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"Crowdsourced Disaster Response And Rescue Assistant"

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Abstract: Natural disasters like floods, earthquakes, and cyclones often cause delays in rescue work because there is not enough real-time information from people in affected areas. Traditional emergency systems find it hard to gather and share accurate data quickly, which slows down rescue efforts and puts more lives at risk. The Crowdsourced Disaster Response & Rescue Assistant helps solve this problem by using a mobile app and a backend system that let people in disaster zones share important information directly. Through the app, users can ask for help, mark safe zones, and share their live location, even if the internet is not working. The system uses mesh networking and SMS backup to keep communication going and has a priority-based SOS feature so that the most urgent help requests reach rescue teams first. By collecting real-time data and sharing it smartly, this system helps authorities, NGOs, and citizens work together more effectively. It allows faster responses, reduces communication failures, and makes disaster management more efficient. In the end, this project aims to create a reliable and community-based system that saves lives and improves disaster preparedness.

keywords- ***Helping during disasters, Rescue help, Emergency SOS messages, Network connection between nearby phones, People working together.***

I. INTRODUCTION

Natural disasters like floods, earthquakes, cyclones, and landslides—have long disrupted human life. They destroy homes, take lives, and force people to flee their communities[1]. In the past, responding to these disasters was mostly the job of government agencies, military units, and formal rescue teams. Communication during such emergencies was slow and often unreliable, depending on radio updates or printed notices. These delays meant that help often arrived too late, resulting in avoidable tragedies.

Over the last two decades, technology has transformed the way we deal with disasters. The rise of smartphones, GPS, social media platforms, and mobile apps has made it easier for people to send out important information quickly. One major step forward has been the use of crowdsourcing, where people directly affected by a disaster report their situation on the spot. This real-time input helps rescue teams respond faster and with better accuracy. However, even with these advances, challenges remain—especially when communication networks fail or when life-threatening situations need urgent attention[3] .One of the biggest problems during disasters is the lack of reliable information from those in danger. If phone towers are damaged or the internet goes down, people are unable to call for help. Rescue workers, in turn, are forced to make decisions based on outdated or unclear data. This leads to poor coordination—where teams may be sent to less critical areas, while people in real need are left waiting. Not being able to communicate also causes mental stress and fear among victims.[2]

To address these issues, a new tool has been created: the Crowdsourced Disaster Response & Rescue Assistant. This digital system combines a mobile app with smart technology to ensure better communication, even when networks are down. It uses mesh networking (phones connecting directly to one another) and SMS as backups when the internet is unavailable. The system works through two main parts:

1. Mobile App for People Affected by Disasters

Lets users share their live location, request urgent help, and mark safe zones. Designed to be easy to use, even in stressful situations Works without internet by connecting to nearby phones or sending SMS messages.

2. System for Rescue Teams and Authorities

Collects data from app users and displays it on a live map. Helps emergency teams organize their response more effectively. Identifies and flags high-priority SOS alerts so urgent cases get help first.

Main Advantages of the System:

Saves Lives: Helps emergency workers quickly locate and rescue people in danger.
Provides Real-Time Info: Gathers direct updates from affected individuals.
Works During Network Failures: Keeps communication going using offline options.
Uses Resources Wisely: Prioritizes the most critical cases first.
Flexible for Any Disaster: Can be used in floods, quakes, storms, or other emergencies.
Involves the Community: Allows people to actively contribute to rescue efforts.
New and Effective Approach: Combines several technologies in a fresh, practical way—making it a strong candidate for future patents.

II. OBJECTIVES

- The system helps people share if they're safe, where they are, and what's happening around them during a disaster.
- It still works when internet is down by sending messages through nearby phones or using regular text.
- When someone sends an urgent SOS, it's sent out first so help can arrive faster.
- Users can also point out safe places and share their location to help with rescue and planning evacuations.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Building a Disaster Help System Using Crowdsourcing (2023):

This study created a disaster preparation system where regular people help by sharing information during emergencies. Both registered volunteers and anyone nearby can send updates, but the system checks how trustworthy the information is to avoid mistakes. It shows how important it is to organize volunteers well and make sure the shared data is reliable for better disaster help.

