

Topic #4: Discussion of Trends in Disasters and Disaster Fatalities

Climate change is one reason that natural disasters are increasing worldwide. The rising of global temperatures and the increase in precipitation is caused by climate change [1]. The global warming projections indicate that the duration and frequency of extreme heat events and precipitation will rise and thus cause more natural disasters to take place [1]. The sea levels are also rising due to human-caused global warming from greenhouse gas emissions. Natural disasters are having an even greater impact on populations and the built environment due to the increases in population and vulnerability in specific areas. There is lots of growth happening in populated areas around the world and vulnerability is high because many infrastructures may not be able to withstand extreme weather events [2]. The impact is higher because the cost of these disasters is increasing due to the rising exposure and vulnerability in the population and built environment [2].

The number of fatalities from natural disasters is decreasing even though the number of disasters is increasing because of the improvement in early warning detection systems and increased capabilities in response. Early warning systems tell us about a disaster in advance that can help communities and organizations to minimize the overall impact. According to the lectures, the number of fatalities is also decreasing because of global efforts to help affected countries. For example, the U.S is able to help other countries that were impacted by natural disasters through donations.

Furthermore, there are fewer terrorist events in some parts of the world currently because of the decline in the number of attacks in some countries, more specifically, Iraq, Pakistan, and Nigeria. Terrorist attacks could also be concentrated in specific regions which prevents the attacks from happening in more parts of the world. With increased security in airports and public areas, there are fewer opportunities for terrorist attacks to occur without any prior knowledge. That being said, terrorist attacks are still common worldwide and there are not enough safety or precautionary measures in place to minimize the effects of these attacks.

References

1. Ebi KL, Vanos J, Baldwin JW, et al. Extreme Weather and Climate Change: Population Health and Health System Implications. *Annu Rev Public Health*. 2021;42:293-315. doi:10.1146/annurev-publhealth-012420-105026
2. Smith AB. 2022 U.S. billion-dollar weather and climate disasters in historical context. *Climate*. <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/blogs/beyond-data/2022-us-billion-dollar-weather-and-climate-disasters-historical#:~:text=The%20number%20and%20cost%20of%20weather%20and%20climate%20disasters%20is,NOAA%20NCEI>.