoye et al., 2023; Ajimuse, 2020). The establishment of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) reflects the nation's commitment to disaster management, although the effectiveness of this framework depends on the capacity of federal, state and local institutions to translate policy into practice (Adefisoye et al., 2023; National Emergency Management Agency, 1999). Mitigation strategies in Nigeria focus on both structural and non-structural solutions. For

example, installing early-warning flood systems and implementing stringent building codes can reduce flood risks (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015). Preparedness measures involve public education and training, as well as stockpiling essential supplies (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015). For instance, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, NEMA stockpiled medical supplies and disseminated crucial information to the public (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2020). The response phase often involves search and rescue operations, as witnessed during the Lagos building collapse in 2019, where rapid coordination among multiple agencies was key (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, 2019). Finally, the recovery phase involves efforts such as rebuilding infrastructure and rehabilitating communities. After the 2012 floods, the Nigerian government allocated substantial resources for recovery and rehabilitation efforts. Disaster management in Nigeria is an evolving field, requiring multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary coordination. Strategies range from long-term mitigation and preparedness measures to immediate response and recovery efforts (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015).

Emergency Management

Emergency management refers to the organised approach and processes used to address unexpected events that could harm individuals, communities, infrastructure and the environment. This framework involves four key phases: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery (Coppola, 2020; Haddow et al., 2020; McEntire, 2022). Unlike disaster management, which primarily focuses on catastrophic events, emergency management can also pertain to smaller-scale incidents like accidents and localised natural phenomena.

Mitigation in emergency management strives to lessen the impact of a potential crisis through pre-emptive planning. These plans may range from fire safety measures in buildings to public health campaigns (Coppola, 2020; Haddow et al., 2020). Preparedness is the next phase and emphasises equipping and training individuals and communities to handle emergencies effectively. This includes creating emergency plans, conducting regular drills, clarifying institutional roles and strengthening early warning arrangements (Haddow et al., 2020; McEntire, 2022). When an emergency occurs, the response phase begins and is usually characterised by immediate action to save lives, minimise damage and ensure that basic human needs are met (McEntire, 2022). This phase requires close coordination among agencies and is usually managed through a central emergency operation arrangement, but Nigeria's experience shows that coordination failures and weak institutional capacity can undermine timely response (Adefisoye et al., 2023; Abdussalaam et al., 2024). The recovery phase aims at restoring conditions to pre-emergency levels while reducing future vulnerability through reconstruction, rehabilitation, livelihood restoration and resilience planning (Coppola, 2020; McEntire, 2022).

Given that Kaduna State is characterised by large urban centres, climate-sensitive agricultural livelihoods and unevenly distributed rainfall patterns, it constitutes a focal area for emergency situations ranging from flooding and drought-related stress to fires and socio-economic upheavals (Abubakar et al., 2024; Abubakar et al., 2025). It is therefore imperative to x-ray how emergency situations are managed in Kaduna State so as to ascertain whether the State Emergency Agency is effective and efficient or otherwise.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks serve as analytical lenses that illuminate the underlying dynamics of institutional behaviour and performance. Given that theories provide insight as searchlight for the conduct of in-depth research, this study adopts the ecological theory as the framework of analysis. This theoretical choice is particularly apt for examining KADSEMA's operations, as the agency functions within a complex web of environmental, social, political, and economic factors that shape its capacity to respond to disasters.

The ecological theory posits that government functions are decisively influenced by the environment, such as people, natural endowments, scientific, socio-economic, and technological situations, and types of sub-systems, among others. Riggs (1964), as cited in Gauba (2005) and Ujo (2007), is one of the foremost exponents of the ecological theory who emphasised the need to conduct ecological-perspective in cross-cultural studies, "keeping in mind the peculiar history, customs, traditions and culture of the people coupled with their present needs and aspirations" (Gauba, 2005, p. 76).

