Unseen need in IFRC World Disaster Report 2018

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Millions of people across the globe are not receiving the humanitarian assistance they desperately need, despite various commitments from government and aid organisations to ensure the world's vulnerable people are not left behind.

This is the core finding of the International Federation of the Red Cross *World Disasters Report 2018*[1] that provides a snapshot of the global humanitarian sector and identifies existing gaps in disaster assistance.

The report attributes these gaps to more than just a lack of funding. The report states that even if all projects were fully funded, many people would still be overlooked due to the process and decision-making of governments, donors and humanitarian organisations. Instead, the report identifies five 'fatal flaws' that result in people being overlooked:

- **Out of sight** - a lack of official ID and unmapped locations hide people from the humanitarian system.
- **Out of reach** - extreme topography, climate, politics and conflict restrict humantarian access.
- **Out of the loop** - people with disabilities cannot always understand or access humanitarian support.
- **Out of money** - rapid-onset, slow-onset and long-term disasters and emergencies are often underfunded.
- **Out of scope** - non-refugee, irregular migrants and urban violence victims can fall outside traditional aid.

These concerns were identified through consultation with local volunteers and Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world that stand at the forefront of disaster planning and recovery. The report points to these gaps and urges the humanitarian sector to reconsider their operations to better identify and prioritise these vulnerable groups.

An estimated 134 million people worldwide required humanitarian assistance in 2018 according to figures from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs *Global Humanitarian Overview 2018*.[2] This report estimates that, over the previous decade, two billion people were affected by natural hazards and 95 per cent of these were weather-related.

Some of Australia's closest neighbours are likely victims of disasters. Asia is the world's most densely populated region and disasters occur at a significantly higher rate than other locations.

During 2008–2017, 41 per cent of global disasters occurred in the Asia region and almost 80 per cent of all people affected by disasters were located in Asia. Comparatively, Australia's region of Oceania experienced the lowest global rates of disaster.

Over the last decade, 3751 natural hazards were recorded worldwide. Though fewer in number, earthquakes remained the largest contributor to death tolls. The most common natural hazard was flooding at 40 per cent, followed by storms at 27 per cent. Where data is available, the report estimates the global cost of damages from disasters in 141 countries at US$1,658 billion, with 76 per cent of costs due to weather-related hazards.

While most disasters cannot be avoided, communities, governments and organisations can improve their preparedness and response to them. To achieve this, the International Federation of the Red Cross recommends governments, donors and humanitarian organisations allocate funds to areas such as under-supported groups, local disaster response capabilities, improved use of data and technology and adopt a shared responsibility for community resilience.

By shifting how resources are allocated in the humanitarian sector, the International Federation of the Red Cross predicts that more money and trust will be invested in local organisations that increases resilience and protects against the mounting impacts of disasters on the world's most vulnerable peoples.

The World Disaster Report 2018 is available at: https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/world-disaster-report-2018/.

1   World Disasters Report. At: https://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/world-disasters-report/.

2   Global Humanitarian Overview 2018. At: https://interactive.unocha.org/publication/globalhumanitarianoverview/.