**Lethal weather**

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The past month alone has seen a very steep increase in extreme weather phenomena, urban floods, and fierce winds that have destroyed many things.

These events serve to underline the increasing uncertainty of our climate and also assert that the world urgently works on more resilient infrastructures and disaster preparedness. Ranging from the hurricanes that lash the US, to rainfall of a kind never experienced in Europe, natural disasters are really becoming weightier in their frequency and force.

In one of the most memorable events, France saw rainfall reach 700 millimeters in 48 hours. Just to compare that with something else, Paris would normally have 641 millimeters throughout the whole year. The two regions that had the worst of it were Ardeche and Lozere, where whole villages were carried away and the infrastructures seriously destroyed.

The official number speaks of the worst flood disaster in 40 years as French emergency services went through more than 2300 operations, many of which saved lives. With roads submerged, railway services between Lyon and Saint-Etienne cut, at least 1,000 people have been rescued.

French authorities brushed off the handling of the situation, with much of it a first test of a system that sent text messages urging residents to stay safe and put off travel. The red alerts in place have been lifted as rainfall eases, with firefighters reporting that more people were injured in storm-related accidents Wednesday, bringing the total number of confirmed deaths to at least 41. The rain has eased, but authorities warned the country remains on edge, with further rain and potential flooding forecast for the southwest.

Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, the US is working to pick itself up from what has been one of the most disastrous hurricane seasons in memory. Milton came as a Category 4 monster storm bellowing into the Gulf Coast with sustained winds over 140 mph and gusts to 165 mph. The storm’s fury was reflected in widespread flooding, homes destroyed, and millions of people left without power. Milton’s intensity and the damage it did place it among the worst hurricanes of the last 10 years.

Estimates place the economic toll of Milton in the tens of billions of dollars, with agricultural lands ruined and communities in Florida and Louisiana left to pick up the pieces during long months of recovery. Although the US can handle resources aimed at responding to such disasters, the strain on emergency services and the scale of damage point to directions revealing vulnerability: even for developed nations, extreme weather events prove that they are stressed. This background information makes it clear for the reader to understand the vulnerability indicated in the last sentence.

That raises a sobering question. What happens when such catastrophes strike poorer developing countries? In countries like Pakistan, where infrastructure is inadequate, cities are heavily populated, and governments are already grappling with multiple crises (say economic instability, political unrest, public health challenges) – the potential for devastation is enormous. Floods struck Pakistan in 2022, displaced millions, and left vast swaths of land submerged, have laid open how ill-prepared the country was to such disasters.

Paradoxically, poor nations often lack the capacity of, the resources for and technology to mount an effective response to such extreme events. Emergency services are underfunded, infrastructure is mostly not so strong and densely populated urban centres of these countries make a very difficult evacuation and relief work. It is in these same areas that the effects of climate change are most acutely felt. Yet they have the least ability to adapt and protect their populations from the fallout. Rebuilding after such disasters can take years, a process during which millions are left in a cycle of poverty and displacement.

Globally the picture is equally grim. In Libya, catastrophic floods, following the collapse of two dams earlier this year, claimed thousands of lives – and entire cities were wiped out. In South Asia, monsoon seasons have displaced people on an increasing scale across Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India as well as destroying vital food security crops.

These hostile weather events all across different continents are a stark reminder that climate change is no distant menace long into the future: it is already here. With extreme weather patterns in the rise, urban areas located in low-lying regions are at risk of heavy flooding and other related calamities. Essentially in underdeveloped nations, already having all resources at the verge of completion, are devastating that can cause tremendous human loss, economic fall down and spoil or damage to environment for longer period.

Even with high-tech and warning systems to help reduce some damage in richer nations, the world also has to realise that more support must be provided to poorer countries. Ensuring preparedness capacities, enhanced water management systems, and viable infrastructure are the most vital investments for the protection of such regions that will very deeply be stricken by future disasters.

The floods in France, the ruins left by Hurricane Milton in the US, and the catastrophes in developing countries sound forthright reminders that must urge governments, international agencies, and individual persons to face up to this new reality of the global environment.

In the world, natural disasters are becoming more and more frequent and far more severe as a result of climate change. No country can afford to just sit back. The time? Now. Really?

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