In the same vein, Bronfenbrenner (1979), as cited in Godswill (2012, p. 55), an apologist of the ecological theory, strove to answer "the question of how a child's surrounding hinders or helps the survival of a child." Further, he emphasised that the quality and context of a child's environment decisively influence or affect his/her development and survival. The relevance of this theory to this study lies in its centrality to administrative systems catering for peculiar and particular public needs in order to in turn enjoy public cooperation, especially the vulnerable groups that are usually worst hit during emergency situations.

It follows, therefore, that one of the means of gauging the impact of democratic governance, especially democratic dividends, is to assess how emergency situations are effectively and efficiently managed in order to guarantee security of lives and property, which is one of the means of guaranteeing vibrant socio-economic activities and political stability in Kaduna State and Nigeria at large.

Methodology

The choice of an appropriate research methodology is fundamental to generating valid and reliable findings in social science inquiry. This section outlines the research design, data sources, and analytical approach adopted in this study to examine KADSEMA's performance in disaster management.

The study adopted a qualitative research design using document analysis. Document analysis was selected because it enables the systematic examination of institutional records, policy documents, and media reports to reconstruct organisational performance and identify recurring patterns and challenges (Morgan, 2022). Data was sourced from secondary sources including peer-reviewed journals, official government reports, NEMA documents, IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) reports, newspaper articles, and policy documents. The use of secondary qualitative data and document analysis is well-established in social science research, particularly where the study requires contextual interpretation of policy records, institutional evidence and publicly available reports (Kayesa & Shung-King, 2021; Morgan, 2022).

The ecological theory provided the analytical framework, guiding the examination of KADSEMA as an administrative system embedded within its broader environmental context. Case study research is appropriate for examining complex social and organisational phenomena within their real-life settings, especially where a researcher seeks to connect institutional practice with contextual conditions and multiple evidence sources (Chowdhury & Shil, 2021; Priya, 2021). This study similarly treats KADSEMA as a single revelatory case that illuminates the broader challenges confronting sub-national emergency management in developing countries.

The document analysis procedure followed the systematic framework advanced by Kayesa and Shung-King (2021), involving the identification, selection, appraisal, and synthesis of relevant documents to examine discrepancies between policy intent and implementation outcomes. In line with recent qualitative case study literature, the method was deemed appropriate because it captures contextual complexity, supports the use of multiple documentary sources and generates nuanced understanding of organisational dynamics that purely quantitative approaches may not adequately access (Chowdhury & Shil, 2021; Priya, 2021). All documents were thematically analysed to identify recurring patterns concerning KADSEMA's institutional capacity, operational effectiveness, inter-agency coordination, and the lived experiences of disaster-affected populations in Kaduna State.

Assessment of the Role of KADSEMA in Managing Disasters in Kaduna State

This section presents the empirical core of the study, examining KADSEMA's operational record in the context of Kaduna State's complex disaster environment. The analysis proceeds through four interrelated dimensions: a historical timeline of major emergency events, an examination of flooding and environmental disasters, an assessment of banditry and security challenges, and an evaluation of the institutional challenges confronting KADSEMA.

Historical Timeline of Emergency Cases in Kaduna State

A chronological review of major disaster events in Kaduna State reveals the persistent and multifaceted nature of the crisis confronting the state and its emergency management apparatus. The following timeline documents selected significant incidents:

