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UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (UNDRR)

Creating an International Support Framework for Disaster Response and Recovery

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January 2026

Introduction to Disaster

To properly address the needs of the international community following a disaster, it is vital to establish the types of disasters that will be addressed. Different regions of the world are subject to their unique sets of disasters. The North and South Poles are the furthest from the equator, allowing their ecosystem to adapt and flourish in a cold, icy atmosphere. Consequently, the disaster that threatens this region the most, is glaciation melting, secondary to rising global temperatures. As of September 2025, Antarctica is losing an average of 135 billion tons of ice mass per year and Greenland has been losing an average of 266 billion tons per year. This loss of frozen fresh water is gained by oceans, which contributes heavily to the global problem of rising sea levels.[1] This is particularly felt in the coasts of Italy, where 20% to 45% of Italian beaches are at risk of complete submersion by 2050 and 2100.[2] It is evident that where the poles are threatened with loss of habitat, Italy is at risk for inundation, demonstrating the diversity yet interconnectedness of globally faced disasters. This connected experience guides nations to connect amongst themselves- using the history of past disasters to predict and inform solutions for future concerns.

As of 2022, there have been five mass extinction events in Earth's history- the End Ordovician, the Late Devonian, the End Permian, the End Triassic, and the End Cretaceous. To define a mass extinction, and understand its significance, it is important to understand that an event isn't considered a mass extinction until at least 75% of species go extinct in a relatively short period of time. Many are most familiar with the End Cretaceous, which is the mass extinction event that killed off the Dinosaurs, but this is the least relevant when addressing predictable and preventable natural disasters. Although an asteroid suddenly hitting earth isn't a disaster that teams can realistically prepare for, the others caused by things like large sea-level swings, tectonic uplift, severe global cooling, intense volcanic activity and ocean/ atmospheric CO2 changes- gives collaborative teams insight on what disasters can cause the most severe harm on earth and its populations.[3] Although history suggests five prior mass extinction events, as of 2025, experts suggest that we are currently living in the sixth mass extinction event known as the Holocene extinction. This modern extinction event is largely driven by human activity and their unsustainable use of natural resources.[4] The human-led burning of fossil fuels creates an increase in greenhouse gases, like CO2 and Methane, that contributed to the very mass extinctions in Earth's history. As the population continues to pursue practices that ultimately change the Earth's climate, extreme weather and disasters are the result. The frequency and intensity of heat waves, precipitation, droughts, floods, wildfires, and hurricanes are reaching record-breaking strengths and consequently- so are the intensity of the damages.[5] Ultimately, nations must collaborate to address the needs of the international community following disasters, but it is important to understand that the root cause that contributes to the increased intensity of

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[1] "Ice Sheets - Earth Indicator - NASA Science." NASA, September 26, 2025. https://science.nasa.gov/earth/explore/earth-indicators/ice-sheets/.

[2] Celata, Filippo, and Eleonora Gioia. "Resist or Retreat? Beach Erosion and the Climate Crisis in Italy: Scenarios, Impacts and Challenges - Sciencedirect." Science Direct, 2024. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0143622824001401.

[3] Ritchie, Hannah. "There Have Been Five Mass Extinctions in Earth's History." Our World in Data, November 30, 2022. https://ourworldindata.org/mass-extinctions.

[4] "What Is the Sixth Mass Extinction and What Can We Do About ..." World Wildlife Fund. Accessed January 2026. https://www.worldwildlife.org/resources/explainers/what-is-the-sixth-mass-extinction-and-what-can-we-do-about-it.

[5] Logreira, Diana. "Extreme Weather - NASA Science." NASA, October 23, 2024. https://science.nasa.gov/climate-change/extreme-weather/.

disaster is directly proportional to unsustainable human practices allowing the climate to accommodate more intense disaster. In order to properly address the needs of communities following a disaster, teams must recognize prevention as a strategy to ensure that the aftermath of disasters doesn't become more than teams can manage.

