SCHOOL OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION STUDIES

(SLADS- BAGAMOYO)

RESEARCH REPORT ON:

AN ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS MEASURES FOR PHYSICAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF DEPARTMENT OF LAND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE AT BAGAMOYO

By

ESTER GODWIN SIKAMANGA

A Research Report to be submitted at the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) as a Partial Fulfillment of requirements for the Award of Diploma in Records and Archives Management.

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) Bagamoyo. A research report titled *"An Assessment on the Implementation of Disaster Preparedness Measures for Physical Records Management"* as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of ordinary diploma in records, achieves and information studies.

Signature _____

Mr. Keneth Saimon

Date_____

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I, **Ester Godwin Sikamanga**, declare that this research report is my own original work and that it has not been presented and will not be presented to any other institution for an Ordinary Diploma or any other similar award.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved parents for their great help, sacrifices, and encouragement during the course of my study; to my classmates for their constructive support, cooperation, and encouragement; and to all who always supported me in many ways through their prayers and support.

May the Almighty God bless you abundantly.

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management in the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, Bagamoyo District. The study aimed to identify the types of disasters that threaten physical records, assess the disaster preparedness measures implemented, examine the level of staff awareness and preparedness, and identify challenges affecting the effective implementation of disaster preparedness measures. A mixed-method research design was employed, whereby quantitative and qualitative data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observation. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

The findings revealed that physical records are exposed to various disasters, including fire, floods, pests, and poor storage conditions. Although some disaster preparedness measures exist, they are inadequate and insufficient to ensure effective protection of records. The study further found that staff awareness and preparedness are generally low due to limited training and the absence of regular disaster drills. In addition, the institution faces several challenges, including inadequate financial resources, insufficient storage facilities, lack of disaster management policies, limited training opportunities, and inadequate disaster response equipment. The study concludes that disaster preparedness for physical records management remains weak and requires significant improvement. It recommends strengthening disaster preparedness policies, providing regular staff training and disaster drills, improving records storage facilities, allocating adequate financial resources, and equipping the institution with appropriate disaster response tools to ensure the long-term preservation and protection of physical records.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Meaning
DLRN	Department of Land and Natural Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IOS	International Organization for Standardization
RAM	Record and Archives Managements
RM	Records Management
TNA	Tanzania National Archives
SLADS	School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a general introduction to the study. The chapter contains the background of the research problem, statement of the problem, general objective of the study, specific objectives, and research questions, significance of the study and the scope of the study. The chapter also presents the definitions of key concepts, expected limitations of the study, and the synopsis of the chapters.

Physical records are very important in institutions because they store essential information used for administrative, legal, and historical purposes. However, these records are highly vulnerable to disasters such as fire, floods, theft, and poor storage conditions, which can lead to loss or damage of valuable information. To address this, institutions are required to implement disaster preparedness measures such as proper storage, security systems, and emergency plans to protect these records. Despite this, many institutions still face challenges in effectively implementing such measures, which puts records at risk. Therefore, this study aims to assess the implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management. The importance of this study is to help institutions improve the protection, safety, and accessibility of records, and to ensure continuity of services and proper decision-making.

1.1 Background of the Study

Disaster events, both natural and human-induced, have long posed serious threats to the integrity, accessibility, and longevity of records across the world (World Bank. 2020). Physical records including paper files, maps, legal documents, and administrative registers are especially vulnerable because they are tangible materials that can be easily

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destroyed, damaged, or rendered unusable by fire, floods, earthquakes, storms, pests, and other hazards. As societies have generated more records over time, the need to protect these valuable assets has become increasingly important. Records serve as evidence of rights, responsibilities, and transactions; they support accountability, continuity, and the rule of law (Ngoepe, M. 2017). When physical records are lost or destroyed in disasters, the consequences can be profound: disrupted services, legal disputes, loss of heritage, and weakened institutional memory.

By the late 20th century, disaster preparedness for records became an area of professional concern. Libraries, archives, government offices, and corporations began to develop dedicated plans to reduce the risk of record loss (Connelly, 2015). Disaster preparedness in records management refers to proactive measures taken to anticipate, mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergencies that might damage or destroy records. It involves understanding potential hazards, designing risk reduction strategies, preparing staff and infrastructure, and establishing procedures for rapid response and recovery. At the global level, the concept of disaster preparedness for recordkeeping has evolved alongside broader disaster risk management frameworks (Ngoepe, 2017).

In Africa, the management and protection of physical records have historically faced significant challenges due to environmental, institutional, and socio-economic factors. For many decades, public and private institutions across the continent relied almost entirely on paper-based records to document land ownership, civil registration, financial transactions, governance, and service delivery (Mnjama, & Wamukoya, 2017). These records were often stored in offices, registries, and archives with minimal consideration for disaster risks, making them highly vulnerable to damage and loss. Historically, disaster preparedness for records management in Africa has been reactive rather than proactive. Institutions often responded to disasters only after damage had occurred, focusing on salvage rather than prevention (NARA, 2019). Many offices lacked formal disaster preparedness plans, trained personnel, or designated budgets for records protection. Records management units were frequently under-resourced and given low

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institutional priority, resulting in inadequate storage facilities, congested registries, and poor environmental controls. From the late 1990s and early 2000s, awareness of disaster risks to records began to increase, influenced by administrative reforms, good governance initiatives, and international support programs (Connelly, 2015).

In Tanzania, physical records management has traditionally played a central role in public administration, particularly in government ministries, departments, and local authorities. For many years, records such as land titles, personnel files, court documents, and policy records have been maintained primarily in paper form. These records are essential for governance, accountability, service delivery, and protection of citizens' rights. However, the management of physical records in Tanzania has often been affected by inadequate disaster preparedness measures, exposing records to a wide range of risks (IRMT, 2019). Natural disasters have posed persistent threats to physical records in Tanzania. Flooding is among the most common hazards, particularly in coastal areas and low-lying regions such as Bagamoyo, Dar es Salaam, and river basins. Floodwaters have damaged records stored on ground floors and in poorly designed storage facilities. Fire outbreaks, often caused by electrical faults, congestion of paper records, or lack of fire detection and suppression systems, have also resulted in severe loss of government records (Mnjama & Wamukoya, 2007). In addition, high humidity, heat, dust, and pests accelerate the deterioration of paper-based records, especially where environmental controls are lacking.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Effective disaster preparedness measures are essential for protecting physical records from risks such as fire, floods, and other emergencies. Physical records play a critical role in supporting land administration, service delivery, accountability, and legal evidence in government institutions. Ideally, these records should be managed in secure environments supported by clear disaster preparedness plans, trained personnel, and

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appropriate infrastructure to ensure their safety and continued accessibility (International Council on Archives, 2015).

However, in many government offices in Tanzania, particularly at the local government level, disaster preparedness measures for physical records management remain inadequate. Records are often stored in overcrowded and poorly designed facilities with limited fire protection systems, weak environmental controls, and absence of formal disaster preparedness plans. Such conditions expose physical records to damage and loss caused by floods, fire outbreaks, humidity, pests, and human-related risks (Mnjama & Wamukoya, 2007; IRMT, 2016).

The loss or damage of physical records, especially land and natural resources records can result in serious consequences including land disputes, delays in service delivery, legal uncertainty, and loss of public trust in government institutions. Studies have shown that weak records management systems undermine governance, transparency, and accountability, particularly in developing countries (Ngoepe, 2017). Despite the critical importance of disaster preparedness in records management, there is limited empirical evidence on how such measures are implemented at the local government level in Tanzania, particularly in land and natural resources offices such as the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo. Despite the growing importance of disaster preparedness, there is limited empirical evidence on how local government institutions, particularly at the district level in Tanzania, implement these measures for physical records management. Most existing studies focus on general records management or digital systems, with little attention to disaster preparedness for physical records in specific institutional contexts. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management.

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1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General objective

The implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

i. To identify the types of disasters that pose risks to physical records
ii. To assess the disaster preparedness measures currently implemented for the protection and management of physical records.
iii. To examine the level of staff awareness and preparedness regarding disaster management practices for physical records
iv. To identify challenges affecting the effective implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management

1.4 Research question

i. What are the types of disasters that pose risks to physical records?
ii. What are the disaster preparedness measures currently implemented for the protection and management of physical records?
iii. To what extent the level of staff awareness and preparedness regarding disaster management practices for physical records?
iv. What are the challenges affecting the effective implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study was concerning with an assessment on the implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management at department of land natural resources office at Bagamoyo as an area of collecting data, Therefore the results

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obtained was not be generalized and hence they may not be a true representative of another department in Tanzania

1.6 Significant of the study

This study was be significant to several stakeholders. First, it was benefit public institutions by providing insights on improving disaster preparedness measures for protecting physical records. Second, the government was gain knowledge that may help in formulating policies and guidelines for records protection and disaster management. Third, records officers and archivists were benefit by understanding best practices in safeguarding records against potential risks. Additionally, the study was be useful to researchers and academicians as it was added to the existing body of knowledge on records management and disaster preparedness. Lastly, society was benefit through improved service delivery resulting from better records protection and accessibility.

