

Statement

“Advancing Science for Disaster Risk Reduction Towards 2030 and Beyond”

The first quarter of the 21st century was marked by a significant number of disasters due to natural hazard events and, particularly, by disasters that happened in 2026. Large earthquakes in South America occurred in Venezuela in June 2026 and in Colombia in August 2026, causing extensive infrastructure destruction and thousands of casualties. Also, a 7.7-magnitude destructive earthquake hit Indonesia in August 2026. Severe convective storms, including severe weather, damaging straight-line winds, hail, and tornado outbreaks, accounted for the lion’s share of disaster losses in the United States during the first half of 2026, alongside a damaging freeze in Florida that caused several billion dollars in agricultural losses and prompted a federal disaster declaration, as well as flash floods in Hawaii that resulted in billion-dollar losses. Extreme, record-breaking summer heatwaves in Europe resulted in droughts and wildfires and led to many thousands of excess deaths by the end of June 2026, reducing the European Union’s GDP by approximately 1% in 2026, which is equivalent to approximately €180 billion, and severely impacting labor productivity. Heavy South Asian monsoon downpours since July 2026 have triggered widespread and destructive flooding and landslides across parts of India. On 26 August 2026, a catastrophic landslide, glacier collapse, and subsequent mudslide struck the China-Nepal border region, triggering devastating flash floods that claimed thousands of lives and missing people across both countries, including international tourists.

In response to the devastating disasters that have struck communities across the globe in 2026 and the first quarter of the 21st century, Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) has issued a statement *“Advancing Science for Disaster Risk Reduction Towards 2030 and Beyond”*.

While average disaster-related mortality declined by 49% during 2014–2023 compared with 2005–2014, the number of people affected rose by 71% over the same period. Disasters in the first half of 2026 alone caused more than US\$112 billion in economic losses, underscoring that vulnerability, exposure, and inequality remain the key drivers of disaster risk.

The statement expresses deep sympathy for the victims and sufferers of recent disasters and calls on the IRDR community to accelerate implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 through co-designed, integrated, and collaborative research. It emphasizes that no single sector can reduce risk alone and urges action before disasters strike, through strengthened early warning systems, anticipatory financing, science-to-policy and science diplomacy mechanisms, and the use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, drones, and digital twins. The full statement can be downloaded from the UNDRR Prevention Web site: <https://www.preventionweb.net/media/120501/download>

Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) is an international scientific programme that aims to usher in an inclusive, safe and sustainable world by promoting a better understanding of disaster risk and the effective use of risk science in decision-making. The programme is co-sponsored by the International Science Council (ISC) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

The initiator and coordinator of this IRDR Statement was
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