

# Asia hit hardest by natural disasters in 2014: report

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Rescue workers searching for victims in the debris in Ganjiazhai village, buried by landslide during the earthquake, in Longtoushan township of Ludian county in Zhaotong, southwest China's Yunnan province, August 2014

Asia was the continent hit hardest by natural disasters in 2014, with China getting the worst of it with 58 million people affected, according to an annual report released Thursday in Geneva.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said in its 2015 World Disasters Report that while there were 317 [natural disasters](#) reported worldwide in 2014, it was actually the lowest number of the decade.

Disasters caused 8,186 deaths worldwide in 2014, but that mortality rate is the lowest since 1986 (7,303), and 90 percent lower than the decade average.

According to the report, 48 percent of all [disasters](#) occurred in Asia.

"Over 85 percent of those killed and 86 percent of those affected globally were also in Asia," the report said.

The earthquake in China's Yunnan province last August that killed 731 people was the deadliest disaster in 2014, and drought, storms and flooding affected some 58 million people in the country.

Continuing a 20-year-long trend, nearly nine out of ten disasters were climate related—87 percent in 2014.

The IFRC report also focused on "local actors", and the need to fund more local humanitarian aid.

"Local actors are always the first to respond," IFRC said.

It said that local actors are effective because "of the perspective they bring, their understanding of language and cultural norms, and because they are permanently present in communities and able to accompany them to address risks before disaster strikes."



Local residents and volunteers attending a candle-light vigil for victims of the earthquake in Ludian county in Zhaotong, southwest China's Yunnan province

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