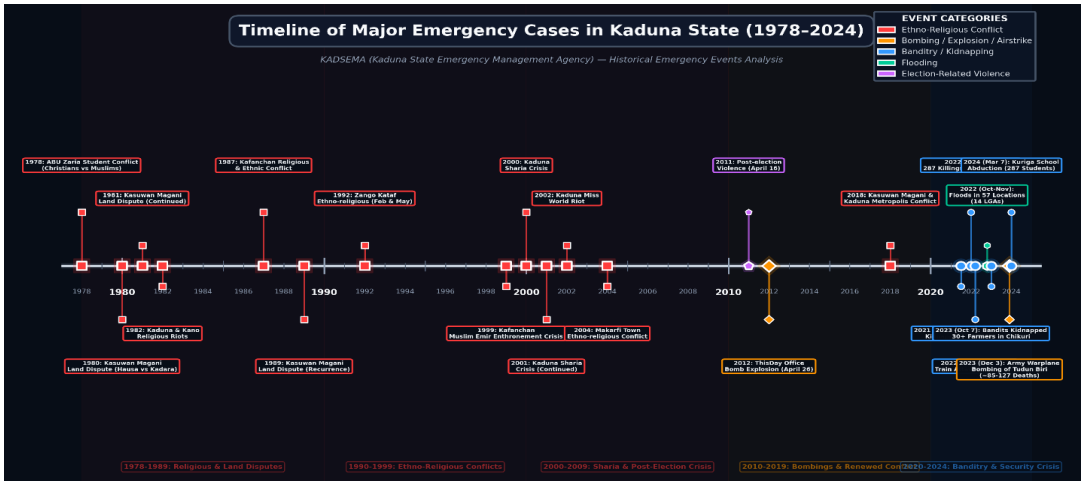


Figure 1: Timeline of Major Emergency Cases in Kaduna State (1978-2024)

1. Christian and Muslim students' violent conflict over students' political election at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria: 1978.
2. Land dispute between Hausa and Kadaras in Kasuwan Magani, Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State: 1980, 1981, and 1989.
3. Religious riots of Kaduna and Kano: 1982.
4. Religious cum ethnic conflict between Muslims and Christians communities at Kafanchan, Kaduna and Zaria: 1987.
5. Ethno-religious conflict at Zango Kataf, Kaduna and Zaria: February and May 1992.
6. Ethno-religious conflict at Kafanchan over imposition or enthronement of a new Muslim emir: 1999.
7. Kaduna Sharia crisis: 2000 and 2001.
8. Kaduna Miss World riot: 2002.
9. Ethno-religious conflict at Makarfi town, Kaduna State: 2004.
10. Post-election violence as some states like Kaduna and Bauchi were hard-hit: 16th April, 2011.
11. Bomb explosion at Kaduna in a business premises where three newspapers including Thisday have offices. It claimed two lives: 26th April, 2012 (BBC News, 2012).
12. Ethno-religious conflict at Kasuwan Magani and Kaduna metropolis: 2018.
13. Bandits killed 222 people and kidnapped 774 people in Q2 2021, as reported by the Kaduna State Security Incidents Report for the Second Quarter of 2021 (Usman, 2021; Ripples Nigeria, 2021).
14. Between 28th October and 1st November, 2022, 57 locations in 14 LGAs in Kaduna State were adversely affected by floods, which led to displacement of some citizens (International Organization for Migration, 2022).
15. From January to 29th March, 2022, Kaduna State recorded 287 killings and 356 kidnapped cases among others (Dataphyte, 2022).
16. Bandits kidnapped over 30 farmers on Saturday, 7th October, 2023, in Chikuri community of Chikun LGA of Kaduna State (Bulus, 2023).
17. On Monday, 4th December, 2023, inadvertent army warplane bombings of Tudun Biri in Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State, which led to a death toll reaching 127 people, aside those that were injured (Nnodim et al., 2023).
18. On the 7th of March, 2024, bandits attacked the Kuriga community in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State and kidnapped about 286 students including some teachers at the LEA Primary School Kuriga (Omonobi & Ajayi, 2024).

Some key elements that are considered in disaster management are preventive measures, such as regulatory policies bordering on environmental conservation, building regulations, and construction of dams against floods among others; mitigation measures with a view to reducing the impact of anticipated disaster to the barest minimum; effective preparedness as a result of timely and effective early warnings; prompt response, including emergency relief coordination, rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery (National Emergency Management

Agency, 2000). The aforementioned key elements constitute the fulcrum on which this study is hinged.

Owing to a range of vulnerabilities, including environmental degradation, industrial pollution, rainfall variability, pressure on agricultural livelihoods and social and political unrest, Kaduna State is susceptible to emergencies (Abubakar et al., 2024; Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency, 2019). The agricultural sector, a cornerstone of the regional economy, is also heavily affected, posing immediate and long-term challenges for food security (Ajimuse, 2020; Balogun et al., 2024). Poignantly, these challenges are amplified by human-induced issues, including poverty and rapid population growth, coupled with recent interventions by both governmental and non-governmental organisations, which have shown limitations, notably in emergency preparedness and response mechanisms (Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency, 2019).

