*Corresponding Author's Email: selinkocak@baskent.edu.tr
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The Importance of Disaster Management and Social Works in Extreme Weather Events Related to the Climate Crisis[1]

Selin Koçak*[1],and Veli Duyan[2]

[1]Baskent University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Social Work, Ankara/Turkey

[3]Ankara University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Social Work, Ankara/Turkey

Abstract

Social work is grounded in the principles of human rights and social justice and also addresses issues of environmental, ecological, and climate justice. The need for social work to collaborate with other climate-related professions is paramount in understanding the causes of and proposed solutions to climate-related disasters. Accordingly, this study aimed to explore the experiences of communities affected by climate-related disasters and to evaluate disaster management practices from a social work perspective. More specifically, the study examined how disaster-affected individuals and professionals perceived the impacts of climate-related disasters and identified recommendations for improving disaster management and social work practices. The research was planned as a qualitative case study. The study included a total of 41 participants, comprising 27 disaster-affected individuals from two climate-related disaster areas in Antalya, Türkiye—Kumluca, which experienced severe flooding in 2022, and Manavgat, which was devastated by wildfires in 2021—and 14 professionals working in disaster-related fields, including social workers, urban planners, and engineers. The interview data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach with the support of MAXQDA 2023 qualitative data analysis software. The findings indicate that a holistic social work perspective is essential for addressing climate-related disasters and that interdisciplinary collaboration is equally important. Various professionals emphasized the importance of participation in climate crisis-related policies and the importance of consulting with other professionals working on this issue. It was observed that preventive and protective measures addressing the climate crisis and climate-related disasters remain insufficient, and that social workers continue to face challenges in disaster practice.

Keywords: Climate justice; Flood; Forest fire; Disaster management; Multidisciplinary study

[1] This paper is based on the doctoral dissertation entitled *Evaluation of Social and Environmental Policies on the Climate Crisis in Türkiye from a Green Social Work Perspective*, completed in 2025.

1. Introduction

Climate change affects not only human societies but also other living species and is widely recognized as one of the most pressing global ecological challenges of the twenty-first century (IPCC, 2023). As the climate crisis intensifies, the frequency and severity of extreme weather events—including floods, wildfires, droughts, storms, and tornadoes—have increased considerably (Adil et al., 2025). These events pose substantial threats to human well-being by disrupting livelihoods, economies, and social systems (Lorenzo et al., 2025), while simultaneously undermining biodiversity, ecosystem functioning, and environmental sustainability (UNDRR, 2025; WMO, 2026).

The social, economic, and ecological dimensions of the climate crisis have increasingly become a shared area of inquiry across multiple disciplines. Its adverse impacts on housing, food security, public health, and livelihoods have reinforced the importance of social work interventions grounded in the principles of human rights, social justice, environmental justice, and ecological justice. Within this context, social work encompasses a broad range of practices, including disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness, climate change awareness, the identification of the needs and vulnerabilities of disadvantaged populations, and the planning of community-based interventions. According to Achstatter (2014), social work operates at the intersection of the social, economic, and ecological consequences of the climate crisis and contributes to addressing its multidimensional impacts through interventions at the individual, group, and community levels. Since its emergence, the social work profession has focused on practice at the individual, group, and community levels (Duyan, 2014). However, as the local and global impacts of the climate crisis continue to intensify, there is an increasing need to strengthen community-based social work interventions that promote resilience, preparedness, and sustainable adaptation.

Nagoshi et al. (2025) argue that social workers should draw attention to the disproportionate impacts of the climate crisis on disadvantaged populations, promote public participation in decision-making processes affecting their living environments, and advocate for the development of climate-responsive social policies. Similarly, Alston (2015) emphasizes the responsibility of social workers to raise public awareness of social, environmental, and ecological justice, while Cwikel (2025) highlights the importance of adopting a holistic approach to assessing the individual and community needs arising from the climate crisis. Likewise, a disaster social work perspective emphasizes the integration of local knowledge and lived experiences into disaster governance, active community participation throughout the disaster management cycle, and the recognition of the social consequences of climate-related disasters (Breen et al., 2023; Ku & Yan, 2018). This holistic perspective enables social workers to play a critical role not only in post-disaster recovery but also in disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and long-term climate adaptation, thereby strengthening community resilience to climate-related disasters.