1.7 Limitation of the study

This study may face several limitations. First, limited time for data collection may affect the number of respondents involved in the study. To address this, the researcher was use effective time management strategies and focus on key respondents. Second, the study may depend on self-reported data, which may lead to bias. This was be minimized by assuring respondents of confidentiality and encouraging honest responses. Third, access to some institutional documents may be restricted due to confidentiality policies. The researcher was seeking official permission to access relevant information. Lastly, since the study was focus on one institution, findings may not be generalized; however, they were providing valuable insights into similar contexts.

1.7.4 Language barriers

Researchers was be hampered on collecting data of this field of research from the respondents because of the language barrier, especially for some terms of library users

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who was be there. To minimize this researcher was use the language that is commonly to respondents such as Swahili where was be needed.

1.8 Definition of the key terms

1.8.1 Disaster Preparedness

A set of precautionary measures and actions taken before a threat occurs to ensure an effective response and reduce the impact of disasters. It includes activities such as contingency planning, stockpiling equipment, establishing coordination arrangements, and conducting emergency training or drills (NARA 2019)

1.8.2 Physical Records

Information captured in a tangible format, such as paper documents, maps, or photographs, that can be handled and stored in physical locations like filing cabinets or archives. Unlike electronic records, they are susceptible to physical damage from environmental factors like light, humidity, and air pollution (Ngoepe, 2017).

1.8.3 Records Management

The field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of records throughout their entire life cycle from creation and receipt to maintenance, use, and final disposition or preservation. It ensures an organization's accountability, transparency, and business continuity, especially following a disaster (IRMT, 2019).

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEWS

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Literature review refers to the process of identifying or locating, reading, evaluating, summarizing and incorporation in the study the documents involving materials that are related to the problem under investigation (Kothari, 2004). This section covers detailed description respectively to the specific objectives with support from various literatures of the Study as well as the research gap.

2.1 Types of Disasters that Pose Risks to Physical Records

Physical records in public institutions are highly vulnerable to various types of disasters that can damage or completely destroy valuable information resources. Disasters affecting records are generally categorized into natural disasters and human-induced disasters, both of which pose significant risks to the preservation and accessibility of records. Natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, storms, and extreme humidity can seriously affect paper-based records by causing deterioration, mold growth, and structural damage (Millar, 2017). In many developing countries, public institutions store records in buildings that were not specifically designed for archival preservation, increasing the vulnerability of physical documents during environmental disturbances. For example, flooding can saturate paper files, causing ink to fade and documents to disintegrate over time. Similarly, excessive humidity may lead to fungal growth and weakening of paper fibers, which compromises the integrity of records (Shepherd & Yeo, 2016). Climate change has also intensified the frequency of extreme weather events, increasing the potential threat to institutional records worldwide (Ngoepe & Saurombe, 2016). Consequently, many records management scholars emphasize the importance of disaster preparedness planning in protecting vital records from environmental hazards. Institutions that lack adequate storage facilities and disaster

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management strategies are more likely to experience irreversible losses of information resources. Therefore, natural disasters remain a major risk factor that threatens the survival of physical records in public organizations.

Another significant threat to physical records is fire, which is widely recognized as one of the most destructive disasters affecting archival materials and records repositories. Fire outbreaks may result from electrical faults, poor building maintenance, or accidental human activities within offices and storage facilities. Once a fire occurs, paper-based records are extremely susceptible to rapid destruction because paper is highly combustible and burns quickly under high temperatures (Franks, 2018). Even when documents are not completely burned, exposure to smoke, heat, and water used during firefighting operations can cause severe damage that makes records unreadable or unusable. Studies on records preservation indicate that many institutions, particularly in developing countries, lack adequate fire detection and suppression systems such as smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and sprinkler systems (Ngoepe & Saurombe, 2016). Additionally, poor storage arrangements such as overcrowded filing cabinets and accumulation of combustible materials further increase the risk of fire disasters in records storage areas. Without effective disaster preparedness measures, fire incidents can lead to permanent loss of confidential information and disrupt institutional operations. For this reason, records management professionals recommend implementing fire prevention strategies, including regular inspection of electrical systems, installation of fire safety equipment, and staff training on emergency response procedures.

Human-induced disasters also present serious threats to physical records in public institutions. These disasters include theft, vandalism, unauthorized access, negligence, and poor handling practices by staff or users. In some cases, records may be intentionally removed, altered, or destroyed by individuals seeking to conceal information or gain unauthorized benefits (Franks, 2018). Such actions compromise the

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authenticity, reliability, and integrity of institutional records. In addition, careless handling of documents, such as improper filing, folding, or exposure to food and liquids, may gradually degrade paper records over time. Poor records management practices, including lack of classification systems and inadequate supervision, can also contribute to the loss or misplacement of confidential records (Shepherd & Yeo, 2016). Research conducted in several African public institutions indicates that weak security measures and limited staff awareness often increase the vulnerability of records to human-related risks (Ngoepe & Saurombe, 2016). These challenges demonstrate that disasters affecting records are not always sudden catastrophic events but may also occur gradually through everyday mismanagement. Therefore, institutions must strengthen internal controls, staff training, and monitoring mechanisms to reduce risks associated with human activities.

Technological and infrastructural failures also represent another category of disasters that can threaten the preservation of physical records. Although these failures are commonly associated with digital systems, they can indirectly affect physical records as well. For instance, poor building infrastructure, leaking roofs, faulty plumbing systems, or malfunctioning air-conditioning units can expose records to water damage and unfavourable environmental conditions (Millar, 2017). Electrical failures may also increase the likelihood of fire outbreaks or power surges that affect climate control systems in records storage facilities. Inadequate environmental monitoring can result in fluctuating temperature and humidity levels that accelerate the deterioration of paper materials and other record formats (Shepherd & Yeo, 2016). Moreover, lack of maintenance of storage equipment such as shelves, cabinets, and boxes can cause physical damage to documents. Studies highlight that effective disaster risk management in records preservation requires institutions to consider both environmental and infrastructural vulnerabilities when designing records storage facilities (Franks, 2018). By integrating proper building maintenance, environmental monitoring systems, and disaster preparedness planning, institutions can significantly reduce the risk of damage

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to physical records. Therefore, technological and infrastructural failures should also be recognized as critical disaster risks in the preservation of institutional records.

2.2 Disaster Preparedness Measures Currently Implemented for the Protection and Management of Physical Records

Disaster preparedness measures play a critical role in protecting physical records in public institutions from unexpected events that may lead to loss, damage, or destruction of valuable information. Records management professionals emphasize the need for institutions to establish formal disaster preparedness plans that outline procedures for preventing, responding to, and recovering from emergencies that threaten records (Franks, 2018). A disaster preparedness plan typically includes risk assessment, identification of vital records, emergency response strategies, and clear responsibilities for staff during disaster situations. These plans are designed to minimize damage and ensure the continuity of institutional operations even when disasters occur. Studies indicate that institutions that maintain well-structured disaster preparedness strategies are more capable of protecting their records and ensuring rapid recovery of information services after disruptions (Ngoepe & Saurombe, 2016). Disaster preparedness also involves establishing backup storage areas, maintaining inventories of important records, and regularly reviewing preservation policies to align with emerging risks. In addition, organizations are encouraged to conduct periodic disaster simulations and drills to test the effectiveness of preparedness strategies and improve staff readiness. Through these measures, institutions can reduce the vulnerability of physical records and strengthen the resilience of records management systems. Therefore, disaster preparedness planning is considered a fundamental strategy for safeguarding institutional memory and maintaining access to critical information resources.

Another widely implemented disaster preparedness measure involves improving records storage conditions and infrastructure to protect physical documents from environmental

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hazards. Proper storage facilities are essential in preventing damage caused by factors such as humidity, temperature fluctuations, dust, pests, and water leakage. Records management guidelines recommend that institutions maintain controlled environmental conditions in storage rooms, including stable temperature and humidity levels, to prevent the deterioration of paper-based records (Millar, 2017). Shelving systems, protective boxes, and secure cabinets are also used to ensure that records are stored safely and are not exposed to physical damage or environmental contaminants. Many institutions have adopted fire-resistant cabinets, water-proof storage containers, and elevated shelving units to reduce the risk of damage during disasters such as floods or fires (Shepherd & Yeo, 2016). In addition, regular maintenance of buildings and storage equipment is necessary to prevent structural problems such as leaking roofs or damaged plumbing systems that could threaten records. Environmental monitoring tools are increasingly being used to detect changes in temperature or humidity that may negatively affect records preservation. These storage and infrastructure improvements play a vital role in strengthening disaster preparedness efforts and ensuring the long-term protection of physical records.

Staff training and awareness programs are also important components of disaster preparedness for the protection of physical records. Employees responsible for records management must possess adequate knowledge and skills to respond effectively to emergencies that may threaten institutional records. Training programs typically focus on disaster response procedures, proper handling of damaged records, and preventive measures that reduce risks in records storage areas (Franks, 2018). Through training workshops and seminars, staff learn how to identify potential hazards, report risks, and implement appropriate responses during emergencies. Awareness campaigns also encourage staff members to follow good records management practices such as proper filing, careful handling of documents, and adherence to security protocols. Research shows that institutions that invest in staff training experience fewer incidents of records damage because employees become more vigilant in protecting information resources

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(Ngoepe & Saurombe, 2016). Furthermore, emergency response teams are often established within organizations to coordinate disaster response activities and ensure quick decision-making during crisis situations. By equipping staff with the necessary skills and knowledge, institutions strengthen their capacity to prevent and manage disasters that threaten physical records.