2. Using Smartphones for Disaster Help (2023):

This review looked at many systems that use phone sensors and people's reports during disasters. It focused on tools like GPS, cameras, and social media to create real-time maps and decide where help is needed most. Most tools work during the disaster itself, but there are still challenges like testing in real situations and using smart computer programs to reduce damage.

3. Using Social Media for Flood Info in Jakarta (2019):

The PetaJakarta.org project gathered flood information from social media posts by citizens. This showed that social media can provide fast and useful information to help city officials and people respond better to floods.

4. AI and Crowdsourcing for Faster Disaster Help (Recent):

New research shows that using AI combined with crowdsourced information helps make faster and better decisions in emergencies. Real-time data and people's reports together help prioritize who needs help first and where to send resources.

5. Trends in Social Media and Crowdsourcing for Disaster Safety (2024):

This paper looked at how social media and crowdsourcing have been used over the last 15 years in different stages of disasters. It found that more people are using these tools for early warnings, checking damage, and recovery, showing how technology and citizen involvement are becoming more important.

A. Low points :

a. Most disaster management systems tend to concentrate on just one part of the disaster process instead of covering the whole event from beginning to end.

b. It is often difficult to verify if the information provided by people is correct, which can sometimes cause mistakes in the response.

c. Many of these technologies have not been thoroughly tested in large-scale real disaster situations, so their true effectiveness remains uncertain.

d. There is still no clear understanding of how to best combine AI technology with human judgment when making decisions during emergencies.

e. Some communities are left out because they dont have proper access to technology or because language differences make it hard for them to participate.

B. Research Gaps:

1. **Developing a Crowdsourcing-Based Disaster Relief Model (2023)**

This study introduced a community-based system where both trained volunteers and everyday citizens can share updates during a disaster. The system checks the reliability of the information to reduce false reports and highlights the importance of organizing volunteers effectively.

Research Gap: While useful, the model hasn't been tested on a large scale and does not include newer technologies like
mesh networks or backup SMS systems that could help when internet or mobile networks fail.

2. **Use of Mobile Crowdsensing in Disaster Management (2023)**

This paper reviewed how mobile phones and their built-in sensors, like GPS and cameras, are used during disasters to create live maps and guide resource distribution. Most examples focused only on the response phase after a disaster.

Research Gap: The systems haven't been tested much in real, large disasters. They also don't fully make use of smart tools like AI for predicting or ranking emergencies, and they don't work well in places with poor or no internet connection.

3. **Crowdsourced Social Media Data for Disaster Management (2019)**

The PetaJakarta.org project collected flood-related updates from social media posts by local residents. This helped create real-time flood maps and improved how city officials responded to the disaster.

Research Gap: The system relies heavily on internet and social media, making it less useful in areas with bad or no
connectivity. It's also mostly focused on cities, so it may not work well in rural or remote areas.

4. **Crowdsourced Disaster Management System Using AI (Recent Research)**

This research explored how artificial intelligence can work with crowdsourced information to speed up decisions during disasters. It helped responders know where to go first and how to use resources effectively.

Research Gap: These systems are still new and haven't been widely tested in real-life disaster conditions. Also, they don't
explore how to keep working when the internet is down or how to mix AI with offline communication tools.

5. **Social Media and Crowdsourcing Trends in Disaster Risk Reduction (2024)**

This review looked at how social media and crowdsourcing have been used over the last 15 years to warn people, assess damage, and help with recovery. It shows that people are getting more involved through technology.

Research Gap: While informative, the paper mostly looks at past trends and doesn't offer new practical solutions. It doesn't suggest specific ways to build modern systems that can still work without the internet or ones that could be turned into patented, real-world tools.

IV. TECHNICAL CONSTRAINTS

A. Network constraints:

During disaster scenarios, traditional communication networks frequently suffer damage or become overloaded, leading to unreliable or completely unavailable internet and cellular services. This limitation presents a significant challenge for disaster response systems, which rely heavily on the timely and accurate transmission of information. To address this, the system incorporates alternative communication methods such as mesh networking, which enables direct device-to-device connections without dependence on central infrastructure, and SMS fallback to transmit critical messages when mobile data services fail. Despite these measures, issues such as intermittent connectivity, low bandwidth, and high latency persist, impacting the real-time sharing of information. Additionally, network instability often causes delays in data synchronization and delivery, requiring the system to efficiently handle offline data caching and prioritize the transmission of urgent alerts. These constraints underline the necessity of resilient, adaptive network strategies to maintain operational effectiveness during disasters.