Accordingly, this study aims to explore the intersection of social work, the climate crisis, and disaster management through a qualitative examination of two climate-related disasters in Antalya, Türkiye—the 2021 wildfires in Manavgat and the 2022 floods in Kumluca. Specifically, the study explores the experiences of disaster-affected communities, evaluates current disaster management practices from a social work perspective, and identifies recommendations for strengthening disaster management and social work interventions in the context of the climate crisis.

To achieve this aim, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do disaster-affected individuals experience the social, economic, psychological, and environmental impacts of climate-related disasters?
2. How do disaster-affected communities and professionals evaluate current disaster management practices in Türkiye?
3. What recommendations can be made for disaster management and social work interventions in the context of the climate crisis?

2. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore how different stakeholder groups perceive climate crisis-related disasters in Türkiye and to develop recommendations from a social work perspective. Given that the climate crisis is a complex phenomenon with social, political, economic, and ecological dimensions, manifesting through extreme weather events such as floods, wildfires, and droughts, a qualitative approach was considered the most appropriate to capture participants' experiences and perspectives in depth. A case study design was adopted, as it enables an in-depth examination of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. In this study, the climate crisis was conceptualized as a contemporary phenomenon reflected in climate-related disasters in Türkiye. Two disaster-affected areas in Antalya Province were selected as the study sites: Kalemler Village in the Manavgat district, which was severely affected by the 2021 forest fires, and Kumluca**,** which experienced devastating floods in 2022.

The aim of the study was to explore the experiences of communities affected by climate-related disasters in Antalya and to evaluate disaster interventions from a social work perspective.

2.1. Participants

The participants comprised disaster-affected local residents and professionals working in the fields of climate change and disaster management in Türkiye. The professional participants were employed in public institutions, non-governmental organizations, and local governments. The local participants consisted of residents of Kalemler Village in the Manavgat district, who experienced the 2021 wildfires, and individuals affected by the 2022 floods in Kumluca**.** A maximum variation sampling strategy, one of the purposive sampling methods, was employed to capture diverse perspectives from different stakeholder groups. Maximum variation was operationalized by recruiting participants across different disaster contexts, stakeholder groups, genders, occupations, professional disciplines, and institutional settings. Among disaster-affected residents, variation was sought by including individuals from two different disaster contexts—the 2022 Kumluca floods and the 2021 Manavgat wildfires—as well as participants with diverse occupational backgrounds. Among professionals, variation was achieved by including participants from different disciplinary backgrounds and institutional settings, including public institutions, local governments, non-governmental organizations, and universities. Maximum variation sampling is widely used in qualitative research to identify common themes across participants with diverse experiences and to obtain rich data from different institutions and social groups (Patton, 2018). A total of 41 participants were included in the study, comprising 27 disaster-affected local residents and 14 professionals. The demographic and occupational characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Introductory Information About Participants

Participant Group	Location/ Context	N	Gender	Occupational Characteristics
Disaster-affected local residents	Kumluca (2022 flood)	14	7 women, 7 men	Greenhouse farmers (n = 4); village headmen (n = 4); shop owners (n = 4); teacher (n = 1); unemployed (n = 1)
Disaster-affected local residents	Manavgat (2021 wildfire)	13	8 women, 5 men	Farmers (n = 10); retired (n = 2); village headman (n = 1)
Professionals	Disaster/climate-related fields	14	7 women, 7 men	Social workers (n = 5); social work academic (n = 1); engineers (n = 2); teacher (n = 1); architect (n = 1); urban planner (n = 1); international relations specialists (n = 2); physical geography and geology specialist (n = 1)