Another key disaster preparedness measure involves the adoption of duplication and backup strategies to ensure that critical information can be recovered even if original records are damaged or destroyed. Many institutions have introduced digitization programs to convert important paper records into electronic formats that can be stored in secure digital repositories (Millar, 2017). Digitization not only supports long-term preservation but also facilitates remote access and reduces the risk of total information loss during disasters. Additionally, institutions often maintain duplicate copies of vital records in separate storage locations, commonly referred to as off-site storage facilities. These backup systems ensure that essential information remains available even when the primary records storage site is affected by disasters such as fire or flooding (Shepherd & Yeo, 2016). Disaster recovery procedures also involve establishing guidelines for salvaging damaged records through techniques such as drying, cleaning, and restoration. Advances in preservation technology have made it possible to recover certain types of damaged records, although the process may be costly and time-consuming. Therefore, implementing duplication, digitization, and backup strategies significantly enhances the preparedness of institutions in protecting and managing physical records against potential disasters.

2.3 Level of Staff Awareness and Preparedness Regarding Disaster Management Practices for Physical Records

The level of staff awareness and preparedness is a critical factor in the successful implementation of disaster management practices for protecting physical records in

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public institutions. Records management experts emphasize that even well-developed disaster preparedness plans may fail if staff members lack sufficient awareness or understanding of their roles during emergency situations. Awareness programs are therefore essential in ensuring that employees recognize potential risks and understand the procedures required to safeguard records during disasters. According to Franks (2018), staff awareness plays a vital role in strengthening institutional capacity to prevent and respond to emergencies affecting records. Employees who are knowledgeable about disaster management practices are more likely to follow proper storage procedures, report hazards promptly, and take immediate action when records are threatened by environmental or human-induced disasters. Research has shown that institutions that invest in awareness programs such as training workshops, seminars, and orientation sessions experience fewer cases of records loss or damage because staff become more responsible in handling information resources (Ngoepe & Saurombe, 2016). In addition, awareness initiatives encourage a culture of responsibility in which all employees understand the importance of protecting institutional information. This culture promotes compliance with records management policies and helps institutions maintain effective control over physical records. Consequently, improving staff awareness remains one of the most important strategies for strengthening disaster preparedness and ensuring the long-term preservation of physical records in public institutions.

Preparedness among staff is closely linked to the availability of training and professional development opportunities related to disaster management. Training programs help records officers and other institutional employees acquire the knowledge and skills required to respond effectively to emergencies that threaten physical records. Such training often includes instructions on risk identification, emergency response procedures, safe handling of damaged records, and strategies for protecting vital records during disasters (Shepherd & Yeo, 2016). Through regular training sessions, staff members become familiar with disaster management policies and develop confidence in

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implementing response procedures. Studies have shown that organizations that conduct continuous professional development programs for records management staff demonstrate higher levels of preparedness and faster response times during disaster situations (Millar, 2017). Furthermore, training activities provide opportunities for staff to learn about modern preservation techniques and the use of protective equipment that can reduce the impact of disasters on records. Despite these benefits, many institutions still face challenges in organizing regular training programs due to limited financial resources or lack of institutional support. As a result, some employees remain inadequately prepared to respond effectively when emergencies occur. Strengthening training initiatives is therefore essential for improving staff preparedness and enhancing institutional capacity to protect records from disaster-related risks.

Another important aspect of staff preparedness involves participation in disaster simulation exercises and emergency drills designed to test the effectiveness of disaster management plans. These practical exercises enable staff members to practice their roles and responsibilities in a controlled environment before an actual disaster occurs. Simulation activities typically involve scenarios such as fire outbreaks, floods, or water leakage in records storage areas, allowing employees to practice evacuation procedures, record protection techniques, and emergency communication strategies (Franks, 2018). Such drills help institutions identify weaknesses in disaster preparedness plans and improve coordination among staff members responsible for records management. Research suggests that organizations that regularly conduct emergency drills tend to have better preparedness levels because employees gain hands-on experience in dealing with potential disaster situations (Ngoepe & Saurombe, 2016). In addition, these exercises increase confidence among staff and reduce confusion during real emergencies. Institutions may also establish disaster response teams composed of trained personnel who are responsible for coordinating emergency activities related to records protection. Through simulation exercises and organized response teams, institutions

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strengthen their disaster management capacity and ensure that staff are capable of protecting valuable records under emergency conditions.

Despite the recognized importance of staff awareness and preparedness, many public institutions still face significant challenges in achieving adequate levels of readiness for disaster management. In some organizations, employees may not fully understand records management policies or the significance of protecting physical records during emergencies. Limited communication between management and staff may also contribute to poor awareness of disaster preparedness procedures. According to Millar (2017), lack of institutional commitment to records management often leads to inadequate dissemination of disaster preparedness guidelines among staff members. Additionally, some institutions fail to allocate sufficient resources for awareness campaigns, training programs, or preparedness exercises, leaving employees unprepared to handle disasters affecting records. In certain cases, staff turnover may also affect preparedness because newly recruited employees may not receive adequate orientation regarding records management policies and disaster response procedures. Addressing these challenges requires strong institutional leadership, effective communication strategies, and continuous capacity-building initiatives aimed at improving staff awareness. By prioritizing staff training and preparedness programs, public institutions can significantly enhance their ability to protect physical records from disasters and ensure the continuity of organizational operations.

2.4 Challenges Affecting the Effective Implementation of Disaster Preparedness Measures for Physical Records Management

Ngoepe (2017) explains that one of the major challenges affecting the effective implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management in public institutions is inadequate financial resources. Many institutions operate under limited budgets which restrict their ability to invest in proper records storage

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infrastructure, disaster detection systems, and preservation equipment. Disaster preparedness requires resources such as fire suppression systems, environmental monitoring tools, water leak detectors, and specialized storage facilities. However, in many developing countries, records management units receive very small allocations compared to other administrative departments. As a result, disaster preparedness activities such as risk assessment, disaster planning, and emergency training programs are often neglected. When disasters such as fires, floods, or pest infestations occur, institutions may experience serious damage or loss of valuable records due to the absence of protective facilities. Ngoepe further argues that insufficient funding also affects the ability of institutions to maintain records storage rooms with appropriate environmental conditions such as controlled humidity and temperature. Poor environmental conditions increase the vulnerability of physical records to deterioration and damage. In addition, limited financial support prevents institutions from conducting regular inspections and disaster preparedness audits for their records management systems. Consequently, the lack of financial resources becomes a critical obstacle that weakens institutional capacity to implement effective disaster preparedness measures for protecting physical records and maintaining the security and continuity of important information resources.

Chaterera (2019) observes that another significant challenge affecting disaster preparedness for physical records management is the lack of adequate professional skills and training among records management staff. Effective disaster preparedness requires knowledgeable personnel who understand records preservation techniques, emergency response procedures, and disaster risk management practices. However, in many public institutions, staff responsible for managing records have limited professional training in disaster preparedness and recovery strategies. Without adequate training, staff members may not know how to respond properly when disasters such as fire outbreaks, floods, or structural damage occur within records storage areas. This situation may lead to delayed response actions and poor handling of damaged records, resulting in permanent loss of

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important information. Chaterera further notes that institutions that fail to conduct regular training and awareness programs on disaster management expose their records to greater risk because employees are not adequately prepared to handle emergencies. Training programs help staff understand preventive measures such as safe storage practices, emergency evacuation procedures, and rapid response techniques for protecting records during disasters. In addition, professional training enables records personnel to identify potential risks within records storage environments and take early action to prevent damage. Therefore, the absence of continuous professional development and disaster preparedness training programs remains a major barrier to the effective protection and management of physical records in many public institutions.

Ngulube (2020) points out that poor records storage infrastructure and inadequate preservation facilities also pose serious challenges to disaster preparedness efforts in public institutions. Many organizations store their records in overcrowded offices, corridors, basements, or temporary rooms that were not originally designed for records preservation. Such environments often lack basic protective features such as proper ventilation systems, fire-resistant cabinets, and moisture control equipment. As a result, physical records become highly vulnerable to disasters including water damage, fire outbreaks, mold growth, and pest infestation. Ngulube further explains that poor storage infrastructure increases the likelihood of records deterioration because paper-based materials are highly sensitive to environmental conditions. Excess humidity can cause paper to weaken and develop mold, while excessive heat may accelerate the chemical degradation of records materials. In addition, inadequate shelving systems and poor arrangement of records may obstruct access during emergencies, making it difficult for staff to rescue records quickly when disasters occur. The study also highlights that some institutions lack proper disaster response equipment such as fire extinguishers and emergency alarms in their records storage areas. This situation significantly increases the risk of large-scale records loss when disasters happen. Therefore, improving records storage infrastructure and establishing purpose-built archival facilities are essential steps

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in strengthening disaster preparedness strategies for the protection and long-term preservation of physical records.

Asogwa (2022) emphasizes that weak institutional policies and lack of management support remain critical obstacles to the implementation of effective disaster preparedness measures for records management. Many public institutions do not have comprehensive disaster preparedness policies specifically designed to guide the protection and recovery of records during emergencies. Without clear policies and procedures, disaster preparedness activities are often implemented inconsistently or ignored entirely. Asogwa further explains that institutional leadership plays a crucial role in promoting records protection initiatives by allocating sufficient resources, establishing policies, and supporting staff training programs. However, in some institutions, management tends to underestimate the importance of records preservation and disaster preparedness, focusing more on other operational priorities. This lack of commitment leads to poor coordination in disaster planning and limited implementation of preventive measures. In addition, the absence of institutional disaster preparedness frameworks makes it difficult for staff to understand their responsibilities during emergency situations. Asogwa also notes that weak policy frameworks reduce accountability in records management practices because there are no formal guidelines directing how records should be protected, stored, or recovered after disasters. Consequently, strengthening institutional policies and improving management commitment are essential strategies for overcoming the challenges that hinder the successful implementation of disaster preparedness measures in public sector records management systems.