Given the foregoing circumstances, there is an urgent need to assess how effective the current management strategies are in anticipating, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from the spectrum of emergencies and disasters that Kaduna State faces. Such an investigation will provide actionable insights that can lead to the development of a more resilient and adaptive emergency management system for Kaduna State and Nigeria at large.

Flooding and Environmental Disasters

Kaduna State's geographical and climatic conditions make it a vulnerable area for natural disasters, particularly flooding. The undulating plateau and major rivers like the Kaduna and Galma set the stage for periodic flooding, especially during the rainy season that stretches from April to October. Recent geospatial evidence confirms that several neighbourhoods in Kaduna remain exposed to flood susceptibility because of topography, drainage conditions, land cover change and settlement patterns (Abubakar et al., 2025; Musa & Abubakar, 2024). The southern parts, like Kafanchan, and northern regions, like Zaria, are particularly susceptible to heavy rainfall. Over the past decades, the state has been grappling with recurrent flooding issues that have resulted in significant economic and social negative impacts.

The economic ramifications of these recurrent flood events are profound. Farmlands get washed away, leading to a decline in agricultural output and increased food insecurity. The destruction of infrastructure like roads, bridges, and power lines further isolates communities, making it difficult for emergency services to reach those in need. Businesses also bear the brunt, as flooding disrupts operations and leads to financial losses, thereby impacting the state's economy. On a social level, the effects are equally detrimental. Families are often displaced, losing not just their homes but also valuable personal possessions. The post-flood period frequently sees an uptick in waterborne diseases like cholera, as clean water sources get contaminated. This creates an additional public health crisis that the state healthcare system, already overstretched, struggles to manage. Moreover, the social fabric of communities is strained. The need for relocation often separates families and communities, leading to psycho-social stress. Children are forced out of schools that are either destroyed or turned into temporary relief camps, setting back educational progress.

Therefore, the flooding issues in Kaduna State are not merely natural events but qualify as disasters due to their far-reaching adverse effects on the economic development and social well-being of its residents. And while flooding might be seasonal, its impact is felt year-round, requiring a more robust and proactive disaster management strategy to mitigate its effects. Furthermore, the City of Kaduna's flood vulnerabilities are amplified by continuous urban growth, land use change and settlement expansion around environmentally sensitive spaces (Abubakar & Abdussalam, 2024; Musa & Abubakar, 2024). Despite these challenges, Kaduna remains a magnet for individuals seeking the economic opportunities that the city's strategic location along the Kaduna River offers. With an average annual population growth rate of 1.99% (Macrotrends, 2023), the city is grappling with a complex set of problems that include a burgeoning population and stagnating public infrastructure, largely modelled on the 1960s framework.

The flooding in Kaduna is a multi-causal phenomenon, induced by an amalgam of factors such as heavy rainfall, dam failures, intense runoff and land use change. It is exacerbated by climate change, which brings more intense and frequent extreme weather events (Abubakar et al., 2024; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2022). The situation is further complicated by rapid urbanisation, marked at 1.99% per annum (Macrotrends, 2023), which is altering land use and straining natural and artificial drainage systems (Abubakar & Abdussalam, 2024; Musa & Abubakar, 2024). Kaduna's population has grown substantially from a mere 35,000 in 1950 to several million today. This rapid population growth has far outpaced infrastructural development, making flood management even more challenging.

The Kaduna River is divided into three reaches—each with its own set of vulnerabilities tied to urbanization. The upper reach (Kangimi to the Kaduna Eastern Bye Pass Bridge at Malali) is characterised by settlements, waterworks, and residential areas developed within the floodplain, making them prone to flash floods during the rainy season. The middle reach (extending from the Eastern Bye Pass Bridge at Malali to the main Kaduna Bridge by the Stadium), the most urbanised, has seen the most devastating impact of flooding in the past, particularly in 2012 and 2015. The lower reach (main Kaduna Bridge to the Eastern Bypass Bridge) is marked by rapid physical development in the floodplain, especially around industrial areas like Zango and Kudenda. Encroachments on these natural water channels have not only heightened flood risks but also altered the river's flow patterns.