Variations in the different types of disasters create variation in the needs of the local community post-disaster. It is vital for international teams promoting change to have a basic foundation in regards to what causes each disaster, the effect of each disaster on the community, and what can be done to ease the burden that these disasters impose on the people. The disasters that many may typically think of include: tropical cyclones like hurricanes, earthquakes, floodings, wildfires, severe thunderstorms, tornadoes and snow storms. The less common but very serious disasters include: volcanic gas disasters, sinkholes, tsunamis, cold waves, heat waves, insect infestations, and space-related disasters. According to statistics that demonstrate the globally reported disasters by type, flooding and extreme weather largely take the lead in the types of natural disasters since the year 1970. The increased frequency of floods and extreme weather gives teams insight on which events require detailed and in-depth post-disaster planning and initiatives. This is not said to undermine the post-disaster planning of less frequent but more intense disasters- which are more likely to cripple the regions that it faces. It is also important to note, although this may be attributed to a lack of data in prior years, reports of glacial lake outburst floods have begun making appearances in 2024, with 3 glacial lake floods reported in 2025 as of October 2025.[6] These increased consequences secondary to the warming of earth may be largely indicative of the effect that human activity has on global environments and disasters.

Over the last few decades, natural disasters kill an average of 40,000 to 50,000 people annually with disasters in the 20th century having a larger death toll- mortality counts closer to a million per year. Although mortalities are the worst part, the damage doesn't end there, millions of individuals are forced to leave their homes- with several people having nowhere else to go. Addressing the needs of the international community following the disaster must address the people's need for shelter and compensation for the property and health lost from the disaster. While warning systems, strengthened infrastructure, and coordinated responses have decreased mortality rates in the face of disaster--there is still a long way to go. As the climate crisis worsens, more severe disasters are in the forecast, solidifying the need for strengthened disaster responses.[7] Nations are encouraged to collaborate with countries facing similar natural struggles to communicate about the success and failures of the past- as well as discuss the areas for improvement and planning.

That said, the probability of a certain type of disaster increases or decreases based on the nation's geographical standing. For example, coastal regions are more prone to hurricanes, coastal storms, tsunamis, landslides, flooding, and ultimately- coastal erosion and sea-level rise. While these extreme natural events create significant consequences on the infrastructure, it is noteworthy to consider the economic consequences as well. For example, in 2005, the economic losses related to that year's hurricane season was $200 billion USD. Additionally, while the pacific islands are at greater risk for tsunamis, flooding, and drought- the North Atlantic coasts

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[6] Ritchie, Hannah, Pablo Rosado, and Max Roser. "Global Reported Natural Disasters by Type." Our World in Data, 2022. https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/natural-disasters-by-type?time=earliest..latest.

[7] Ritchie, Hannah, Pablo Rosado, and Max Roser. "Natural Disasters." Our World in Data, December 7, 2022. https://ourworldindata.org/natural-disasters.

suffer at the hands of severe storms, anthropogenic pressures, and climate change[8]. This demonstrates that there are further niches within broad categories, like "coastal regions" that indicate different priorities when it comes to disaster prevention and alleviation. While the region is a great tool to assess allocation of resources, so is the season. For example, resources and attention may alternate for a focus *response* during the disaster-heavy season, which varies by region,[9] before switching to disaster *prevention* during the months with lighter disaster expectancy.

Shrimp Farming and the Indian Ocean Tsunami

The Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 2004 is considered one of the most destructive tsunamis in human history. An earthquake with a magnitude of 9.1 triggered the Indian Ocean Tsunami with waves that reached over 30 feet after hitting the shoreline. This 9 hour tsunami devastated the coasts of Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Maldives, Thailand, and as far as East Africa. The Indian Ocean Tsunami had a reported mortality rate of over 280,000 individuals over 15 countries[10]- the water forces were so strong that they exposed submerged ancient temples, altered coast lines, and disrupted shipping lanes.[11] However, in coasts with little to no loss of mangrove swamps- the surrounding population suffered little to no loss of life in the face of this immensely destructive disaster. Meanwhile, significant losses of life were demonstrated in the populations closer to the coasts with destroyed mangrove swamps. Interestingly, these mangrove swamps not only serve as a breeding ground for a large diversity of aquatic species- but they also provide protection from the storm surges caused by hurricanes and tsunamis.

Although the presence or absence of mangrove swamps may initially seem like a coincidence of nature- closer inspection suggests that mangrove swamps are destroyed and sacrificed by humans with the goal of creating shrimp farms and harvesting shrimp for mass production.[12] Once again, history suggests that anthropogenic factors and human activity damages the environment- with the ultimate consequence of compromised human safety secondary to the increased severity of disaster.

Frameworks for Action

Dedicated to building a foundation that advocates for resilience to disasters, nations collaborated to create the 2005-2015 "Hyogo Framework for Action" at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Japan. The emphasis in this conference was to reduce vulnerabilities

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[8] US Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. "What Threats Do Coastal Communities Face?" NOAA's National Ocean Service, October 15, 2009. https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/coastalthreat.html.