2.5 Research Gap

Previous studies have discussed different aspects related to disaster preparedness and the protection of physical records in organizations. For instance, Ngulube (2020) and Ngoepe (2017) explain that disasters such as fire, floods, humidity, pests, and

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environmental deterioration pose serious threats to physical records in many institutions. These studies emphasize the importance of implementing disaster preparedness strategies such as safe storage facilities, environmental control systems, and disaster response planning in order to protect records from damage or loss. Similarly, Chaterera (2019) highlights the need for institutions to establish disaster preparedness plans and risk management strategies to ensure the continuity and protection of important records during emergencies. Furthermore, most studies have been conducted in different countries and institutional environments, which may not fully reflect the situation in local government offices in Tanzania. Despite the existing literature on disaster preparedness and records management, there is a noticeable lack of empirical studies focusing specifically on the implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records in local government institutions at the district level in Tanzania. Many studies have concentrated on digital records or general records management practices, leaving a gap in understanding how physical records are protected against disasters in specific institutional settings. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 introduction

This chapter explains various aspects that were applied in carrying out the research study. It describes the research design, research approach, target population, area of the study, sample size, sampling technique, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to an arrangement or plan of research work for the collection and analysis of data (Hancock, 2021). The most important decision in research design involves choices concerning the research approach, as it determines how a particular study is conducted. A case study design was be used since the study focuses on a single institution

3.2 Research Approach

A research approach is a plan of action that provides direction to conduct research systematically and efficiently (Daniel, 2019). According to Neuman (2003), research methodology comprises three research approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches.

The researcher was using a mixed method approach, where both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied to collect and analyze data. This approach was helping the researcher to obtain more detailed and specific information about the problem under study. It also allows the researcher to use both narrative and numerical data during analysis, leading to a deeper and clearer understanding of the research problem.

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3.2.1 Mixed Approach

Creswell and Creswell (2018) define a mixed method approach as one in which data collection and analyses are carried out using both qualitative and quantitative methods within a single study. Mixed method research combines both approaches to provide a better understanding of research problems and complex phenomena than using either approach alone (Creswell and Creswell, 2017).

3.3 Area of The Study

Ngechu (2014) defines an area of study as the specific boundary or limit of the study or problem. This study was be conducted at Department of Land Natural Resources Office at Bagamoyo, located in the Pwani region. Department of Land Natural Resources Office at Bagamoyo selected because few related studies had been conducted there, and due to the researcher's familiarity with the environment.

3.4 Population

According to Creswell (2012), a population is defined as a group of individuals sharing similar characteristics that distinguish them from other groups. In this study, the population comprised respondents from the Department of Land Natural Resources Office at Bagamoyo, including both records cleric and head department of records staff at Department of Land Natural Resources Office at Bagamoyo.

3.5 Sample Size

Sample size is an important feature from which inferences are made based on a selected portion of the population. In this study, the sample size was fifteen (15) respondents, drawn from the study population using the formula simplified by Yamane (2009) to calculate sample size from a given population.

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3.6 Sampling Procedures

Sampling techniques are methods used by researchers to select representatives of a population that can be used to make inferences or generalizations about the whole population concerning an existing theory (Taherdoost, 2018). The study was use purposive sampling to select respondents who are directly involved in records management activities. These was included records officers, registry staff, and administrative personnel. This method is appropriate because it allows the researcher to obtain detailed information from knowledgeable individuals.

3.6.1 Simple Random Sampling

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where researchers select participants who are easiest to access or readily available at the time of the study (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). This method is often used due to its simplicity, low cost, and time-saving nature, especially when quick data collection is needed or when the target population is difficult to reach (Creswell, 2014). It is important in exploratory research, pilot studies, or situations with limited resources, as it allows researchers to gather initial insights and test hypotheses without the need for complex sampling procedures (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Despite its limitations in generalizability, convenience sampling remains a practical choice in many real-world research settings. In this study, simple random sampling was be used to eliminate bias by giving all individuals in the field area an equal opportunity to be selected.

3.6.2 Purposive Sampling Technique

According to Glenton and Lewin (2019), purposive sampling is a method under non-probability sampling techniques that allows a researcher to select samples based on their knowledge, relationships, and expertise in relation to the objectives of the study. In this study, purposive sampling was used to obtain key information that could not have been

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attained through other techniques. ***Two (2) respondents (head of department)*** were selected as key informants from the total sample size of fifth teen (15).

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest in a systematic way that enables answering stated research questions (Kabir, 2016). In this study, the researcher was use two main sources of data collection: primary and secondary sources, to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

3.7.1 Primary Data

Primary data refers to data directly collected by the researcher through interviews, observation, and questionnaires. In this study, primary data were collected from the sample population using questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and interviews.

3.7.1.1 Questionnaire

According to Kabir (2016), a questionnaire is a research tool that includes a series of written or printed questions presented systematically to gather information from respondents. In this study, the researcher applied both close-ended and open-ended questions. Open-ended questions allowed respondents to provide more detailed answers, while close-ended questions limited the range of responses (Creswell, 2012). Questionnaires was be administered to records clerics to help eliminate bias in the responses.

3.7.1.2 Interview

An interview is a data collection instrument involving a one-on-one meeting in which the researcher asks target questions related to the research problem (Rwegoshora, 2006).

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In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain data. Semi-structured interviews, which blend closed and open-ended questions, allowed the researcher to rearrange queries when necessary to gather appropriate information. This method was be used specifically to collect key information.

3.7.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to data collected by someone other than the user (Raj, 2005). In this study, secondary data were collected through reviewing documents related to the research topic, including research reports, theses, dissertations, books, journals, and scholarly articles.

3.8 Data Analysis and Processing

Krishna (2004) defines data analysis as the critical examination of assembled and grouped data for studying characteristics of the object under study and for defining associations among the variables. In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data was be obtained and analyzed. Quantitative data was be analyzed statistically using Excel and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), while qualitative data was be analyzed using the content analysis method, given that qualitative data are in narrative form rather than numerical.

3.9 Data Quality Control

Refers to the systematic processes and procedures used to ensure the accuracy, reliability, consistency, and completeness of data collected during a study. It involves techniques such as data verification, validation, error checking, and adherence to standardized protocols during data collection and entry to minimize bias and errors (Bolarinwa, 2015). These controls are essential to maintain the credibility and trustworthiness of research findings, as poor data quality can lead to misleading conclusions and undermine the overall integrity of the study. Researchers implement data quality control through

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training of data collectors, pre-testing of instruments, and supervision during fieldwork and regular data audits (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.9.1 Pilot Study

According to Codete (2017), a pilot study refers to small-scale preliminary studies. It is typically conducted with a small representative sample that is identical to, but not included in, the group to be studied (Orodho, 2010). In this study, a pilot study was be conducted to test the weaknesses and strengths of the research instruments, allowing the researcher to make necessary corrections and become familiar with the instruments.

3.10 Research Ethics

Research ethics refer to the principles guiding what should and should not be done by a researcher before, during, and after obtaining data from the field (Bhattacherjee, 2012). To ensure ethical consideration, the researcher introduced the purpose of the research to the respondents, which fostered honesty and cooperation. Information obtained from the field was be used for academic purposes only, and confidentiality of the participants was strictly maintained. Finally, all relevant sources involved in the study were acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and presentation of data collected from respondents regarding the implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, Bagamoyo. The findings are presented in relation to the study objectives and are based on both quantitative and qualitative data obtained through questionnaires and interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages and are presented in tables, while qualitative data obtained from key informant interviews are presented through narrative descriptions to supplement and clarify the quantitative findings.

