

The Global Hazard Trends

Frequency – the number of events of a given magnitude that occur over a period of time. Generally lower magnitude events happen more frequently, but have a lesser impact of people.

Magnitude – **this is the size of the natural hazard events** and so represents **the amount of work done** (e.g. the energy given out during a volcanic eruption). We can use scales to catalogue events according to size and energy. Scales that we use are:

1. Hurricanes – Saffir-Simpson scale (1-5)
2. Earthquakes – Richter Scale (1-10 log scale)
3. Tornadoes – TORRO or Fujita intensity scale
4. Volcanic Eruptions – explosivity index

Low magnitude events have less of an impact on people than high ones e.g. 2.5 on the Richter scale has nearly no impact whereas **the 2004 South Asia earthquake and tsunami had a devastating impacts – two million people were made homeless and a quarter of a million people died.**

TREND 1:

“The number of reported disasters increased”

This is due to the use of technology becoming more sophisticated meaning that we can mitigate against disasters. Communication has also got better, social media such as Facebook and Twitter means that more people are aware when a disaster strikes. Portable mobile phones allow you to access the internet now, so people are generally more connected to the world around them.

The **number of hydro-meteorically hazards increased** due to the effects of climate change - **the frequency and magnitude increased.**

TREND 2:

“There is a rising number of people affected by disasters”

More people are being affected by disasters especially in LEDCs, this is because due to the relaxed building regulations and land management many people are living on areas which are more **vulnerable** to disasters such as flood plains and marginal land.

Rural to urban migration is also increasing due to pull factors such as increased number of jobs available with higher pay than people would get farming in rural areas.

Furthermore the example of the **Pakistan Floods in 2010**, a great number of people were affected due to the rapid loss of their homes, crops and livestock. These amenities are what people in this region rely on, meaning without the affect are far higher.

TREND 3:

“There are a falling number of deaths”

Due to the fact that there are infrastructure improvements, which therefore means that people have access to sanitation, healthcare and education. They have fallen for a number of reasons, however some of the key one are:

- Warning system such as tornado sirens and tsunami alerts make people more aware of hazards that will occur
- More prepared, for example children in Japan have earthquake drills at the 1st of every month in order for them to understand what to do in the event of an earthquake
- Mitigation - large tower blocks which allow people to gain height during a tsunami, are saving lives.
- **90% of all deaths are still occurring in developing countries**

TREND 4:

“There are increasing economic losses”

Growing economies in NICs e.g. India and China. They are **building industry** now which means that there is a **greater amount to lose when a disaster strikes e.g. factories** rather than what used to be there – cheap crops. MEDCs have increasing economic losses because there are more people claiming insurance after a natural hazards. However in relative terms there tend to be higher economic losses in LEDCs.