The repercussions of such rapid and inadequately planned urbanisation are multifaceted. Recent geospatial studies make a similar point: urban growth, landscape fragmentation and wetland conversion in Kaduna Metropolis have increased pressure on natural drainage systems and reduced flood buffering capacity (Abubakar & Abdussalam, 2024; Musa & Abubakar, 2024). The conversion of natural permeable surfaces to impermeable ones like concrete or asphalt lessens the ground's water absorption capacity, leading to increased surface runoff and flood risk. Poorly designed or obstructed drains and culverts further exacerbate the situation. These conditions impede flood attenuation potential and may cause high local flood levels due to backwater effects.

Recent flood events underscore the persistent nature of this challenge. In September 2024, floods affected 16,078 individuals across 6 LGAs in Kaduna State, displacing 1,782 people, destroying 202 houses and 1,414 farmlands, and damaging critical infrastructure including 20 water points and 575 toilets/latrines (International Organization for Migration, 2024a). The assessment was conducted in collaboration with NEMA, KADSEMA, and the Nigerian Red Cross Society, confirming KADSEMA's active—if limited—operational role in disaster assessment. As of December 2024, a joint post-flood assessment found 9,616 individuals in 7 LGAs still affected, with significant damage to housing and livelihoods (International Organization for Migration, 2024b). These figures demonstrate that flooding remains a recurrent and destructive force in Kaduna State, with KADSEMA's response capacity perpetually stretched.

Banditry and Security Challenges

Aside from natural vulnerability, Kaduna State faces severe human-induced emergencies stemming from banditry and other forms of terrorism. Primarily affecting rural areas and some parts of Kaduna Metropolis, Kaduna State has emerged as one of the hotspots for such activities, with weak state institutions, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, cattle rustling networks, displacement pressure and attacks on farming households contributing to the crisis (Balogun et al., 2024; Ojewale, 2024; Sylvanus, 2023). The statistics are harrowing: in 2021 alone, bandits killed 1,192 residents and kidnapped 3,348 in Kaduna State, severely affecting farming activities and leading to mass migrations from affected communities (Daily Trust, 2022; Oluwafemi, 2022). The Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency (KADSEMA) recorded about 22,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in 2022 alone, revealing the gravity of the issue. Of these IDPs, women and children—the most vulnerable groups—constitute approximately 90%, mostly rendered as widows and orphans due to ongoing violence. Their dire needs for food, clothing, and education are often unmet, exacerbating their vulnerable status.

The issue of emergencies in Kaduna State and the larger North-West region cannot be disentangled from the economic landscape, which is primarily based on agriculture and animal husbandry, supplemented by trading activities. Over recent years, targeted attacks on farmers have profoundly disrupted these core economic activities. Such attacks make agricultural activities like cultivation and harvest virtually impossible, critically affecting not just the income of families but also threatening food security across communities.

Animal husbandry is another sector in dire straits, largely due to the prevalent issue of cattle rustling. This criminal activity has added another layer of complexity to the already perilous situation, making it difficult for people in the affected communities to rely on self-produced cereals for both subsistence and commercial farming. These conditions have increased the vulnerability of both displaced and non-displaced populations to food insecurity (Balogun et al., 2024; Nwankpa, 2024; World Food Programme, 2019).

The residents of these affected communities have little faith in the ability of security agencies like the army and police to protect them effectively. The slow or non-existent response from

these agencies when attacks occur has led to a general sense of skepticism and mistrust among the populace. Events like the attack on the Abuja-Kaduna train on 28th March, 2022, where passengers were abducted and held captive for extended periods, lend credence to these perceptions.