The chapter begins by presenting the demographic characteristics of respondents, including age, gender, education level, position, and work experience. Thereafter, the findings focus on the types of disasters that pose risks to physical records, the disaster preparedness measures implemented within the institution, the effectiveness of those measures, and the extent to which disaster drills and training are conducted. The chapter further examines the challenges affecting the implementation of disaster preparedness measures and concludes by presenting respondents' suggestions and interview findings on strategies for improving disaster preparedness for physical records management within the institution.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

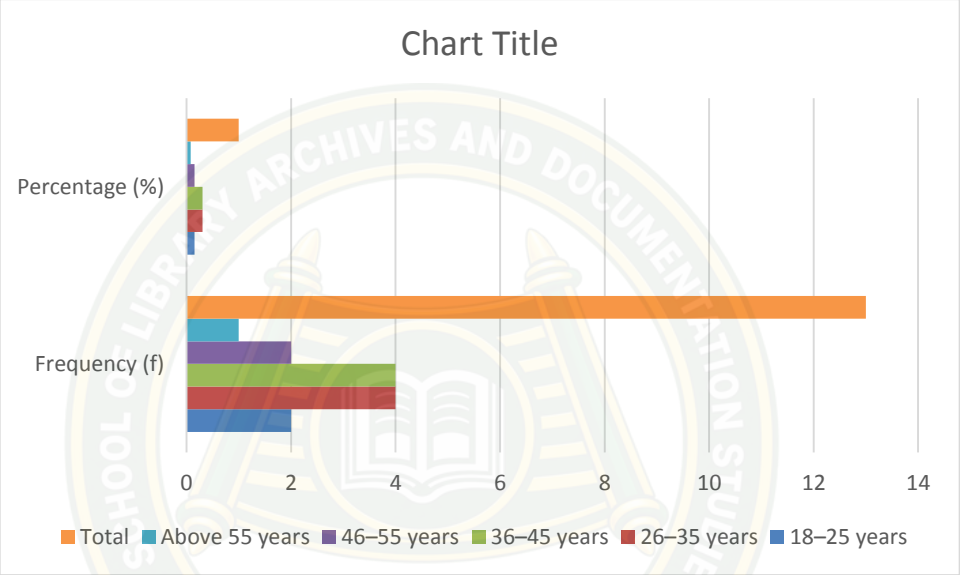
This section presented the demographic characteristics of respondents who participated in the study. The information included age, gender, education level, position, and work experience. Understanding these characteristics was important because they helped the researcher determine whether respondents had adequate knowledge and experience regarding disaster preparedness measures for physical records management. The findings are presented in the following subsections.

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4.2.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

Age distribution was important in this study because it helped to determine whether respondents were mature and experienced enough to provide reliable information regarding disaster preparedness measures for physical records management.

Figure 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents (N = 13)



Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Figure 4.1 show that the majority of respondents (30.8%) were aged between 26–35 years and another 30.8% were between 36–45 years. This indicates that most respondents were within the active working age and likely to have sufficient experience in records management activities.

A smaller proportion (15.4%) were aged 18–25 years and 15.4% were between 46–55 years, while only 7.6% were above 55 years. The presence of respondents across different age groups suggests diversity in experience and perspectives regarding disaster preparedness measures within the institution.

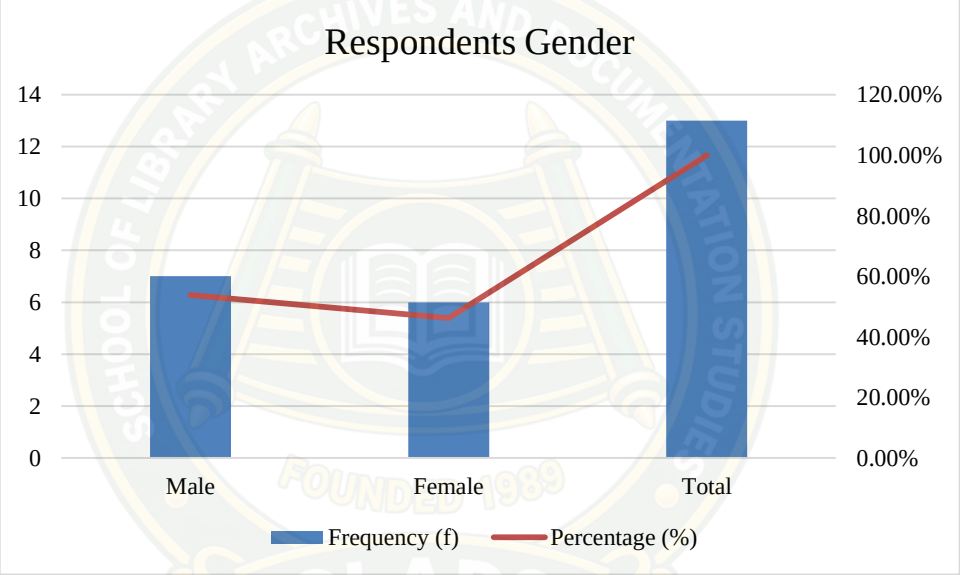
Since most respondents fall between 26–45 years, it can be assumed that they are actively engaged in institutional operations and capable of providing relevant and reliable information concerning disaster risks and preparedness practices.

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4.2.2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender distribution was examined to determine whether both male and female staff were represented in the study. This was important in understanding whether disaster preparedness awareness and implementation involve all staff members regardless of gender.

Figure 4.2: Gender Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Figure 4.2 indicate that the majority of respondents were male, representing 53.8% of the total respondents, while female respondents accounted for 46.2%.

This shows that both genders were fairly represented in the study, although males slightly outnumbered females. The near-balanced gender distribution suggests that disaster preparedness measures for physical records management involve staff members of both genders within the institution.

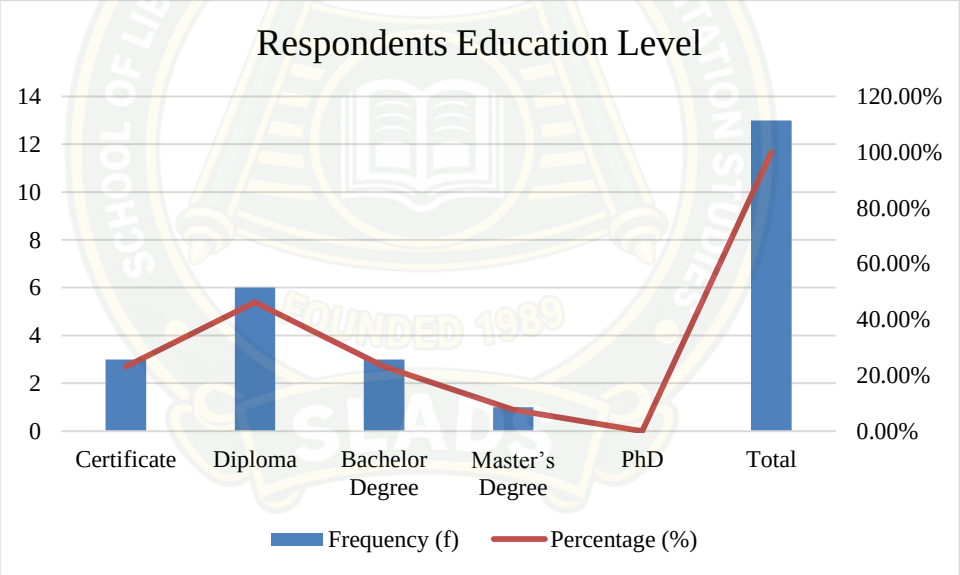
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The representation of both male and female staff enhances the reliability of the findings, as it reflects diverse perspectives regarding disaster preparedness practices in the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office at Bagamoyo.

4.2.3 Level of Education of Respondents

The level of education of respondents was examined to determine whether staff possessed adequate academic qualifications relevant to records management and disaster preparedness practices. Educational background is important because it may influence awareness, understanding, and implementation of disaster preparedness measures.

Figure 4.3: Level of Education of Respondents (N = 13)



Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Figure 4.3 show that the majority of respondents (46.2%) held a Diploma qualification. This is expected because the study was conducted in a district-level government office where most records staff typically possess diploma-level qualifications in records management or related fields. Respondents with Certificate and Bachelor Degree qualifications each accounted for 23.1%, while only 7.6% had a Master's Degree. None of the respondents had a PhD qualification.

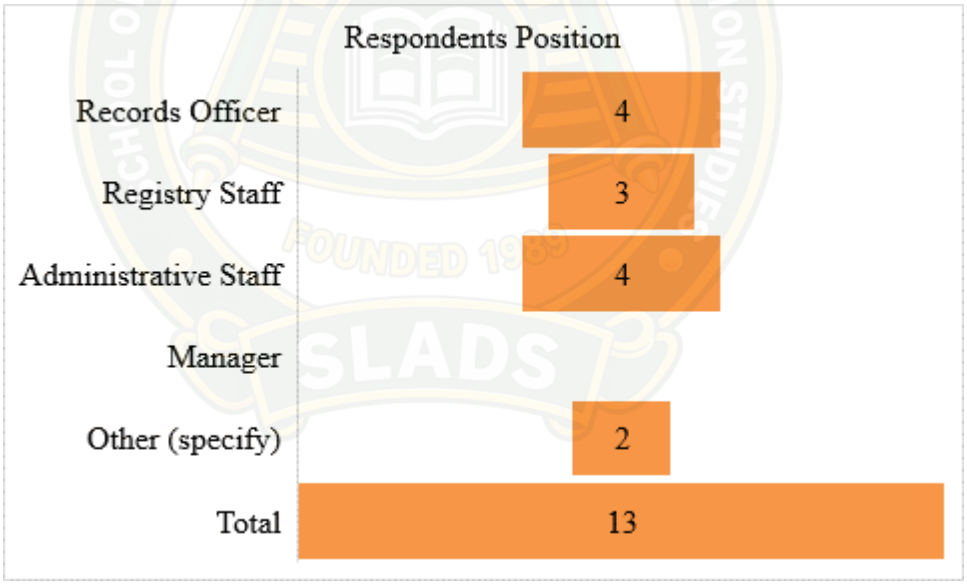
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The results suggest that most staff members have formal training relevant to records and information management, which may positively influence their understanding of disaster preparedness measures. However, the small number of respondents with advanced degrees may indicate limited specialized expertise in disaster risk management within the institution.

4.2.4 Position of Respondents in the Institution

This section presents the distribution of respondents according to their positions in the institution. Understanding respondents' positions was important because different roles may influence their level of involvement in records management and disaster preparedness activities.

