

Essay

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The Impact of Natural Disasters on Community Health and Wellbeing

1. Introduction

2. Thesis

Natural disasters have significantly increased in the last few decades due to climate change and pose a serious social, economic and environmental threats to communities, especially the most vulnerable communities of children, women and disabled ~~women~~ people.

3. Types of Natural Disasters

3.1 Floods, cyclones, wild fire, earthquake

4. Impacts of Natural Disasters

4.1 Physical health impacts on community due to Natural disasters

4.1.a Waterborne disease (Cholera and diarrhoea)

4.1.b Vector-borne disease (malaria and dengue)

4.1.c Malnutrition due to shortage of food

4.1.d Immediate injuries and deaths

4.2 Impacts of Natural Disasters on mental health of communities

- 4.2.a Anxiety and depression due to financial loss
- 4.2.b post-traumatic stress disorder
- 4.2.c Impacts on Children Psychological development
- 4.2.d increase in suicide risks.

4.3 Social impacts on community due to Natural Disasters

- 4.3.a Mass displacement
- 4.3.b Breakdown of schools, colleges and universities
- 4.3.c loss of jobs
- 4.3.d overloading of shelters and poor living conditions

4.4 Environmental impacts on community health

- 4.4.a Air pollution (volcanic eruption, wildfire)
- 4.4.b water pollution (floods) and water scarcity.
- 4.4.c loss of biodiversity
- 4.4.d Soil degradation and agriculture loss.

4.5 Economic impacts and their consequences on health

- 4.5.a. Loss of livelihoods and income
- 4.5.b. Disruption of food and medicine supply chain
- 4.5.c. Poverty ~~cycle~~ cycle
- 4.5.d. Loss of building and infrastructure
- 4.5.e. Strain on national budgets and development programs

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 Increase funding for climate adaptation
- 5.2 Promote health education and awareness
- 5.3 Enhance international cooperation

6. conclusion

Natural disasters are sudden destructive events caused by environmental process that disrupts the social and economic system. These includes floods, cyclones, earthquakes, droughts, volcanic eruption, wildfire and heatwaves. Their frequency and intensity have ~~increased~~ significantly increased in the last few decades due to climate change, rapid urbanization and environmental degradation. According to **UNDRR** (United Nations

Office for Disaster Risk Reduction), natural disasters affect more than 200 million people annually. They influence human health at multiple levels: physical, mental, social, economic and environmental, especially in developing countries. There is a need to implement long term strategies and empowering communities to reduce risk.

Natural disasters such as floods, volcanic eruption, heatwaves, storms, earthquakes and tsunamis affect communities health, infrastructure and social stability. The major cause of increased natural disasters in a last few decades is increased in global warming which affects our environment and become the reason of multiple natural disasters.

The most immediate impact of natural disasters is death and injury. waterborne diseases such as Cholera, ~~the~~ Typhoid, Hepatitis A and B are spread due to contaminated water with sewage and industrial waste when mix with floods. According to World Health Organization, 2022 flood in Pakistan caused reported **1.5 million** waterborne disease cases.

Stagnant water increases mosquitoes breeding leading to malaria and dengue. In 2022 Pakistan saw over **400,000** confirmed dengue cases after

floods (WHO Surveillance Report). Natural disasters cause \$ 30 billion yearly agriculture losses, worsening malnutrition, especially among children. collapsing building in earthquakes, drowning during floods cause major casualties.

Trauma from loss, destruction, and fear leads to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). UNDRR estimates that 33%.

of disaster survivors exhibit post-traumatic stress disorders. Economic losses, displacement and uncertainty contribute to long term mental distress. loss of family members, homes, livelihoods & creates deep emotional wounds. it also cause increase in suicidal rate due to fear of poverty and stress.

After 2022 floods in Pakistan 8 million people were displaced ~~from~~ according to UNHCR. Displacement cause overcrowding, poor sanitation and increased disease risk. collapse of buildings, schools, colleges, hospitals ^{worsening} ~~and~~ community health and stability. Disasters disrupts community cohesion which is essential for mental and social wellbeing.

Wildfires release toxic smoke, increase respiratory disease and cause air pollution. Floods spread fecal matter, dead matter, animal wastes and chemical wastes leading to widespread contamination.

Flooding and drought reduce soil quality, harming food production and nutrition. Heatwaves cause dehydration, renal failure and heatstroke. **European Heatwave 2003** caused **70,000** deaths (WHO).

"Floods destroy farms, infrastructure; roads, buildings and canal system. World Bank reports **26 million** people fall into poverty each year due to natural disasters. It cause shortages of food, medicine ^{and} clean water. countries spend years in rebuilding infrastructure, diverting funds from hospitals and schools. These destruction cause poverty and increase government expenses on rebuilding communities. ~~and~~ ;