2.2. Data Collection

Disaster-affected local residents were recruited through different pathways at the two study sites. In Kumluca, participants were reached through civil society organizations, whereas in Manavgat, participants were recruited with the assistance of the local village headman. Interviews with disaster-affected residents were conducted first during fieldwork at the study sites. For the recruitment of professional participants, individuals and institutions working on climate change and disaster-related issues were identified based on the predefined inclusion criteria, and potential participants were contacted via email. Prior to data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the relevant ethics committee, and official permissions were secured from the relevant institutions. Participants provided informed consent prior to the interviews. Semi-structured interview guides were developed separately for disaster-affected local residents and professionals. The interviews lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Semi-structured interview guides included open-ended questions designed to explore participants' experiences of climate-related disasters, their evaluations of disaster management practices, and their recommendations for improving disaster management. Examples of interview prompts included: "How do you evaluate disaster management practices before, during, and after the disaster?", "Can you describe the impacts of the disaster on your life and community?", and "What recommendations do you have for reducing the impacts of climate-related disasters?". Fieldwork was conducted in Kumluca between 21 and 25 August 2023 and in Kalemler Village (Manavgat) between 28 and 31 August 2023**.** Interviews with disaster-affected local residents were conducted face-to-face at the study sites. Following the completion of the field interviews, interviews with professionals were conducted online via Zoom**.** Ethical approval for this study was obtained from Baskent University in 2023.

2.3. Data Analysis

Audio recordings of all interviews were transcribed verbatim and imported into MAXQDA 2023 for analysis. The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach, which involved familiarization with the data, initial coding, searching for themes, reviewing and refining themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. This approach enabled an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives regarding climate-related disasters and disaster management practices. Initial coding was conducted by the researcher. As the data were coded by a single researcher, no formal intercoder reliability assessment was conducted. To enhance consistency in the analytic process, the coding framework and emerging themes were reviewed and discussed with the research supervisor through peer debriefing. Particular attention was given to ensuring that the development and interpretation of codes and themes remained closely

grounded in participants' accounts. Data collection was concluded when thematic saturation was reached, as no substantially new codes or themes emerged from subsequent interviews. Reflexivity was considered throughout the research process, particularly given the researcher's academic background in social work and familiarity with disaster and climate-related issues. The researcher remained attentive to how this professional background might influence the interpretation of participants' experiences. To reduce the potential influence of researcher assumptions, the analysis remained closely grounded in participants' accounts, and the emerging codes and themes were reviewed and discussed with the research supervisor.

2.4. Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the study was enhanced through several strategies. To ensure credibility, all interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach. In addition, transcripts of several interviews were shared with the respective professional participants to verify the accuracy of the recorded information (member checking). Dependability was supported through the systematic documentation of the research process, including participant selection, data collection, and data analysis procedures. To enhance confirmability, the coding process was conducted by the researcher, and the coding framework and emerging themes were subsequently reviewed and discussed with the research supervisor.

3. Results

Three overarching themes emerged from the thematic analysis: (1) Disaster and the Climate Crisis, (2) Climate Crisis and Disaster Management Practices, and (3) Recommendations. The three themes were closely aligned with the research questions. Theme 1, *Disaster and Climate Crisis*, primarily addressed the first research question by capturing participants' experiences of the social, economic, psychological, and environmental impacts of climate-related disasters. Theme 2, *Climate Crisis and Disaster Management Practices*, addressed the second research question by reflecting participants' evaluations of current disaster management practices. Theme 3, *Recommendations*, addressed the third research question by presenting participants' recommendations for disaster management and social work interventions in the context of the climate crisis.

Theme 1. Disaster and Climate Crisis

The findings under Theme 1 demonstrate that climate-related disasters deepen climate injustice and disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, resulting in significant economic losses and psychological distress.