[9] Center, National Hurricane. "National Hurricane Center." NHC Graphical Tropical Weather Outlooks RSS, January 1, 2001. https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/#:~:text=The%20Atlantic%20hurricane%20season%20runs%20from%20June%201st%20through%20November%2030th.&text=Issuance%20will%20resume%20on%20May%2015th%20or%20as%20necessary.

[10] Britannica Editors. "Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004 | Facts, Death Toll, Post-Disaster Policy Changes, & Commemorative Monuments | Britannica." Britannica, December 19, 2025. https://www.britannica.com/event/Indian-Ocean-tsunami-of-2004.

[11] Grescoe, Taras. *Bottomfeeder: How to eat ethically in a world of vanishing seafood*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2011.

[12] Pisarra, Bill. "A Geographic Perspective on Natural Disasters." Social Studies, 2010. https://www.socialstudies.org/sites/default/files/ncss-bu110-chapter3.pdf.

and risks to hazards.[13] 168 countries agreed to the content of this framework involving preparations for the consequences of climate change and reducing disaster losses by the year 2015.[14] This framework enlisted several achievements through the years 2005 to 2015 but there were also several areas of identified improvement. More specifically, reports suggested there were adjustments needed regarding: expanding collaboration amongst key players, integrating climate change adaptations in key policies, strengthening coordination between climate change adaptations and disaster risk reduction, highlighting communication between local and national levels, strengthening local leadership and decision-making in the face of risk management, implementing risk assessments nation-wide to identify what support is needed to prevent risks, streamlining communication between researchers, policy-makers, and disaster risk management practitioners, and raising public awareness to shift focus from risk response to risk prevention. [15]

When taking into account the feedback and the experience gained from implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action, The Sendai Framework succeeded the 2005-2015 outline- supported by UNDRR upon the request of the UN General Assembly. The Sendai Framework advocates for, "The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries." and highlights four priorities. These priorities include the understanding of disaster risk, strengthening the governance that surrounds disaster risk management, investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and enhancing preparation for disaster response with a goal to "Build Back Better" in the face of reconstruction and recovery. The goal of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is to provide member states with actionable steps to protect development gains from disaster from 2015 to 2030.[16] Change-makers are encouraged to reference these outlines for action when creating actionable resolutions, policies, plans, and investments that relate to disaster response and recovery. As the year 2030 approaches, nations must also reflect on the content of these frameworks with constructive feedback- emphasizing what can be done differently to enhance the future of risk response.

The Lahaina Wildfire

In August of 2023, a series of four wildfires burned through the Maui islands of Hawai'i. Of these four fires, the Lahaina fire was the most deadly and costly, with over 100 human losses and over 2,000 structural damages.[17] It is worth noting that approximately 85% of wildfires in the United States are secondary to human activity- cigarettes left lit, campfires inefficiently

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[13] United Nations. "Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters." International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, 2005. https://www.unisdr.org/files/1037_hyogoframeworkforactionenglish.pdf.

[14] UN Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. "Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters." United Nations, 2005. https://unterm.un.org/unterm2/en/view/UNHQ/3F9DD10DDB85FFF18525704200624FBC.

[15] "A Catalyst for Change: How the Hyogo Framework for Action Has Promoted Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe | Undrr." United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, December 2019. https://www.undrr.org/publication/catalyst-change-how-hyogo-framework-action-has-promoted-disaster-risk-reduction-south.

[16] "What Is the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction? | Undrr." United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015. https://www.undrr.org/implementing-sendai-framework/what-sendai-framework.

[17] "Libguides: Modern United States Wildfires: The Maui Fires of 2023." The Maui Fires of 2023 - Modern United States Wildfires - LibGuides at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2026. https://guides.library.illinois.edu/modern_wildfires/maui_lahaina#:~:text=The%20Maui%20wildfires%20of%202023,the%20most%20costly%20and%20deadly.

extinguished, the burning of trash, arson, and in this case- malfunctioning electrical equipment.[18] In 2023, the historic city of Lahaina caught fire due to the re-energization of a downed power line, which caused sparks and ignited unmaintained vegetation in the area.[19] The biggest concern was that the fire flare-ups spread across the city, but only a fraction of the city residents received the cellphone evacuation warnings- leaving many unaware of the threat at hand. The Maui Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) faced scrutiny for failure to activate town sirens. However, these same sirens would have indicated a Tsunami- which would have inclined city residents to move inland- towards the fire instead of towards safety. Due to road closures and obstructions, many people were forced to seek safety from the flames near the coast or inside the water for hours on end.[20]