The grave consequences of banditry and other forms of violence are multifaceted, affecting not only rural development but also creating ripple effects on security, peace, and prosperity in both Kaduna State and the broader North-West region. These local issues compound the already fragile security situation, which has been influenced by the long-standing Boko Haram insurgency in the North-East.

Given the escalating situation, many affected communities resort to fleeing their ancestral homes to seek safety in urban centres. In other instances, people depend on local vigilantes for protection, and there is a growing trend of individuals taking up arms to defend themselves. This complex scenario not only heightens the sense of insecurity but also raises serious ethical and governance concerns, as the state seems unable to fulfil its fundamental role of providing security to its citizens.

The state of emergency in Kaduna also has implications for the governance structures and social contracts that bind the state and its citizens. The failure of the state to protect its people and preserve their livelihoods has far-reaching repercussions, as it leads to a loss of faith in institutional structures, fostering a climate ripe for anarchy and lawlessness. The complexities of emergencies in Kaduna State are deeply rooted in its economic activities and amplified by the failures of the state's security apparatus to effectively beef up security of lives and property. These emergencies have not only shattered the economic backbone of rural communities but have also led to a widespread crisis of confidence in state institutions. The residents are increasingly forced to fend for themselves, getting pushed towards options that may have lasting negative implications for social cohesion and governance.

While flooding disrupts livelihoods and leads to displacement, the pervasive banditry has escalated into a humanitarian crisis. The role of KADSEMA and other state bodies in managing these disasters has been inadequate, prompting criticism from humanitarian observers and affected communities. As of November 2024, Kaduna State hosts 117,989 IDPs, the vast majority sheltering in host communities with minimal institutional support (International Organization for Migration, 2025). Recent research establishes that rural economies sustained by farming are severely disrupted by the dual challenges of flooding and banditry, with implications for food security, poverty and livelihood resilience (Balogun et al., 2024; Nwankpa, 2024).

Kaduna State is currently facing a severe emergency and disaster management crisis. The challenges of flooding and banditry are exacerbated by geographical factors, weak institutions and ineffective governance structures, requiring immediate and sustained intervention to protect the state's most vulnerable population (Balogun et al., 2024; World Bank, 2024; World Food Programme, 2019).

Challenges Facing KADSEMA

Despite several initiatives taken by the state in conjunction with KADSEMA and other agencies, numerous challenges mitigate the fruitful achievement of disaster management goals. While some strategies have been adopted to reduce these challenges, there still exist significant efforts to be made. This subsection examines the institutional and operational constraints that have undermined KADSEMA's effectiveness.

One glaring challenge in Kaduna State's approach to emergency and disaster management is the reliance on a 'fire brigade approach,' characterised by reactive measures rather than proactive measures (Ajimuse, 2020; Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency, 2019). This tactic is akin to rushing to put out a fire rather than investing in fire prevention methods. Such an approach undermines the principles of effective disaster risk reduction and preparedness, and recent Nigerian disaster management scholarship similarly identifies poor funding, weak coordination and limited institutional capacity as persistent barriers to proactive disaster governance (Adefisoye et al., 2023; Abdussalaam et al., 2024). This short-term orientation can compromise not only the effectiveness of the response but also the efficient use of resources. As witnessed in various incidents, the reactive approach often results in higher costs, both in terms of financial expenditure and human lives. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a paradigm shift toward a more preventive and proactive approach in line with global best practices.

Inadequate funding poses a significant challenge for effective emergency and disaster management in Kaduna State. Despite collaborations with multiple stakeholders, financial limitations have hindered KADSEMA's capacity to implement long-term strategies (Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency, 2019). Unreliable funding exacerbates pre-existing issues, such as lack of functionality and capacity in SEMA and other involved agencies.

Transparency, or rather the lack of it, further complicates the state's emergency management efforts. The absence of a transparent system makes it difficult to hold agencies and stakeholders accountable, leading to inefficiency and a potential misuse of resources. This lack of transparency correlates with the noted lack of functionality and capacity of SEMA and other stakeholders (Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency, 2019).

