

Evacuation Waves

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Frontline communities have raised sustainable development concerns about how policymakers, elected officials, and corporate transnationals have neglected the needs of low-income, minority, indigenous and noncitizen persons during extreme weather events, namely sudden onset water hazards like hurricanes. These concerns have brought minimal change to disaster risk reduction and responsiveness from these affected communities. Leaders address these concerns of disparate resource allocations and information sharing to these frontline communities, but the gap for variations in resource allocation continues to widen.

The literature to address this phenomenon include areas such as environmental justice, disaster justice, and climate justice. Environmental justice includes the idea that “all people and communities have a right to equal protection and equal enforcement of environmental laws and regulations.” (Bullard 1993). Climate justice “insists on a shift from a discourse on greenhouse gases and melting ice caps into a civil rights movement with the people and communities most vulnerable to climate impacts.” (Robinson 2019). The discipline of disaster justice is a field of study to explore the governing structures of societies in developing and maintaining vulnerabilities, inequalities and injustices, which are intensified by natural events (Verchick 2012, Lukawics and Dover 2018).

The efficacy of an early warning system is based on the following classification (1) personal and cultural factors, (2) prediction-related factors, and (3) dissemination-related factors (Klafft and Meissen (2011). Early warning systems are used in a variety of contexts. One study focused on early warning systems for gentrification and displacement tracked investment, disinvestment, and population flows at local levels. (Chapple and Zuk 2016). Other studies have considered the economic, social and cultural rights that are causes, consequences and predictors of violence, social unrest, and conflict (UNHCR, 2015). Yet few explanatory studies have been conducted to address the intersections of environmental justice and disaster justice with respect to early warning systems in the Caribbean Basin, which is impacted by not only natural disasters, but also political upheaval. Quantitative data on race, income, tribal status, and citizenship standing have not been fully researched and remain uncertain.

The overarching goals of my study are to aggregate the prospective human health benefits and public health burden reductions associated with sudden onset water events in the Caribbean Basin for their justice and economic impacts on sustainable development.