



Human Security and Natural Disasters (Routledge Humanitarian Studies)

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"Human security" is an approach that rejects the traditional prioritization of state security, and instead identifies the individual as the primary referent of security. It offers a way of broadening our perspective, and recognizing that the most pressing threats to individuals do not come from interstate war, but from the emergencies that affect people every day, such as famine, disease, displacement, civil conflict and environmental degradation. Human security is about people living their lives with dignity, being free from "fear" and "want". To date, there has been a strong tendency to focus on insecurity caused by civil conflict, with less attention on issues to do with environmental security. This volume addresses the threat posed by natural disasters, which represent an increasingly major human security threat to people everywhere.

In looking at natural disasters, this book also refines the human security approach. It does so through developing its previously unexplored interdisciplinary potential. This volume explicitly seeks to bring the human security approach into conversation with contributions from a range of disciplines: development, disaster sociology, gender studies, international law, international relations, philosophy, and public health. Collectively these scholars unpack the "human" element of "natural" disasters. In doing so, an emphasis is placed on how pre-existing vulnerabilities can be gravely worsened, as well as the interconnected nature of human security threats. The book presents a variety of case studies that include the Indian Ocean tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, the 2010 Haiti earthquake, and the 2011 "triple disasters" in Japan.

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