This critical systemic failure highlighted how common-cause disaster warnings can undermine centralized systems and fail to protect individuals from niche yet serious disasters. A study that surveyed Lahaina residents and showed how a majority of individuals didn't receive official alerts that indicated the presence of a fire. Instead, almost half of them visually inspected the approaching fire, some got informed via the evacuation of others, 12% were warned face-to-face, and 13% received text-messages that largely came from loved ones.[21] These details illustrate the different routes of receiving disaster information and highlights how, when official alerting underperforms, communities default to informal, redundant communication channels- often too late and unevenly-creating avoidable gaps in awareness, equity, and evacuation timing. International change-makers must utilize these cases to identify the gaps in modern systems, before consequently making changes to support those in need of disaster response and recovery. Efficient systems and frameworks are the preventative measures by which lives are saved in the most unexpected of circumstances.

The Marrakesh-Safi earthquake

In the High Atlas Mountains, 44 miles southwest of Marrakesh, an earthquake struck on September 8th of 2023. This magnitude 6.8 earthquake directly affected 380,000 people- and caused over 500,000 individuals to be displaced as a result.[22] Although the earthquake originated in Morocco, it was felt as far as Portugal and Algeria.[23] Despite Marrakesh being a region of higher wealth, the area directly surrounding the earthquake epicenter exhibited relatively lower levels of wealth. The epicenter consisted of rural and mountainous areas that were remote and

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[18] "Wildfires." National Geographic. Accessed January 2026. https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/wildfires-collection/.

[19] "MFD and ATF Conclude Aug. 8, 2023, Lahaina Fire Was One Fire Caused by Re-Energization of Broken Electrical Lines." Maui Recovers, October 4, 2024. https://www.mauirecovers.org/news/mfd-and-atf-conclude-aug-8-2023-lahaina-fire-was-one-fire-caused-by-re-energization-of-broken-electrical-lines#:~:text=.

[20] "Libguides: Modern United States Wildfires: The Maui Fires of 2023." The Maui Fires of 2023 - Modern United States Wildfires - LibGuides at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2026. https://guides.library.illinois.edu/modern_wildfires/maui_lahaina#:~:text=The%20Maui%20wildfires%20of%202023,the%20most%20costly%20and%20deadly.

[21] Chen, Chen, Changjian Zhang, Michael K Lindell, Yiwei Wang, Qianli Qiu, Haizhong Wang, and Guohui Zhang. "Alerts and Warnings under Disrupted Communication Infrastructure: Lahaina Residents' Immediate Responses to the 2023 Wildfire - Sciencedirect." ScienceDirect, 2025. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2212420925007083.

[22] "2023 Morocco Earthquake." Center for Disaster Philanthropy, March 15, 2024. https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/2023-morocco-earthquake/.

[23] Rafferty, John P. "Morocco Earthquake of 2023 | Description, Geology, Deaths, & Facts | Britannica." Britannica, September 2023. https://www.britannica.com/event/Morocco-earthquake-of-2023.

very hard to access with the aid that the villagers required post-earthquake.[24] Ultimately, the 2023 Morocco earthquake underscores several priorities for policymakers and responders: closing disparities in response and recovery between higher- and lower-income communities; establishing contingency capabilities for remote, hard-to-access areas so residents are not isolated or overlooked; and coordinating specialized efforts to protect and restore cultural heritage sites whose damage can reduce tourism revenues and hinder long-term economic recovery. Additionally, considerations for equity metrics would be worth researching to identify which areas are reached and how long it took for aid to get there. Knowing where the problem exists would allow for policies and systems to adjust to accommodate equitable access.

Present Plans

Presently, there are guidelines such as international frameworks, agreements, and institutions that are designed to help mitigate the risk of a potential future disaster like the ones mentioned in previous sections. Such guidelines assist with disaster response and recovery in such worst case scenarios. One of the recent and most influential of these guidelines is the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), which urges the shift from a reactive response to natural disasters to a more proactive and a risk-reduction centered recovery strategy.[25] This was adopted by the United Nations, due to the shared goals of reducing disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods, and health globally. In comparison to some of the earlier disaster response models, which were primarily reactive and focused to a large extent on the actual emergency relief, this framework shifted its focus to prevention, preparedness, and resilience pre and post disaster. This shift in thinking comes directly after the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, where it became evident that the lack of preparation for a disaster of that scale, paired with weakened infrastructure and an uncoordinated government response with limited capacity, worsened the result of the catastrophe. Disaster response is heavily integrated in the UN's SDGs as well, though emphasis is not as heavily placed on prevention in comparison. Particularly, SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) relate heavily to the topic of disaster response.[26] Because of how integrated the SDGs are to natural disasters, it is important to recognize that disasters are not simply isolated events, but emerge from a pattern of environmental degradation. One prolific example of this is Typhoon Haiyan (2013) in the Philippines, where much of the disaster recovery work centered around SDG aligned recovery efforts, such as more resilient housing and preparedness in the community rather than individual preparedness or simply reconstruction.[27] This typhoon in particular demonstrated how elements such as poverty, informal housing, and proximity to the coast can amplify the impacts of disaster.

