This thesis examines the performance of emergency & disaster management response during the 26th Jan 2001 Bhuj (Gujarat) earthquake to assess the organizational effectiveness, specifically of the Governance system. With a matured policy framework in place (at all levels of the Governance hierarchy), the international counter-disaster community, especially in developed countries, is focusing more and more on leveraging modern technology tools for bringing “effectiveness” into disaster management. Central to this trend is the belief that advanced monitoring, measuring, analyzing, predicting and disseminating potential of modern technological (ICT) tools can facilitate the integration of multiple (State / National / International) disaster management organizations into one seamless entity for flawless sharing of resources, coordinated information flows, and meaningful participation of various stakeholders (Public-Private-People) for effective and efficient disaster management. Such policy framework and practices would not only synergize resource coordination and management but would also bring down the “total cost of ownership (TCO)”.

“Standardization and interoperability” has become a necessity under the current trend with changing dynamics of disasters, where a local event anywhere may have regional, national or global implications. This applies to all components of disaster management starting from policies, procedures, origination, human & other resources as well as technologies. National Government has a critical role in designing and implementing effective emergency and disaster management policies based on “standardized and interoperable” principles. National Government also has a very crucial role of management alert and warning system which are connected to “the global and the local” environment at the same time.

Schools and employees can be the most effective channels for inducing home
preparedness in Indian context. Gujarat state, with a typical cultural composition strongly attached to various religious agencies / institutions (BAPS, Gayatri Parivar etc.), offers a new category of role players who can be very effective in community preparedness and relief works.

This thesis develops a systems perspective for disaster management in Gujarat State (India) by examining primary and secondary data along with a detailed comparative study on one of the "tested & most effective" emergency & disaster management organization systems in the world - namely, the Office of Emergency Services, California State, USA. This model is customized for Indian conditions and governance norms and is very likely to be relevant for other States in India.