B. Device Compatibility:

The disaster response application is designed to be compatible with a wide range of mobile devices to ensure broad usability during emergencies. It supports both Android and iOS platforms, targeting devices with at least Android 8.0 and iOS 12 or higher to balance functionality and accessibility. Core hardware requirements include GPS capability for accurate location tracking and a minimum of 1 to 2 GB of RAM to handle app processes efficiently in constrained environments. The application is optimized to work on devices with limited storage and varying specs by incorporating offline data caching and low-bandwidth communication modes such as mesh networking and SMS fallback. This adaptability guarantees that users with older or budget-friendly smartphones can still actively participate in disaster reporting and receive critical alerts, making the system inclusive and effective across diverse community settings.

C. Data Accuracy:

Accurate data is essential for effective disaster response, as it directly influences decision-making and resource allocation during emergencies. The system emphasizes collecting precise and timely information from affected areas, using mechanisms to verify and validate user inputs to minimize false or misleading reports. Location data, user status updates, and safe zone information are carefully timestamped and cross-checked where possible to enhance reliability. Given the challenges of network disruptions, the platform also incorporates redundancy and synchronization techniques, enabling offline data capture and later syncing to maintain data integrity. By ensuring data is both accurate and up-to-date, the system supports responders in making informed, life-saving decisions in real-time.

D. Storage & Scalability:

The system is built to efficiently manage large volumes of data generated during disaster events, including live location updates, SOS alerts, safe zone markings, and hazard reports. It employs scalable cloud storage solutions that allow for dynamic expansion as data load increases during large-scale emergencies. The backend architecture supports distributed databases with geospatial indexing to enable rapid querying and retrieval of relevant information. Furthermore, local device storage plays a crucial role by temporarily holding data during offline periods and syncing it with central servers once connectivity is restored. This dual-storage approach not only ensures data persistence but also enhances the system's ability to scale and accommodate growing numbers of users and data inputs without compromising performance or accessibility.

V. OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

A. User Training & Awareness :

For any disaster response system to function effectively, users must be well-trained and knowledgeable about how to utilize the platform during emergencies. Training programs should cover the basic operation of the mobile application, including how to send SOS alerts, mark safe zones, and share live locations. Awareness campaigns are equally important to educate the community on the system's benefits and encourage active participation. Since disasters often cause stress and confusion, user-friendly design and clear instructions are crucial to ensuring that even those with limited technical skills can navigate the app during critical moments. Regular drills, simulations, and refresher training sessions can reinforce understanding and preparedness, increasing user confidence and ultimately improving response outcomes. This emphasis on training and awareness bridges the gap between technology and real-world application, ensuring the system serves the community effectively when it’s needed most.

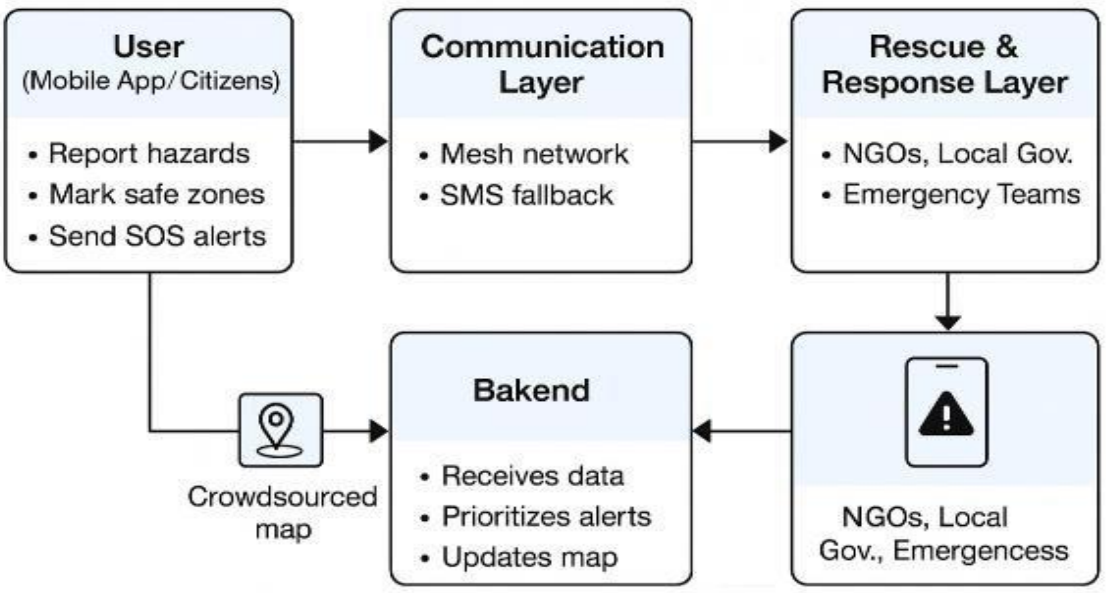
B. Coordination with Authorities :

