



Exploring Social Work Interventions in Response to Two Climate-Related Disaster Cases

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BACKGROUND

Climate-related disasters disproportionately affect marginalized and rural communities, exposing systemic gaps in disaster preparedness and emergency response.

Social work plays a vital role in integrating environmental justice with psychosocial support in such contexts.

This study was to examine social work interventions following the death of a scholar during floods and a grandmother struck by lightning in 2024.

AIM

This study explores how social work interventions responded to two climate-related disasters in rural Limpopo, South Africa.

METHODS

This was a qualitative case study:

- Data collected through case reports
- Reflective practitioner journals
- Community feedback

Reflexive thematic analysis was used to identify key themes.

FINDINGS

Social workers provided:

- Immediate psychosocial support
- Trauma-informed counselling
- Coordinated shelter and resources
- Collaboration with local authorities

Advocacy efforts emphasized:

- Accessible early warning systems
- Community-based disaster response teams

Indigenous knowledge applied:

- Local weather interpretation
- Sustainable land use practices

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Key insights:

- Decolonize environmental response practices
- Collaborate with Indigenous leaders
- Foster culturally grounded, sustainable interventions

Role of Social Workers:

- Bridge social and environmental justice
- Promote inclusive policies & community resilience
- Ensure equitable access to emergency services

Policy Reforms Needed:

- Institutionalize culturally responsive
- Community-led disaster management strategies