A dearth of logistical support is another glaring issue. Whether it is the mobilisation of relief materials or the activation of emergency protocols, inadequate logistics can delay critical actions, thereby aggravating the crisis. Furthermore, the insufficient logistic infrastructure complicates the already challenging task of managing Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps.

Regarding training, it is clear that there is inadequate instruction for IDPs on community-led sanitation. Lack of such training hampers the sustainability of the camps, exacerbating health risks and worsening living conditions. Similarly, the deficit of training for IDPs on camp management results in a lack of preparedness for mitigating and managing crises within the camps.

In a similar vein, the issue of poor training for IDPs in community-led sanitation and camp management falls under the broader problems of inadequate funding and lack of stakeholder

engagement. The challenges facing Kaduna State in its emergency and disaster management efforts are inextricably intertwined, ranging from financial constraints to transparency issues, from agency functionality to stakeholder cooperation; each problem amplifies the other. Addressing these long-standing challenges requires a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach that acknowledges the interconnected nature of these issues.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This section distils the principal findings of the study and proposes actionable recommendations for enhancing KADSEMA's disaster management capacity. The paper has examined the agency's performance against the backdrop of Kaduna State's complex disaster environment, revealing significant gaps between institutional mandate and operational reality. The paper is a gamut of appraising the role KADSEMA plays in preventing and reducing both natural and man-made disasters to the barest minimum. The study found that KADSEMA employs more of cosmetic reactive measures than proactive measures, among others, which is at variance with the strategy of international best practices and inappropriate. It was also discovered that certain factors militating against KADSEMA's effective and efficient service delivery include inadequate funding, lack of functional capacity, limited logistics support, and inadequate collaboration with other relevant agencies, which leaves much to be desired.

Against the foregoing background, the study recommends the following far-reaching panaceas:

1. **Shift Toward Proactive Disaster Management.** KADSEMA should employ more plausible proactive measures that will reduce both natural and man-made disasters to the barest minimum, with a view to being at par with international best practices. This includes investing in disaster risk reduction, early warning systems, community-based preparedness programmes, and regular simulation exercises. The agency should develop comprehensive disaster risk maps for all 23 LGAs in the state and establish community disaster response committees in vulnerable areas.
2. **Enhanced Budgetary Allocation and Funding.** The government of the day should provide adequate funds to KADSEMA so as to guarantee procurement of more logistics, relief materials, and expeditious rehabilitation of Internally Displaced Persons. Dedicated budget lines should be established for disaster preparedness and response, with transparent accounting mechanisms to ensure accountability. The state government should explore partnerships with international humanitarian organisations and donor agencies to supplement domestic funding.
3. **Strengthened Inter-Agency Collaboration.** KADSEMA should tighten more collaborative effort with other relevant agencies, including NEMA, the State Ministry of Internal Security, the police, the military, and civil society organisations, in order to beef up security of lives and property, which is a precursor for vibrant socio-economic activities and political stability. Inter-agency coordination protocols should be formalised and regularly tested through joint training exercises.
4. **Public Enlightenment and Awareness Campaigns.** There should be aggressive

pursuance of public enlightenment programmes, with a view to raising citizens' awareness on the need to desist from unwholesome practices that are detrimental to the ecological settings and peaceful coexistence, among others. Community education on flood risk reduction, conflict prevention, and early warning response should be integrated into local governance structures.

5. **Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening.** KADSEMA personnel require regular training in modern disaster management techniques, including incident command systems, search and rescue operations, and humanitarian logistics. The agency should also invest in digital technologies for real-time disaster monitoring and information management. The establishment of a state-of-the-art emergency operations centre in Kaduna would significantly enhance the agency's coordination capabilities.
6. **Improved Support for Internally Displaced Persons.:**Given that Kaduna State hosts 117,989 IDPs as of November 2024 (International Organization for Migration, 2025), there is an urgent need for the state government, through KADSEMA, to establish more durable solutions for displaced populations. This includes livelihood restoration programmes, educational support for displaced children, and psychosocial services for trauma-affected individuals.

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