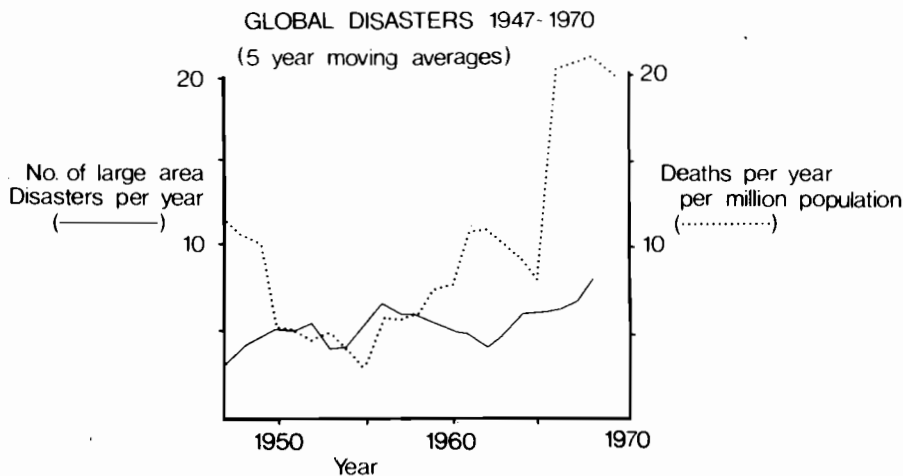


NOTE

INTERNATIONAL DISASTERS INSTITUTE SET UP*



Graph showing increasing scale of disasters

An International Disasters Institute has just been set up in London to tackle disasters in a new way. Its aim is to lessen the human impact of future disasters by:

- (1) initiating, promoting and conducting research;
- (2) providing a consultancy service for field evaluations;
- (3) providing an information and educational service for relief workers and agencies.

The organisers, a group of natural and social scientists, believe that better information and

research means better planning which can save more lives at less cost. It can prevent a situation as occurred in the Ethiopian famine of 1975 when relief work killed perhaps as many people as the famine.

As the director, Dr. Frances D'Souza, points out, "There remains a frightening lack of applied knowledge of the victims' actual needs as opposed to imagined needs. Only a minute fraction of the money which is currently spent on aid is needed. Scientific research – including the formation of teams to assess post-disaster conditions – would allow the development of an effective technology and therefore the alleviation of human suffering."

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