This is a map of people who are known or presumed to have been killed by disasters which are beyond local capacity. The map covers the period 1975 to 2004, so includes: the 1976 earthquake in China, the 1984 drought in Sudan and Ethiopia, and the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh.

Death counts from disasters are affected by human factors. The 1984 Ethiopian famine was caused by a lack of rain but aggravated by civil war, and an initial reluctance to give international assistance. Deaths from disasters can be minimised by: warning systems (good communications are needed); durable shelters; political will; and practical support.

Territory size shows the proportion of all deaths caused by disasters, which overwhelm local resources, that died there 1975-2004. It includes outbreaks of infectious diseases not normally found there.

“The we are preparing ourselves for up to 1,000 dead bodies from this flood alone ...” Insp Daniel Gezahenge, 2006