Effective disaster response heavily relies on smooth collaboration between the system users and various government and non-government authorities. This coordination ensures that urgent alerts and situational data are communicated promptly to the right decision-makers, enabling rapid deployment of rescue teams and resources. Establishing clear protocols and communication channels with local, regional, and national agencies is essential to avoid overlaps and gaps during emergency operations. Regular engagement with authorities through joint planning and training ensures that the disaster response system integrates seamlessly with official workflows. Additionally, real-time data sharing with authorities supports informed decision-making, effective resource allocation, and enhances overall disaster management efficiency. Strong coordination mechanisms build trust among stakeholders and improve the system’s reliability in crisis situations.

C. Maintenance & Updates :

Maintaining and regularly updating the disaster response system is vital to ensure its continued effectiveness in emergency situations. Updates may include software enhancements, security patches, and feature improvements that adapt to evolving user needs and emerging technologies. Regular maintenance helps identify and fix potential issues before they affect system performance during critical moments. Additionally, scheduled testing and system audits are necessary to verify that all components, including offline and backup communication features, function correctly. An efficient maintenance plan also involves timely user feedback integration and training for technical teams to manage updates with minimal disruption. These ongoing efforts ensure the system remains reliable, secure, and capable of handling the demands of dynamic disaster scenarios.

VI. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE



VII. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

A. Physical Infrastructure Damage :

Natural disasters often cause widespread damage to physical infrastructure, including roads, bridges, communication towers, and power lines, which are critical for effective emergency response. Such destruction severely hampers rescue efforts by limiting access to affected areas and disrupting communication channels essential for coordination and information flow. The damage to infrastructure not only delays the arrival of aid but also complicates real-time data collection and transmission from disaster zones. In addition, damaged facilities and environmental hazards pose risks to responders and survivors alike, requiring the disaster response system to be resilient and adaptable. Strategies that integrate flexible communication technologies and alternative routes help mitigate these challenges. Recognizing the impact of physical infrastructure damage is crucial for designing response systems that can operate effectively despite environmental setbacks and support relief operations in highly disrupted scenarios.

B. Geographical Limitations :

Disaster response efforts are often complicated by the unique geographical features of affected areas. Remote locations, rugged terrain, dense forests, mountains, and water bodies can severely restrict access for rescue teams and delay the delivery of aid. These geographical barriers also create challenges in establishing reliable communication networks, limiting real-time data transmission and coordination. Additionally, widely dispersed or isolated communities may be underrepresented in baseline data, making targeted assistance more difficult. Understanding these geographical limitations is critical for designing flexible disaster response systems that can adapt to diverse settings and ensure no communities are left underserved. Incorporating geographic information systems (GIS) and remote sensing technologies can help mitigate these issues by providing detailed maps and improving situational awareness in complex terrains.

VIII. SOCIAL & ETHICAL CONSTRAINTS

A. Privacy & Security:

In disaster response systems, safeguarding users' privacy and securing sensitive data are fundamental ethical obligations. Personal information, such as live location, health status, and emergency requests, must be protected against unauthorized access or misuse. Implementing robust encryption protocols and strict access controls ensures that data is only shared with authorized personnel involved in rescue coordination. Transparency about data collection purposes and usage fosters trust, encouraging more people to participate without fear of privacy violations. Balancing the immediate need for critical information during emergencies with respect for individual privacy rights is essential to maintain ethical standards and protect communities from harm beyond the disaster itself.