Figure 4.4: Position of Respondents in the Institution (N = 13)



Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Figure 4.4 show that the largest proportion of respondents were Records Officers (30.8%) and Administrative Staff (30.8%), each accounting for an equal share. Registry Staff represented 23.1% of the respondents, while 15.3% were in other positions such as land officers and supporting staff. No respondents were from managerial positions.

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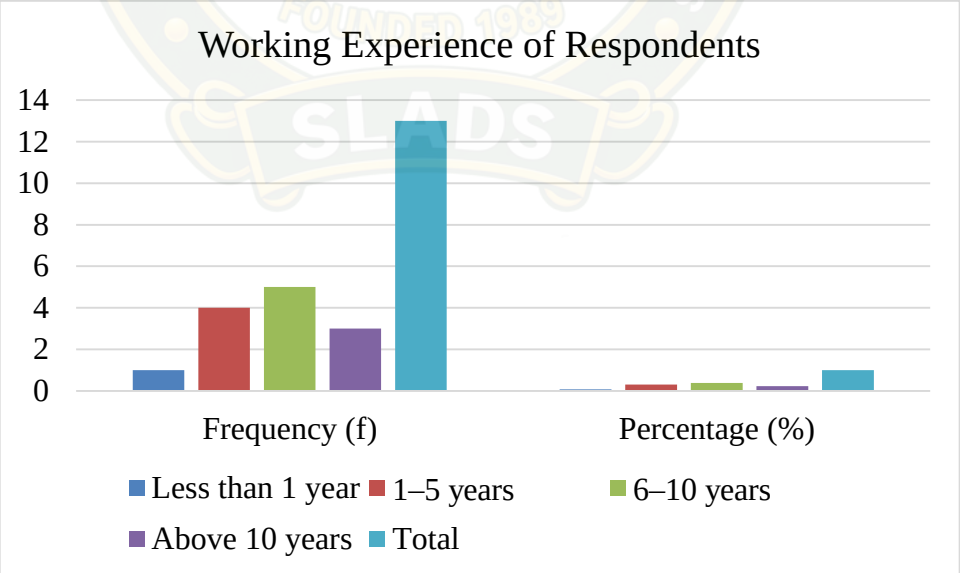
These results indicate that the study involved staff members who are directly involved in handling, storing, and managing physical records on a daily basis. The inclusion of Records Officers and Registry Staff is particularly important because they are the primary protectors of physical records and are most likely to be aware of disaster risks and preparedness practices within the institution.

The absence of managers in the sample is consistent with the methodology of the study, which focused on operational staff involved in day-to-day records management activities. However, complementary information from key informant interviews (2 managers) was used to enrich the findings.

4.2.5 Work Experience of Respondents

Work experience was examined to determine whether respondents had sufficient exposure to records management practices and disaster-related challenges within the institution. Experience is important because staff who have worked longer are more likely to have encountered or observed risks affecting physical records.

Figure 4.5: Work Experience of Respondents (N = 13)



Source: Field Data, 2026

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The findings in Figure 4.5 show that the majority of respondents (38.5%) had between 6 and 10 years of working experience, followed by 30.8% who had 1 to 5 years of experience. A smaller proportion (23.0%) had more than 10 years of experience, while 7.7% had worked for less than one year.

The results indicate that most respondents had moderate to long working experience, which suggests that they were familiar with the operations of the institution, including the management of physical records and the disaster preparedness measures that have been implemented over time. Respondents with long-term experience were particularly useful in providing information regarding historical disaster events, recurring risks, and the effectiveness of preparedness strategies within the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office at Bagamoyo.

4.3 Presentation of Findings According to Specific Objectives

The demographic characteristics of respondents presented in Section 4.2 showed that most of the staff who participated in this study had adequate educational qualifications and sufficient working experience to provide reliable information regarding disaster preparedness measures for physical records management.

This section presents the findings of the study in relation to the four specific objectives stated in Chapter One. The findings are presented using frequencies, percentages, tables, and narrative explanations supported by interview quotes from the two key informants. Each subsection corresponds directly to one specific objective of the study.

4.3.1 Types of Disasters that Pose Risks to Physical Records

The first specific objective of this study was to identify the types of disasters that pose risks to physical records at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo. To address this objective, respondents were asked to indicate the disasters that commonly affect physical records within their institution, and key informants were also interviewed for additional information.

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Table 4.1: Types of Disasters that Pose Risks to Physical Records (N = 13)

Types of Disasters	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Fire	9	69.2%
Flood	8	61.5%
Theft	6	46.2%
Pest infestation	7	53.8%
Poor storage conditions	10	76.9%
Power failure	5	38.5%
Other (Specify)	1	7.7%

Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Table 4.1 indicate that the most common disaster posing risks to physical records is poor storage conditions, as indicated by 76.9% of respondents. Fire was reported by 69.2% of respondents, while flood risks were mentioned by 61.5%. Pest infestation was identified by 53.8% of respondents, and theft was noted by 46.2%. Power failure was less common, reported by 38.5%, while only 7.7% of respondents mentioned other types of disasters.

The results suggest that physical records at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office are vulnerable to multiple risks, with environmental and infrastructural challenges being the most dominant. The high percentage for poor storage conditions highlights serious concerns regarding the suitability of existing storage facilities in safeguarding records.

These findings were supported by one of the key informants, who stated:

> *"We keep many files in rooms that are not well maintained. Some have leaking roofs, and during the rainy season, water enters the storage areas and damages some documents. We are*

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> *also worried about fire because we do not have proper firefighting equipment in the registry." (Key Informant 1, 2026)*

Another informant added:

> *"Pests such as termites and cockroaches are a serious problem in our records storage rooms. Some files have been damaged and the information is no longer readable." (Key Informant 2, 2026)*

The interview responses confirm that poor storage conditions, water damage, fire risks, and pest infestation are among the major disasters threatening physical records in the institution.

4.3.2 Disaster Preparedness Measures Currently Implemented for the Protection and Management of Physical Records

The findings in Section 4.3.1 showed that physical records at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo are exposed to several disasters, including poor storage conditions, fire, floods, pests, and theft. This section addresses the second specific objective, which sought to assess the disaster preparedness measures currently implemented for the protection and management of physical records. Respondents were asked to indicate the measures that are available in their institution, and key informants were also interviewed to provide further explanation.

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Table 4.2: Disaster Preparedness Measures Implemented (N = 13)

Preparedness Measures	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Fire extinguishers	4	30.8%
Proper storage facilities	3	23.1%
Records digitization/backup	2	15.4%
Disaster preparedness policies	1	7.7%
Regular inspection and maintenance	3	23.1%
Emergency response plans	2	15.4%
Other (Specify)	0	0.0%

Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Table 4.2 show that the most common disaster preparedness measure implemented in the institution is the availability of fire extinguishers, as reported by 30.8% of respondents. Proper storage facilities and regular inspection and maintenance were each mentioned by 23.1% of respondents. Records digitization/backup and emergency response plans were each reported by 15.4% of respondents, while only 7.7% of respondents indicated the existence of disaster preparedness policies.

The results suggest that while some basic preparedness measures are in place, the overall level of disaster preparedness within the institution is low. The very low percentage of respondents reporting the presence of disaster preparedness policies and emergency response plans indicates weak institutional planning in addressing risks to physical records. This implies that the institution relies mostly on basic physical equipment such as fire extinguishers rather than having comprehensive preparedness frameworks.

These findings were supported by the key informants, one of whom stated:

> *"We have a few fire extinguishers placed in some offices, but we do not have a written disaster preparedness plan that guides*

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staff on what to do in case of fire, floods, or any other emergency." (Key Informant 1, 2026)

Another informant added:

"Some important files have been scanned and stored in computers, but most of our records are still in physical form, and we do not have a proper backup system. We also do not have a designated emergency response team for records." (Key Informant 2, 2026)

The interview responses confirm that although some basic measures such as fire extinguishers exist, the institution lacks a comprehensive approach to disaster preparedness for physical records.

4.3.3 Level of Effectiveness of the Implemented Disaster Preparedness Measures

The previous section revealed that the institution has limited disaster preparedness measures in place, with most of them being basic such as fire extinguishers and limited storage improvements. Building on that, this section presents the perceived effectiveness of the existing measures as reported by respondents and key informants. This addresses the part of the questionnaire that required respondents to rate the level of effectiveness of the current disaster preparedness measures in the institution.

Table 4.3: Level of Effectiveness of Disaster Preparedness Measures (N = 13)

Effectiveness Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very effective	0	0.0%
Effective	2	15.4%
Neutral	3	23.1%
Ineffective	5	38.5%
Very ineffective	3	23.0%
Total	13	100%

Source: Field Data, 2026

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The findings in Table 4.3 show that the majority of respondents (38.5%) rated the current disaster preparedness measures as ineffective, while 23.0% rated them as very ineffective. Only 15.4% of respondents considered the measures to be effective, and 23.1% remained neutral. Notably, no respondent rated the measures as very effective.

These findings clearly indicate that the existing disaster preparedness measures in the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office are perceived to be insufficient in protecting physical records. The high percentage of negative ratings (61.5% combining ineffective and very ineffective) suggests serious weaknesses in the institution's ability to prevent, respond to, and recover from disasters affecting physical records. This implies that urgent improvements are needed to strengthen disaster preparedness and ensure the safety of valuable records.

