

Risks of Exposure and Vulnerability to Natural Disasters at the City Level:

A Global Overview

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Abstract:

Using the data from the *2014 Revision of the World Urbanization Prospects* and the spatial hotspot data on risks of exposures and vulnerability to natural disasters, this report shows that 944 cities out of 1,692 world's cities with 300, 000 inhabitants or more in 2014 or 1.4 billion people face a relatively high risk of exposure to at least one of six types of natural disasters analyzed, representing 56% of all 1,692 cities and 62% of 2.2 billion people in these cities. Furthermore, about 82% of cities and 88% of city populations are highly vulnerable to disaster-related deaths, and that nearly 90% of cities and more than 93% of city populations are highly vulnerable to disaster-related economic losses. We also illustrate a great variation across city sizes, development groups, major areas, and income groups. Overall, we show that natural disasters have been a major threat to dense urban spaces worldwide. Our findings could be informative for better preparedness, development of adaptive strategies and improvement of resilience, and addressing and fulfilling sustainable development goals.

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