Inequality & Climate Justice and Vulnerability & Risk

"The real issue is the dimension of just justice, rights, and human rights emerging from these inequalities… Why should the poor suffer loss of welfare? A person who owns 10 luxury residences — do those residences get submerged under water?" (M7, Female, Architect, Global Balance Association)

"There are people who built homes at the top of mountains, in forests, and those forests burned down, or people who built near or on riverbeds by their own means. Those exposed to the climate crisis are usually the segment closer to poverty." (M10, Female, Urban & Regional Planner, AFAD)

Economic Loss

"Our money, the money from the goods we sold, was left inside. We had no chance to go in and get it. Years of work — gone." (B16, Female, Manavgat, Farmer)

Psychological & Physical Impact

"It was like a horror movie. Lightning was flashing. Rain was pouring. Water was up to my feet. If I had dropped my child, the water would have swept her away. My husband's leg was broken — he was walking through the water with crutches. I had never seen anything like it in my life." (B3, Female, Kumluca)

Theme 2. Climate Crisis and Disaster Management Practices

Theme 2 revealed that inadequate climate-resilient infrastructure, insufficient early warning systems, and limited pre-disaster risk assessment have increased the vulnerability of communities to climate-related disasters in Türkiye.

Infrastructure Failure

"Because the greenhouses are close to the stream, they dump waste into it. Even slight rain causes blockage. When logs, rocks, and soil came down — everything came with the force of the water. That's why water passages were blocked." (B13, Male, Kumluca, Deputy Headman/ Greenhouse Farmer)

Structural Vulnerability

"Bridges are built flat when they should be arched. Otherwise, we will experience this flood disaster again." (B1, Male, Kumluca, Retired)

Preparedness & Early Warning

"If we had known such a thing was going to happen, everyone would have taken their own precautions. Most of those who didn't burn in those villages had prepared themselves. If there is a fire engine with a water tanker, they will survive; otherwise, what will happen?" (B20, Female, Manavgat, Farmer)

Systemic Risk Management Gap

"We are very weak in risk management as a country — basically non-existent. We are great at responding because we work desperately, but because our risk management is poor, our response also suffers... When there is a fire or flood, we ask what to do. Nobody talks about preventing the flood in the first place." (M8, Female, Social Work Specialist, Directorate of Family and Social Services)

Theme 3. Recommendations

Theme 3 identified several key recommendations, including the need for climate-resilient construction, the implementation of social and environmental risk assessments, and the promotion of community participation in local decision-making processes.

Climate-Resilient Construction

"Areas prone to flooding must be specifically identified and channelled. Streams need to be enclosed in concrete or stone-wall channels." (B1, Male, Kumluca, Retired)

Comprehensive Impact Analysis

"We need a comprehensive impact analysis — which regions will be affected and how — so that the transition does not create new injustices and new victims." (M9, Male, International Relations, WWF-Turkey)

Participation Principle

"You wrote a climate law about vulnerable groups — invite one of them to the negotiations, officially. If they also have a voice, you would have added an article. But this is a matter that takes time." (M7, Female, Architect, Global Balance Association)

Local Context & Interconnectedness

"Why does inflation rise? Poor economic policies can be a cause, but on the other hand, the decrease in global food supply is related to the climate crisis — everything is interconnected, just like the melting of glaciers." (M5, Male, Social Work Academician)

Some differences in emphasis were observed across the two disaster sites and participant groups. In Kumluca, participants' accounts particularly highlighted infrastructure-related issues, including the use of riverbeds, greenhouse waste, inadequate water passages, and bridge design. In Manavgat, greater emphasis was placed on disaster preparedness, the availability of firefighting equipment, and the importance of individual preparedness. Differences were also evident between disaster-affected residents and professionals. Local residents tended to describe the economic, psychological, and physical impacts of the disasters more directly, along with infrastructure and preparedness problems encountered in their communities. Professional participants, on the other hand, placed greater emphasis on broader structural issues, including inadequate disaster preparedness, systemic risk management, climate justice, community participation, and the need for comprehensive social and environmental risk and impact assessments.