This finding was confirmed by one of the key informants, who stated:

> *"The few measures we have are not enough to protect our records. We are not confident that if a fire or flood happens today, we would be able to save most of the files. Our preparedness is very weak." (Key Informant 1, 2026)*

Another informant noted:

> *"We do not conduct regular drills or training, and many staff do not know what to do when disasters occur. This makes the existing measures even less effective." (Key Informant 2, 2026)*

The interview responses further confirm that the institution lacks adequate and effective disaster preparedness measures for physical records management.

4.3.4 Conduct of Disaster Drills and Training

The previous section established that the existing disaster preparedness measures are perceived as ineffective. One of the key factors that influences the effectiveness of preparedness measures is the regular conduct of disaster drills and training for staff. This

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section therefore presents findings on whether the institution conducts disaster drills or training related to records management, addressing the third specific objective of the study, which examined the level of staff awareness and preparedness regarding disaster management practices.

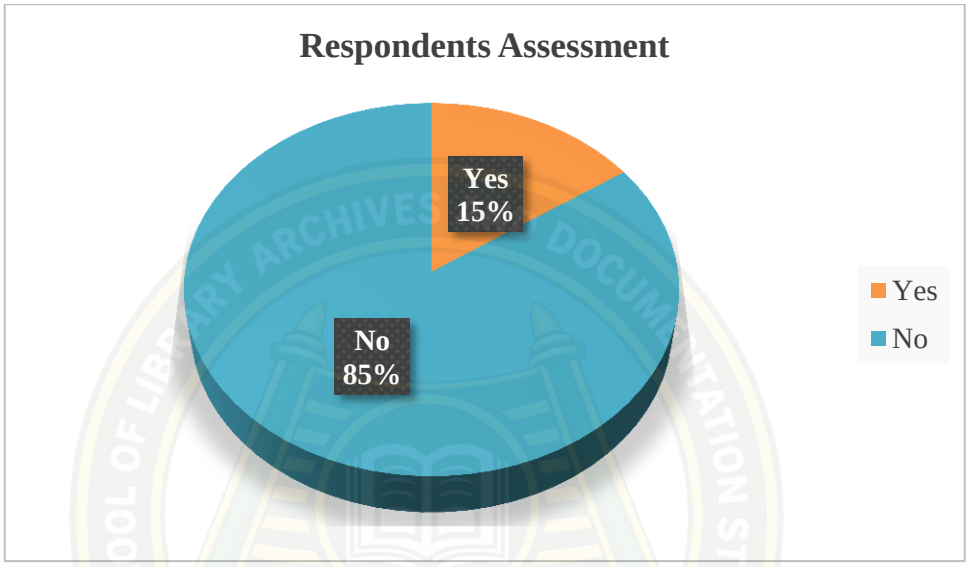


Figure 4.6: Conduct of Disaster Drills and Training (N = 13)
Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Figure 4.6 reveal that the majority of respondents (84.6%) reported that their institution does not conduct disaster drills or training related to records management, while only 15.4% of respondents indicated that such activities are conducted. This indicates that disaster drills and staff training are not regularly practiced in the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo.

The low frequency of disaster drills and training suggests that staff members are not adequately prepared to respond to emergencies that may affect physical records. Without regular training, even the limited preparedness measures in place are unlikely to be applied effectively during actual disaster situations. This highlights a significant gap in staff preparedness and a need for the institution to invest in regular training and simulation exercises.

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This finding was further supported by the key informants. One informant stated:

> *"Since I joined this department several years ago, I have never attended any training or drill related to disaster management for records. We only learn through experience when something goes wrong." (Key Informant 1, 2026)*

Another informant added:

> *"There is no scheduled program for disaster training. Even basic fire drills are not conducted in the records storage areas." (Key Informant 2, 2026)*

The interview responses confirm that disaster drills and training are not regularly conducted, which contributes to the low level of staff preparedness observed in the institution.

4.3.5 Challenges Affecting the Implementation of Disaster Preparedness Measures for Physical Records Management

The previous sections revealed that disaster preparedness measures in the institution are limited and largely ineffective. One of the reasons for this situation may be the presence of various institutional challenges that hinder proper implementation of disaster preparedness strategies. This section therefore addresses the fourth specific objective of the study, which sought to identify the challenges affecting the effective implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management. Respondents were asked to indicate the major challenges facing the institution.

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Table 4.4: Challenges Affecting Implementation of Disaster Preparedness Measures (N = 13)

Challenges	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Lack of funds	11	84.6%
Lack of training	9	69.2%
Poor infrastructure	10	76.9%
Lack of management support	6	46.2%
Inadequate policies	8	61.5%
Lack of awareness	7	53.8%
Other (Specify)	1	7.7%

Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Table 4.4 show that the most significant challenge affecting the implementation of disaster preparedness measures is lack of funds, as indicated by 84.6% of respondents. This was followed by poor infrastructure (76.9%) and lack of training (69.2%). Inadequate policies were reported by 61.5% of respondents, while 53.8% mentioned lack of awareness. Lack of management support was identified by 46.2% of respondents.

These findings suggest that financial constraints are the primary barrier to effective disaster preparedness in the institution. Without sufficient funding, it becomes difficult to improve storage facilities, purchase fire detection equipment, conduct staff training, or develop comprehensive disaster preparedness plans. Poor infrastructure further exposes physical records to risks such as floods, humidity, and pest infestation. Additionally, the lack of training and awareness contributes to low staff preparedness, which weakens the institution's ability to respond effectively during emergencies.

Overall, the results indicate that disaster preparedness for physical records management in the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office is affected by multiple

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interrelated challenges, particularly financial, infrastructural, and institutional weaknesses.

These findings were supported by the key informants, one of whom stated:

> *"Budget limitations are our biggest challenge. Records management is not given high priority compared to other departments, so we receive very little funding for improving storage facilities or buying emergency equipment." (Key Informant 1, 2026)*

Another informant added:

> *"We do not have a clear disaster preparedness policy specifically for records. Even management rarely discusses disaster risks related to files unless something has already happened." (Key Informant 2, 2026)*

These interview findings confirm that financial constraints, weak policies, poor infrastructure, and limited management support significantly hinder the effective implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management.

4.3.6 Suggestions from Respondents on Improving Disaster Preparedness Measures

The previous section identified several challenges that hinder the effective implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management, including lack of funds, poor infrastructure, weak policies, and limited staff training. To strengthen disaster preparedness, respondents were further asked to suggest possible ways through which the institution could improve its preparedness measures. Their suggestions are presented in this section.

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Table 4.5: Suggestions for Improving Disaster Preparedness Measures (N = 13)

Suggested Improvement	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Increase budget for records management	10	76.9%
Conduct regular training and drills	8	61.5%
Improve storage infrastructure	9	69.2%
Develop disaster preparedness policies	7	53.8%
Increase management support	6	46.2%
Raise staff awareness	5	38.5%
Digitize critical records	4	30.8%

Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Table 4.5 show that the most common suggestion provided by respondents was to increase the budget allocated to records management, as indicated by 76.9% of respondents. This was followed by improving storage infrastructure (69.2%) and conducting regular training and drills (61.5%). The development of disaster preparedness policies was suggested by 53.8% of respondents, while 46.2% recommended increased management support. Raising staff awareness and digitizing critical records were suggested by 38.5% and 30.8% of respondents, respectively.

These findings suggest that respondents recognize the importance of financial support, infrastructure improvement, and capacity building in strengthening disaster preparedness. The emphasis on increased budget indicates that without adequate financial resources, other improvements such as training, policy development, and infrastructure development cannot be effectively achieved.

The suggestions are consistent with the challenges identified in Section 4.3.5, showing that respondents understand the weaknesses in the current system and are aware of practical strategies to address them.

These suggestions were also rebounded by the key informants. One informant stated:

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> *"If the government can allocate enough funds for records management, we were be able to renovate the storage rooms, buy modern filing equipment, and install fire detection systems. This was making a big difference." (Key Informant 1, 2026)*

Another informant added:

> *"We need to be trained regularly on how to handle records during emergencies. Even a simple training once or twice a year would help staff understand what to do when disaster strikes." (Key Informant 2, 2026)*

These responses confirm the importance of financial investment, staff training, and infrastructure improvement in enhancing disaster preparedness for physical records management.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the major findings of the study, conclusions drawn from those findings, recommendations for improving disaster preparedness measures for physical records management, and areas for further research. The discussion is structured according to the four specific objectives that guided the study: identifying types of disasters that pose risks to physical records, assessing disaster preparedness measures currently implemented, examining the level of staff awareness and preparedness, and identifying challenges affecting effective implementation.

5.2 Summary of the Major Findings

The study assessed the implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo. Data were collected from 13 questionnaire respondents and 2 key informants.

5.2.1 Types of Disasters that Pose Risks to Physical Records

The study revealed that physical records in the institution are exposed to multiple disaster risks. The most significant risk identified was poor storage conditions (76.9%), followed by fire (69.2%), floods (61.5%), pest infestation (53.8%), and theft (46.2%).

These findings indicate that physical records are highly vulnerable, particularly due to environmental and infrastructural weaknesses. The prominence of poor storage conditions suggests that internal institutional factors, rather than only external natural disasters, significantly contribute to the vulnerability of records.

Interview findings confirmed that leaking roofs, inadequate storage rooms, and pest infestations are ongoing threats to the preservation of physical records.