B. Language & Accessibility:

Ensuring that disaster response systems are accessible to all individuals, regardless of language or disability, is essential for effective and inclusive emergency management. Many communities include speakers of different languages and dialects, as well as people with diverse communication needs, including those with visual, hearing, or cognitive impairments. To address these challenges, communication must be provided in multiple languages and formats such as written text, audio, and visual aids, including sign language interpretation. Utilizing simple, clear language enhances understanding across literacy levels. Coordination with local organizations specializing in language and disability support ensures that messaging is culturally relevant and widely accessible. Incorporating these measures promotes equity and dignity, enabling everyone to receive timely information and assistance during disasters .

IX. BENIFITS

1. Provides quick and real-time information from on-site individuals.
2. Increases community involvement and shared responsibility.
3. Works even when traditional communication is down.
4. Improves data accuracy through crowd validation.
5. Speeds up volunteer mobilization and coordination.
6. Reduces costs by leveraging public resources.
7. Helps prioritize and allocate emergency resources better.
8. Adapts well to disasters of varying sizes and complexities.
9. Ensures inclusion of diverse and marginalized groups.
10. Enhances transparency and trust between citizens and responders**.**

X. PROPOSED SYSTEM

The proposed system is a mobile-based tool designed to speed up rescue efforts during natural disasters like floods, earthquakes, or landslides. It uses real-time information shared by people in affected areas to guide rescue teams, making sure help reaches those who need it most.[5]

How the System Works:

When a disaster strikes, people in danger can use the mobile app to mark safe places nearby, like shelters, hospitals, or safe buildings. If they're in trouble, they can also send out SOS alerts to ask for immediate help. These alerts include their current location, making it easier for rescuers to find them.

Even when the internet is slow or unavailable, the app can still function. It uses a special type of communication where phones connect directly to each other (called mesh networking). If that's not possible, it switches to SMS so that important messages can still be sent.

A. Key Features of the System:

Crowdsourced Safety Map: The app creates a map based on what users report. It shows danger zones—like flooded streets—as well as safe areas, so others know where to go.
Emergency SOS Priority: The system identifies which help requests are most urgent and sends those to rescue teams first. This way, people in serious danger get help faster.
Offline Support: Messages and locations can still be sent without needing full internet access. Live Updates: Rescue teams receive real-time alerts, helping them plan better and respond faster.

B. Who Can Use This System:

NGOs and Relief Workers: They can quickly locate people who need urgent help and organize their response more efficiently.
Local Governments: Authorities can use the live data to guide rescue efforts, deploy teams, and manage resources more effectively.
Citizens: Anyone in the affected area can use the app to find safer routes, nearby shelters, or medical help.

XI. METHODOLOGY

The disaster response system is built with four main layers that work together to help people during emergencies. Each layer has its own role, and all of them are connected to make sure communication and rescue efforts are fast and reliable, even when internet services are down.[4]

1. User Layer

This is the part of the system used by regular people, such as citizens, volunteers, or anyone affected by a disaster. Through the mobile app, users can report their current safety status, mark places they think are safe, and request help by sending SOS alerts. They can also share their live location and any important information they see around them. The app also sends back helpful updates, like where to go for safety or which areas to avoid.

2. Application Layer (Mobile App)

This is the main app that users install on their phones. It is designed to be very easy to use, even for someone under stress. It has several parts:

- The User Interface lets people quickly fill out forms to send an SOS, mark safe zones, or give updates.
- The Location Module tracks where users are and records the location of safe spots.
- The Notification Module sends out important alerts or safety messages from the system.
- The Data Sync Module makes sure the app can communicate with the main server, even when the internet is weak.
- The app works on both Android and iOS phones. It can store information even when the phone is offline and will send it later once the connection returns. If internet is not available, it can still send messages using mesh networking or SMS.