4. Discussion

The findings indicate that climate-related disasters are not merely environmental events but also multidimensional processes that exacerbate existing social and economic inequalities. Participants consistently emphasized that individuals with lower socioeconomic status are disproportionately affected by climate-related disasters and identified climate injustice as a key concept for understanding their disaster experiences. This finding is consistent with the climate justice literature, which argues that individuals and communities contributing least to the climate crisis are often those who bear its most severe consequences (Heilinger & Kempt, 2025). In particular, the substantial economic losses experienced by participants whose livelihoods depended on agriculture and greenhouse farming illustrate the long-term adverse effects of climate-related disasters on local economies and livelihood security. Similarly, the IPCC (2023) emphasizes that the climate crisis intensifies poverty, food insecurity, and economic vulnerability, thereby further reinforcing existing social inequalities. These findings further demonstrate that climate-related disasters disproportionately affect socioeconomically disadvantaged populations. For example, a recent study conducted in Australia found that disadvantaged communities were not only more exposed to flood risks but also experienced greater economic losses and had lower recovery capacity than more socioeconomically advantaged groups (Settle et al., 2025). Similarly, recent international research has demonstrated that flood vulnerability remains substantially higher in less developed and socially disadvantaged areas, indicating that socioeconomic inequalities continue to shape disaster impacts and recovery despite advances in disaster risk reduction (Sauer et al., 2024). Consistent with these international findings, participants in the present study reported experiencing considerable economic hardship and psychological distress, which adversely affected their post-disaster recovery process.

Another prominent finding of the study concerns the psychological impacts of climate-related disasters on affected individuals. Participants described experiencing intense fear, helplessness, and uncertainty during and after the disasters. This finding is consistent with

previous research demonstrating that disasters result not only in physical and economic losses but also in long-lasting psychosocial consequences (Cleary & Dominelli, 2020). Likewise, the social workers participating in this study reported that their post-disaster interventions were largely confined to the provision of psychosocial support services. Recent studies conducted in Türkiye similarly highlight the prominent role of social workers in post-disaster psychosocial support and emergency response, while also drawing attention to the challenges encountered by professionals in disaster settings (Karaağaç & Özada Nazım, 2025; Kelebek Küçükarslan et al., 2025). This finding suggests that disaster social work practice in Türkiye remains predominantly focused on post-disaster response, whereas contemporary international disaster social work increasingly emphasizes prevention, preparedness, climate adaptation, and community resilience (Sim et al., 2022). Recent international disaster social work scholarship similarly emphasizes that social workers should play an active role across all phases of the disaster management cycle, including preparedness, mitigation, response, recovery, and long-term climate adaptation. Rather than focusing exclusively on post-disaster psychosocial support, contemporary approaches advocate community-based interventions, participatory disaster planning, and the integration of climate justice principles into social work practice (Cwikel, 2025; Nagoshi et al., 2025). Compared with these international developments, the findings of the present study suggest that disaster social work practice in Türkiye continues to be largely response-oriented, indicating the need to expand preventive and resilience-focused interventions.

Another important finding concerns the structural factors that amplify the impacts of climate-related disasters. Participants identified the inappropriate use of riverbeds, inadequate infrastructure, the construction of bridges that were not designed to withstand disaster risks, and the neglect of local environmental characteristics as key factors contributing to the severity of disasters. These findings are consistent with the disaster studies literature, which emphasizes that disasters are not merely natural events but are shaped by human and social processes (Gomez, 2025). Similarly, Soğancı and Duyan (2025), in their study of the Bozkurt flood disaster, demonstrated that the characteristics of the physical environment, together with unplanned urban development, significantly increased the destructive impacts of flooding. Accordingly, climate change adaptation policies should extend beyond post-disaster response to incorporate climate-sensitive urban planning, climate-resilient infrastructure, and comprehensive risk assessments aimed at reducing disaster risk and enhancing community resilience.