Much of modern disaster response plans integrate modern technologies to provide a more thorough and modern approach to recovery. Many plans prioritize early warning through satellites as well as modernized climate mapping, so meteorologists can get an advanced and early look at potential disasters. One notable example of success through this method can be noticed with Bangladesh's progression in their disaster prevention. In 1970, Bangladesh was

[24]"2023 Morocco Earthquake." Center for Disaster Philanthropy, March 15, 2024. https://disasterphilanthropy.org/disasters/2023-morocco-earthquake/.

[25]UNDRR. 2025. "What Is the Sendai Framework?" Www.undrr.org. UNDRR. 2025. https://www.undrr.org/implementing-sendai-framework/what-sendai-framework.

[26]United Nations. 2015. "The 17 Sustainable Development Goals." United Nations. 2015. https://sdgs.un.org/goals.

[27]NOAA. 2025. "How Big Was Typhoon Haiyan?" National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service. 2025. https://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/about/k-12-education/severe-weather/how-big-was-typhoon-haiyan.

devastated with an incredibly destructive cyclone, which killed an estimated 240,000.[28] This prompted the government to invest heavily in infrastructure such as cyclone shelters, early warning systems to aid in evacuation, as well as clear evacuation protocols to prevent the past from repeating itself. This investment proved itself to be a huge success, as in 2020, though it was economically draining, Cyclone Amphan resulted in a significantly less number of fatalities, thus proving that proper preparation based on being informed of past tragedies can ultimately save lives.[29] [30]

Despite this success story, the road to universal implementation of disaster prevention roadmaps remains full of challenges. Many countries simply do not have the economic capacities to create preventative measures, when much of the reactive mechanisms for environmental disasters hinge on the fact that much of the international disaster aid is disbursed post disaster, thus making it difficult for developing countries to invest heavily in preventative measures. This issue is made especially evident in the recent Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico (2017), as delays in aid disbursement, in conjunction with infrastructural neglect and bureaucratic obstacles made the recovery period longer than anticipated, which ultimately ended up with worsened health outcomes.[31] Additionally, it is important to note that other factors that impact the climate such as the continued reliance on fossil fuels and rapid urbanization with a lack of environmental concern leads to further environmental degradation through landslides, floods, and heatwaves, which all undermine resilience efforts in one way or another.[32] Therefore, it is important to keep in consideration whether or not our current actions are reflecting efforts towards resilience, or if we are simply preparing to repeat the same mistakes we made in the past.

Call to Action

It is undeniable that environmental disasters are on the rise, and this demands a more unified preventative approach and response from the international community, not just in individual countries. It is imperative that we move beyond simply providing emergency relief, but towards building resilience preemptively. Time and time again, we are shown through past disasters that early intervention is more effective and ultimately less costly, both literally and in terms of loss of human life and livelihood, in comparison to simply responding post-disaster.[33] It may be beneficial to focus more energy on countries more at risk for total devastation, such as countries in low lying areas like Vietnam, Bangladesh, and other pacific islands, before it is too late to do so. Coordinating international efforts to increase preventative measures will not be a simple feat. In fact, it will require interdisciplinary collaboration in many spheres, including but not limited to scientific, political, sociological, anthropological, and humanitarian fields. Experts in specialized fields such as meteorological and environmental fields will likely be key players in providing information, yet their efforts will be null unless their insights are translated into proper