3. Communication Layer

This layer handles how messages and alerts travel between people and the system. It uses:

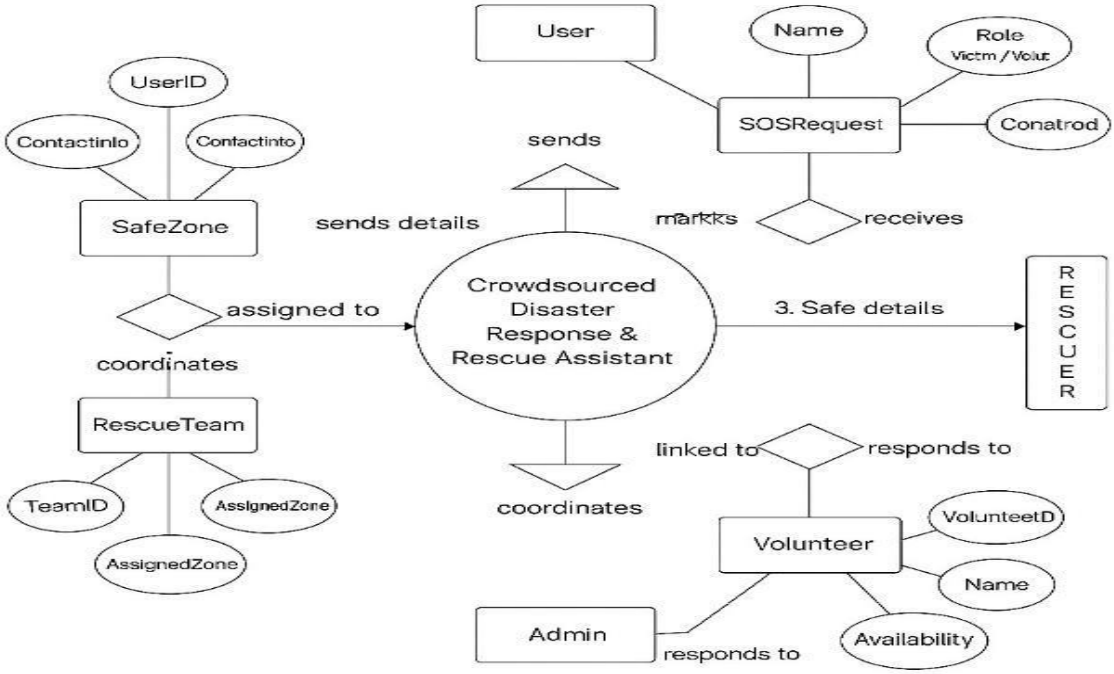
- **Mesh Networking**, which allows nearby phones to connect directly to each other, without needing the internet. This creates a temporary network so information can still move from one phone to another.
- **SMS Fallback**, which uses basic mobile signals to send messages as text when no internet or mesh network is available.

This part of the system makes sure SOS messages and updates get delivered, no matter the situation. It can also tell the difference between a regular message and an urgent SOS, and sends the more critical ones first.

4. Backend & Admin Layer

This is the part of the system used by rescue workers, NGOs, and government teams. It includes:

- A **Backend Server**, which stores all the incoming data from users like SOS alerts, safe zone locations, and reports. It also decides which alerts are most urgent and displays them on a live dashboard.
- A **Database**, which keeps records of users, alerts, past disaster data, and logs.
- An **Admin Panel**, which lets authorized groups view alerts, plan rescue actions, and coordinate who goes where.
- An optional **Analytics Tool** (planned for the future) that can study patterns, predict risky areas, and give insights into how disasters usually happen or spread.



XII. LIMITATIONS

Although the *Crowdsourced Disaster Response & Rescue Assistant* system offers a practical and innovative solution for improving disaster management, certain limitations still exist in its current form. The system relies heavily on user participation, which means that the accuracy and usefulness of the data depend on how actively individuals in disaster- affected areas engage with the application. In areas with low smartphone usage or lack of technical awareness, the effectiveness of crowdsourcing may be limited. Another challenge lies in maintaining reliable communication when physical infrastructure, such as cell towers or power supply, is completely destroyed. While the system supports mesh networking and SMS fallback, these methods still depend on the proximity and availability of other devices or mobile networks. Additionally, verifying the authenticity of crowdsourced data can be difficult, as false or duplicate reports may cause confusion and delay rescue efforts. From a technical standpoint, large-scale deployment may require high server capacity and continuous maintenance to handle real-time data and ensure system stability during emergencies. Security and privacy are also critical concerns, as the platform deals with sensitive user information such as live locations and emergency requests. Despite these limitations, the system serves as a strong foundation for developing more advanced, AI-assisted, and infrastructure-independent disaster management tools in the future.