One of the most notable findings regarding disaster management was participants' emphasis on the inadequacy of pre-disaster preparedness measures. In particular, insufficient early warning systems, inadequate equipment, and an institutional focus on crisis response rather than proactive risk management were identified as key factors exacerbating the impacts of climate-related disasters. Similarly, following the flood in Ayancık district of Sinop Province, inadequate disaster preparedness efforts and limited participation of disaster-affected communities were identified as important challenges in disaster management (Özmete & Pak, 2025). These findings are consistent with the disaster management literature, which highlights the importance of preventive approaches in reducing disaster risk. For example, Thieken et al. (2023) reported that a substantial proportion of individuals affected by the 2021 floods in Germany did not receive timely early warnings, while Sufri et al. (2020) emphasized the critical role of early warning systems in minimizing disaster-related mortality and losses. The findings further suggest that disaster management in Türkiye remains largely response-oriented, with disaster risk reduction and preparedness continuing to receive comparatively limited attention. From a social work perspective, these findings have important implications. In addition to providing psychosocial support during the response and

recovery phases, social workers have a vital role in promoting community-based disaster risk reduction, enhancing public awareness, strengthening community resilience, and supporting preparedness efforts before disasters occur.

Recent studies on disaster governance in Türkiye indicate a transition from a crisis-oriented approach toward an integrated and risk-based disaster management model. A study examining AFAD policy documents shows that risk reduction, preparedness, response, and recovery have increasingly been incorporated into the national disaster management framework, while also emphasizing the need to further strengthen preparedness and risk reduction efforts (Yıldırım & Saygın, 2024). Similarly, recent assessments of Türkiye's national policy framework indicate that the 2024–2028 AFAD Strategic Plan and the Twelfth Development Plan are broadly aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and prioritize risk reduction, community participation, preparedness, and multi-stakeholder governance (Aliyev et al., 2025). Nevertheless, research conducted following the 2023 Türkiye earthquakes has highlighted continuing challenges related to institutional coordination, role clarity, and the integration of civil society actors into disaster governance (Efe, 2026). These studies are consistent with the findings of the present study, which emphasize the importance of strengthening pre-disaster preparedness, interagency coordination, community participation, and locally responsive disaster risk reduction within Türkiye's disaster governance framework.

The recommendations emerging from this study further support a preventive and participatory approach to disaster management. Participants emphasized the need for climate-resilient infrastructure, comprehensive risk assessments, the incorporation of local environmental and social characteristics into disaster planning (Pentaris, 2026), and greater community participation in decision-making processes. These findings are consistent with the disaster governance literature, which identifies participation, the integration of local knowledge, and multi-stakeholder collaboration as fundamental principles for effective disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation (UNDRR, 2023). Given that the impacts of climate change vary across regions according to their environmental, social, and economic characteristics, disaster policies should be designed to address local needs and vulnerabilities through context-specific and inclusive approaches. Recent social work scholarship likewise emphasizes that effective disaster management extends beyond emergency response and requires sustained community engagement, empowerment, and interdisciplinary collaboration throughout the disaster management cycle. For example, a qualitative study conducted in Trinidad and Tobago demonstrated that social workers play a critical role in addressing structural inequalities, facilitating community participation, and supporting transformative disaster management practices (Boodram, 2025). Consistent with these findings, the present study suggests that integrating social work into participatory and locally responsive disaster governance could contribute to the development of more climate- and disaster-responsive disaster management policies and social work practices in Türkiye.

