

Integrating Disaster Risk Management with Emergency Services and Defence to Reduce Avoidable Disaster Deaths

10th December 2021

About the Symposium

When your house is on fire, who do you call?

When your house is flooded or about to flood, who do you call?

When you need help to evacuate your house, who do you call?

When a national government is overwhelmed with an emergency, who do they call?

Answers to all these questions are the first responders (aka category 1 responders).

First responders consist of the affected community, emergency services, defence – amongst others (Ray-Bennett, 2018).

The one-day symposium entitled ‘Integrating Disaster Risk management with Emergency Services and Defence to Reduce Avoidable Disaster Deaths’ will bring together the emergency services (viz. fire and rescue, civilian), defence (viz. navy, airforce, army, civilian), researchers and policy influencers from the risk, crisis, disaster and development sectors to understand the role that the first responders play in reducing avoidable disaster deaths and the number of affected people by disasters in the Caribbean region.

Avoidable deaths are those deaths that can be avoided through preventable measures, amenable or timely intervention measures, and disaster risk governance (Cook, 2019; Ray-Bennett, 2018; Ray-Bennett et al., forthcoming). Avoiding disaster deaths and the number of people affected by disasters is currently part of the United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction’s first two Global Targets: ‘substantially reduce global disaster mortality by 2030’ (Target A), and ‘substantially reduce the number of affected people globally by 2030’ (Target B).



This one-day symposium will explore:

- the strategies, tactics, and actions that the emergency services and defence undertake in collaboration with disaster management authorities and alike, to reduce avoidable disaster deaths;
- the challenges that they experience and the lessons that can be learned to improve disaster response and recovery; and
- the support that will be required for cross-pollination of cognate sectors (defence, emergency services, disaster, development) for mutual learning, capacity building, and reimagine practices for collaboration to achieve sustainable development in the Caribbean region.

Currently, the voices of the first responders are either not heard or are not celebrated in the mainstream disaster risk reduction and development conferences and symposiums. They discuss and celebrate their experiences within the confines of their domains, departments and platforms.

This symposium, therefore, will be path-breaking by bringing the voices of the first responders to the fore, and explore the support that will be required to cross-pollinate cognate sectors (emergency, defence, disaster and development) for mutual learning, capacity building, and reimagine practices for collaboration to reduce avoidable disaster deaths to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: 1 (No Poverty), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and 13 (Climate Action). These Goals and their specific Targets (1.5, 3.8, 11.5 and 13.1) are directly connected to the Sendai Framework's Global Targets A and B (UN, 2015, UNISDR, 2017).

More Information

For more information, please follow this website: <https://www.avoidable-deaths.net/events-2/symposium/>

References

Cook, A. (2019) Avoidable mortality in the UK: 2017. Office of National Statistics (ONS).

Ray-Bennett, N.S. (2018) Avoidable Deaths: A Systems Failure Approach to Disaster Risk Management. Switzerland, Springer Nature.

Ray-Bennett, N.S. et al., (forthcoming) Avoidable Deaths From The Impact of COVID-19 and Economic Lockdown in India. <https://www.avoidable-deaths.net/ongoing-projects/project-avoidable-deaths-covid-report/>

UN (2015) Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Geneva: United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). Available at: <http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/43291> [Accessed 9 September 2021].

UNISDR (2017) Technical Guidance for Monitoring and Reporting on Progress in Achieving the Global Targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction: Collection of Technical Notes on Data and Methodology. UNISDR. Available at: <https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/54970> [Accessed 9 September 2021].

Note

Description of the symposium is written by Dr Nibedita S. Ray-Bennett, Mr Julian Coetzee, Mr Daniel Mendez and Mr Krishna Clarke. © Avoidable Deaths Network (2021)

Images: © Alois Hirschmugl, D.M.A.T.