XIII. SCOPE

The Crowdsourced Disaster Response & Rescue Assistant is designed to offer practical and life-saving support during emergencies by combining smart technology with community participation. Its functional scope focuses on enabling people affected by disasters to report their safety, share their live location, mark safe zones, and alert authorities about dangers in real time. The system also allows users to send SOS messages that are ranked by urgency, ensuring that those in critical need receive faster help. What makes the system especially useful is its ability to work even when there's poor or no internet connection. It uses mesh networking, which allows phones to connect directly with each other, and falls back on SMS when needed. The app is also simple to use, so people can operate it under stress or panic, which is common during disasters. At the same time, rescue teams, NGOs, and government agencies can view this incoming data on a central dashboard to locate victims, assess danger zones, and coordinate their efforts more efficiently. In terms of application, this system is intended for a wide range of users and disaster situations. Government bodies, both at local and national levels, can use the platform to manage rescue operations more effectively. NGOs and volunteer organizations can rely on the data to identify which areas are most in need, and plan their aid distribution better. The system also gives ordinary citizens a way to take part in their own safety by sharing real-time information and helping others around them. It is designed to be flexible and applicable in a variety of disaster scenarios—whether it's an earthquake, flood, cyclone, landslide, or any other emergency where communication networks fail. Beyond emergency response, it can also support preparedness by encouraging users to identify safe zones and share guidance before a disaster even happens.

Technically, the system is built with both a mobile application and a strong backend platform that work together. While the mobile app allows users to report and receive updates, the backend handles all the critical tasks like storing data, processing SOS messages, and managing alerts. Mesh networking is a key feature, allowing users to stay connected without needing the internet by enabling direct device-to-device communication. If this fails or isn't available, the system uses SMS to make sure that essential information still gets through. A smart routing system ensures that high-priority SOS signals are delivered first, helping emergency services act faster in life-threatening situations. The platform is also built to handle a large number of users and can be expanded in the future to include advanced technologies like drones, IoT sensors, and AI for predicting risks. Importantly, the system also prioritizes data security and reliability, ensuring that sensitive information like user locations and distress messages are safely transmitted and not lost during network failures

XIV. FUTURE SCOPE

The Crowdsourced Disaster Response & Rescue Assistant system has significant potential for future growth and improvement. As technology continues to advance, the platform can be expanded to integrate more intelligent features that enhance both efficiency and reliability during emergencies. One major area of development is the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) to analze large volumes of real-time data. These technologies can help predict disaster patterns, identify high-risk zones, and automatically prioritize rescue operations based on severity. Another promising direction is the use of drones and IoT (Internet of Things) devices for real-time monitoring and rapid response. Drones equipped with cameras and sensors can provide aerial images of affected areas, identify trapped victims, and send critical data to rescue authorities. Similarly, IoT-based sensors can be installed in vulnerable regions to detect early warning signs of floods, earthquakes, or landslides, allowing for faster preventive actions. The system can also be integrated with smart city infrastructure, enabling automatic alerts through public communication systems, traffic management, and emergency control centers. Additionally, enhancing multi-language support and accessibility features can make the app more inclusive for users from different regions and literacy levels. In the long run, partnerships with government agencies, NGOs, and international organizations can help expand the platform to a global scale, creating a unified network for cross- border disaster response. With these advancements, the system can evolve into a comprehensive, intelligent, and globally connected platform capable of saving lives and strengthening community resilience during natural and man-made disasters.

XV. CONCLUSION

The Crowdsourced Disaster Response & Rescue Assistant represents a modern and effective approach to tackling the challenges faced during natural disasters. By combining the power of crowdsourcing, real-time communication, and resilient networking technologies, the system bridges the critical information gap between affected individuals and rescue authorities. Its mobile application allows people to request help, mark safe zones, and share live locations, ensuring that even in low-connectivity situations, vital data continues to flow through mesh networking and SMS fallback. This approach not only enhances coordination among citizens, NGOs, and government agencies but also transforms disaster management into a more inclusive and community-driven process. The introduction of priority-based SOS routing ensures that urgent rescue requests are addressed first, thereby saving valuable time and lives. Beyond improving immediate disaster response, the system lays the foundation for future integration with AI, IoT devices, and drone technologies, which can make disaster prediction and response even more intelligent and automated. Overall, the Crowdsourced Disaster Response & Rescue Assistant demonstrates how technology and collective human participation can work together to build safer, more resilient communities capable of responding effectively in times of crisis.

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