[28]World Health Organization. 2012. “WHO | Reduced Death Rates from Cyclones in Bangladesh: What More Needs to Be Done?” Archive.org, January. https://doi.org/entity/bulletin/volumes/90/2/11-088302/en/index.html.
[29]IFRC. 2021. “Bangladesh: Cyclone Amphan - Final Report (N° MDRBD024) - Bangladesh | ReliefWeb.” Reliefweb.int. November 30, 2021. https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/bangladesh-cyclone-amphan-final-report-n-mdrbd024.
[30]UNDRR. 2023. “Home.” Www.undrr.org. 2023. https://www.undrr.org/.
[31]National Weather Service. 2017. “Major Hurricane Maria - September 20, 2017.” Weather.gov. September 20, 2017. https://www.weather.gov/sju/maria2017.
[32]Environment, U. N. 2023. “Disasters and Conflicts.” UNEP - UN Environment Programme. October 5, 2023. https://www.unep.org/topics/disasters-and-conflicts.
[33]“5 Reasons Why Disasters Are Not Natural.” 2024. United Nations University. 2024. https://unu.edu/ehs/series/5-reasons-why-disasters-are-not-natural.

policy and international coordination. An example of a failure caused by a lack of overall coordination is the 2011 Horn of Africa drought, where warnings from meteorological and environmental experts were provided, yet due to political delays, advanced prevention measures were not able to be put into place, thus leading to widespread famine and displacement, though this disaster could have been entirely mitigated.[34]

It may be valuable to consider a pooled global disaster prevention fund in order to address disparities in recovery capacity. Small developing island states may especially benefit from such a fund, such as the Maldives and Tuvalu, as such states face literal existential threats from environmental factors such as the rise in sea level, yet they lack the resources, both financially and physically to prevent a total disaster or create a large scale prevention plan.[35] A pooled fund may allow for more equitable access to disaster prevention and recovery, and may even reduce long term reliance from individual states. Not only will cooperation between states allow better opportunities for less developed countries to manage in the face of a disaster, it presents an opportunity to share information and an opportunity to learn from disasters in other regions. Countries with similar climates tend to share similar disaster patterns, therefore, one strategy that worked in one region may prove useful in another region. For example, wildfires are prone to happen in warmer, drier regions, therefore, certain regions in Australia, the western United States, and regions in Southern Europe can exchange strategies, specific technologies, as well as specialized infrastructure designs, which can potentially be of mutual benefit to all countries involved. Ultimately, one of the key takeaways should be the fact that environmental disasters are not simply isolated, unfortunate natural events, but as foreseeable, preventable, and in some cases, anthropogenic. Through this committee, delegates should keep past failures in mind at all times while aiming to shift some focus to what we can do to prepare ourselves in case disaster strikes, in order to avoid the tragedies of the past.

Guiding Questions for Research

1. Risk profile: What natural disasters most frequently affect your country, and which cause the greatest loss of life, displacement, and economic damage?
2. Who is most vulnerable and where: Which regions and populations in your country are consistently hit hardest (rural/urban, low-income, coastal/mountain, elderly/disabled), and what barriers delay help reaching them?
3. Current national system: How does your country currently manage disaster preparedness, response, and recovery (key agencies, warning systems, shelters, logistics, health services), and where are the main bottlenecks?
4. What has worked before: In recent major disasters in your country (or similar neighboring countries), what response and recovery actions worked well, and what evidence shows they improved outcomes?
5. What support is missing: What international support would most improve results for your country- funding, search-and-rescue, medical surge, communications,

[34]Kelly, Emma. 2023. “The Horn of Africa Crisis, Explained.” Concern Worldwide. July 19, 2023. https://www.concern.net/news/horn-of-africa-crisis-explained.
[35]Robertson, Lara. 2024. “The Last Generation to Live in Tuvalu | UNICEF Australia.” UNICEF Australia. 2024. https://www.unicef.org.au/stories/tuvalu-climate-change-photo-essay.

supply-chain/logistics, temporary housing, or reconstruction expertise- and what should be pre-arranged before disasters occur?

Guiding Questions for Debate

1. Keep vs change: Which parts of existing disaster frameworks (Sendai/Hyogo, cluster coordination, national plans) are working well, and which parts need reform to reduce delays and duplication?
2. Early warning and communication: What changes are needed to make alerts reliable and accessible (multi-channel alerts, local leadership, language access, power/telecom backup), especially for remote or vulnerable communities?
3. Equitable access: How should the international community ensure that aid reaches hard-to-reach and lower-income areas- not only major cities- and what basic equity measures should be reported after every disaster?
4. Faster funding and recovery: What mechanisms best speed up recovery in your region (emergency cash, pre-positioned supplies, insurance/parametric payouts, reconstruction funds), and what safeguards prevent misuse?
5. Prevention and risk reduction: What prevention strategies should be prioritized in your region (land-use planning, resilient infrastructure, ecosystem protection like mangroves, wildfire mitigation), and how can international partners support these without harming local livelihoods?