Finally, the findings suggest that the climate crisis should be understood not merely as an environmental issue but as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by the interconnections among social, economic, and ecological systems. This perspective is consistent with the person-in-environment approach, which constitutes one of the fundamental theoretical foundations of the social work profession. However, the findings indicate that social work practice in Türkiye remains largely confined to the provision of psychosocial support in the context of climate-related disasters, while environmental and ecological dimensions have yet to be systematically integrated into practice. Accordingly, social work interventions should move beyond post-disaster response to incorporate community-based approaches that prioritize disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation, community resilience, and climate

justice. Such an approach would not only mitigate the social consequences of climate-related disasters but also contribute to the development of more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient models of disaster management and social work practice.

5. Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the research was limited to two climate-related disaster settings in Antalya, Türkiye—Kumluca, which was affected by flooding, and Manavgat, which experienced wildfires. Therefore, the findings may not be transferable to other disaster contexts with different environmental, social, and institutional characteristics. Second, participation was voluntary, and disaster-affected community members were recruited through referrals from local residents who recommended individuals affected by the disasters. Consequently, not all groups affected by the disasters could be included in the study, which may have introduced selection bias. Finally, although the interviews were conducted one to two years after the disaster events, participants were able to recall and describe their experiences and the impacts of the disasters in considerable detail. Nevertheless, the possibility of recall bias cannot be entirely excluded.

6. Implications

The findings have important implications for disaster management policy and social work practice in Türkiye. Early warning systems should provide timely and accessible information tailored to local disaster risks, including floods and wildfires. These systems should be supported by community preparedness activities, with particular attention to vulnerable populations who may face barriers in accessing or responding to warnings.

Social workers should take a more active role in community-based disaster risk reduction by contributing to needs assessments, preparedness activities, and the identification of vulnerable groups. They can also facilitate community participation in disaster planning and strengthen communication between communities and relevant institutions.

Interagency coordination among public institutions, local governments, non-governmental organizations, universities, and local communities should be strengthened by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder.

7. Conclusion

This study aimed to examine climate-related disasters from a social work perspective by exploring the experiences of both disaster-affected local communities and professionals working in the field of disaster management through the cases of the 2021 wildfires in Manavgat and the 2022 floods in Kumluca, Antalya.

The findings demonstrate that climate-related disasters disproportionately affect socioeconomically disadvantaged populations. Participants emphasized that disasters resulted not only in substantial economic losses but also in long-term psychological consequences, while climate injustice emerged as a key factor shaping their disaster experiences. These findings suggest that the climate crisis reinforces existing social inequalities and that disaster policies should address not only physical damage but also the social vulnerabilities that exacerbate disaster impacts.

Another significant finding is that disaster management practices in Türkiye remain predominantly focused on post-disaster response. Inadequate early warning systems, limited risk assessments, and physical infrastructure that fails to consider local climatic conditions were identified as major structural factors that intensify the impacts of climate-related

disasters. In response to these challenges, participants emphasized the need to strengthen climate-resilient infrastructure, expand social and environmental risk assessments, integrate local characteristics into planning processes, and enhance community participation in disaster management. From a social work perspective, the findings indicate that disaster-related interventions remain largely confined to the provision of post-disaster psychosocial support. However, given the multidimensional impacts of the climate crisis, social workers should play a more active role not only in post-disaster recovery but also in disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness, climate change adaptation, the promotion of climate justice, and the strengthening of community resilience. In this regard, the green social work approach offers an important framework for integrating environmental and ecological dimensions into social work practice and for developing more holistic, inclusive, and sustainable interventions for climate-related disasters.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that social work should be recognized as a key profession not only in post-disaster response but also in disaster preparedness, risk reduction, and climate adaptation. Strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration among public institutions, local governments, non-governmental organizations, universities, and local communities, together with the development of climate-sensitive, participatory, and preventive policies, will contribute to reducing disaster risks and enhancing societal resilience to the climate crisis. Furthermore, this study contributes to the limited empirical literature in Türkiye by examining climate-related disasters through a social work perspective and highlights the importance of integrating disaster management, climate justice, and green social work in developing more comprehensive responses to the growing challenges posed by the climate crisis.

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