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5.2.2 Disaster Preparedness Measures Implemented

The findings showed that disaster preparedness measures currently implemented in the institution are limited and largely basic in nature. The most commonly reported measure was the availability of fire extinguishers (30.8%). Other measures such as proper storage facilities (23.1%), regular inspection (23.1%), digitization (15.4%), emergency response plans (15.4%), and disaster preparedness policies (7.7%) were reported at very low levels.

This indicates that the institution lacks a comprehensive disaster preparedness framework. The absence of formal disaster preparedness policies and emergency response plans suggests weak institutional planning and poor strategic commitment to records protection.

5.2.3 Level of Effectiveness and Staff Preparedness

The majority of respondents rated the existing disaster preparedness measures as ineffective (38.5%) or very ineffective (23.0%), meaning 61.5% of staff perceive preparedness measures as inadequate. No respondent rated the measures as very effective.

Furthermore, 84.6% of respondents reported that the institution does not conduct regular disaster drills or training. This demonstrates low staff preparedness and limited practical capacity to respond effectively in case of emergencies.

The findings indicate that even the limited preparedness measures in place are unlikely to function effectively during actual disaster situations due to lack of training and simulation exercises.

5.2.4 Challenges Affecting Implementation

The study identified multiple interrelated challenges affecting the implementation of disaster preparedness measures. The most significant challenge was lack of funds

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(84.6%), followed by poor infrastructure (76.9%), lack of training (69.2%), inadequate policies (61.5%), lack of awareness (53.8%), and limited management support (46.2%).

These findings suggest that financial constraints are the primary barrier, which directly affects infrastructure development, training programs, policy formulation, and acquisition of protective equipment. The absence of strong management commitment further weakens institutional disaster preparedness efforts.

5.2.5 Suggested Improvements

Respondents suggested increasing budget allocation (76.9%), improving storage infrastructure (69.2%), conducting regular training and drills (61.5%), developing disaster preparedness policies (53.8%), increasing management support (46.2%), raising awareness (38.5%), and digitizing critical records (30.8%).

These suggestions align directly with the challenges identified, indicating that staff are aware of practical measures needed to strengthen disaster preparedness.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo has weak and inadequate disaster preparedness measures for physical records management.

Although some basic protective measures such as fire extinguishers exist, they are insufficient and not supported by comprehensive policies, structured planning, regular training, or adequate infrastructure. Physical records remain highly vulnerable to disasters due to poor storage conditions, environmental risks, and weak institutional preparedness.

The absence of regular disaster drills and staff training significantly undermines the effectiveness of existing measures. Moreover, financial constraints, inadequate policies,

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poor infrastructure, and limited management commitment collectively hinder the proper implementation of disaster preparedness strategies.

If these weaknesses are not addressed, the institution remains at high risk of losing valuable physical records, which may negatively affect governance, service delivery, legal accountability, and institutional memory.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

5.4.1 Increase Budget Allocation

The institution should allocate adequate funds specifically for records management and disaster preparedness activities. Increased financial support was enable the acquisition of proper storage facilities, fire detection systems, environmental monitoring tools, and other protective equipment.

5.4.2 Improve Storage Infrastructure

The Department should improve its records storage facilities by ensuring proper ventilation, protection from water leakage, installation of fire-resistant cabinets, and pest control measures. Dedicated and well-designed storage rooms should be established to reduce vulnerability to disasters.

5.4.3 Develop and Implement Disaster Preparedness Policies

Management should develop a formal disaster preparedness policy specifically for records management. The policy should clearly outline procedures, roles, and responsibilities in case of emergencies.

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5.4.4 Conduct Regular Training and Disaster Drills

Regular training programs and disaster simulation exercises should be organized to enhance staff awareness and preparedness. Training was equipped staff with knowledge and skills to respond effectively during emergencies.

5.4.5 Introduce Digitization and Backup Systems

The institution should gradually digitize vital records and establish secure backup systems, including off-site storage, to minimize the risk of total information loss during disasters.

5.4.6 Strengthen Management Support

Institutional leadership should recognize the importance of records protection and actively support disaster preparedness initiatives through supervision, monitoring, and policy enforcement.

5.5 Areas for Further Study

This study focused on disaster preparedness measures for physical records management in one district-level government office. Therefore, further studies are recommended in the following areas:

- A comparative study on disaster preparedness measures in different local government institutions in Tanzania.
- An assessment of disaster preparedness for digital records management in public institutions.
- A study on the impact of digitization on reducing disaster risks for records management.
- An evaluation of national policies and frameworks guiding disaster preparedness for records management in Tanzania.

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Further research in these areas was contribute to a broader understanding of disaster preparedness practices and help improve records management systems in public institutions.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF

The researcher is a student conducting a study on the implementation of disaster preparedness measures for physical records management. You are kindly requested to respond to this questionnaire by filling in the appropriate information according to your knowledge. The information provided was be used for academic purposes only and was be treated with confidentiality.

Please indicate the correct response by marking (√) in the brackets or fill in the blank space provided.

1. Which age group do you belong?
   a) 18–25 years
   b) 26–35 years
   c) 36–45 years
   d) 46–55 years
   e) Above 55 years ( )
2. What is your gender?
   i. Male
   ii. Female ( )
3. What is your level of education?
   a) Certificate
   b) Diploma
   c) Bachelor Degree
   d) Master's Degree
   e) PhD ( )
4. What is your position in the institution?
   a) Records Officer

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b) Registry Staff

c) Administrative Staff

d) Manager

e) Other (specify) _____ ( )

5. How many years of experience do you have?

a) Less than 1 year

b) 1–5 years

c) 6–10 years

d) Above 10 years ( )

6. Which types of disasters pose risks to physical records in your institution? (Select all that apply)

a) Fire

b) Flood

c) Theft

d) Pest infestation

e) Poor storage conditions

f) Power failure

g) Other (specify) _____

7. Which of the following measures are implemented? (Select all that apply)

a) Fire extinguishers

b) Proper storage facilities

c) Records digitization/backup

d) Disaster preparedness policies

e) Regular inspection and maintenance

f) Emergency response plans

g) Other (specify) _____

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8. How effective are the current disaster preparedness measures?
   a) Very effective
   b) Effective
   c) Neutral
   d) Ineffective
   e) Very ineffective ( )
9. Does your institution conduct disaster drills or training?
   a) Yes
   b) No ( )
10. What challenges affect the implementation of disaster preparedness measures? (Select all that apply)
    a) Lack of funds
    b) Lack of training
    c) Poor infrastructure
    d) Lack of management support
    e) Inadequate policies
    f) Lack of awareness
    g) Other (specify) _____
11. What suggestions would you give to improve disaster preparedness for physical records management?

    …….

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APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STAFF

i. What types of disasters commonly affect physical records in your institution?

ii. What disaster preparedness measures are currently implemented to protect physical records?

iii. How effective do you think these measures are in safeguarding records?

iv. What is your level of awareness regarding disaster preparedness practices?

v. Have you received any training related to disaster management for records? Please explain.

vi. How prepared do you feel in handling disasters affecting physical records?

vii. What challenges do you face in implementing disaster preparedness measures?

viii. How do these challenges affect the protection of physical records?

ix. What support does your institution provide to improve disaster preparedness?

x. What improvements or solutions would you recommend to enhance disaster preparedness measures?

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APPENDIX III

APPROVAL LETTER

JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA

OFISI YA WAZIRI MKUU
TAWALA ZA MIKOA NA SERIKALI ZA MITAA
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA BAGAMOYO

Unapojibu tafadhali taja

Kumb Na:. HA.29/183/08/76 **Tarehe:** 25 Machi, 2026

Mkuu wa Chuo,
Chuo cha Ukutubi na Utunzaji wa Nyaraka,
S.L.P 227,
BAGAMOYO.

Yah: **RUHUSA YA KUFANYA UTAFITI KWA NDUGU ESTER G. SIKAMANGA.**

Kichwa cha habari hapo juu cha husika.

2. Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo inakiri kupokea barua yako yenye Kumb. **Na. DA.201/457/VOL/1/20** ya tarehe **25 Februari, 2026** yenye somo sawa na hapo juu.

3. Kwa barua hii, napenda kukufahamisha kwamba mtajwa hapo juu ameruhusiwa kufanya Utafiti Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Bagamoyo katika **Idara ya Utawala na Rasilimali Watu** kwa kipindi cha kuanzia tarehe **1, April** hadi **1 Mei, 2026**

4 Nakutakia Utafiti mema.

Majid S.Mhina
KAIMU MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA
BAGAMOYO.

KAIMU MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA
BAGAMOYO
S.L.P. 59
BAGAMOYO

Nakala: Mkuu wa Idara,
Idara ya Utawala na Rasilimali Watu,
Halamashauri ya Wilaya,
S.L.P. 59,
BAGAMOYO. - Mpokee na kumpa ushirikiano.

Ester G. Sikamanga - Ripoti Idara ya Utawala na Rasilimali Watu.

Barua zote ziandikwe kwa Mkurugenzi Mtendaji (W)
Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji, Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo,Barabara ya uhindini, S.L.P. 59, 61301 BAGAMOYO Mkoa wa Pwani.
Simu Na: +255 733860575, Nukushi: 023 2440338 Barua Pepe: ded.bagamoyo@pwani.go.tz. barua@bagamoyodc go.tz. Tovuti: www.bagamoyodc.go.tz

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