

EAP DRM | Project Highlights in FY21



Ebeye island at Kwajalein Atoll, Republic of Marshall Islands. Photo: kurakurakurarin

East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) is one of the world's most disaster-prone regions, bearing the impacts of nearly 70 percent of natural hazard events globally and affecting more than 1.6 billion people in the past 20 years.

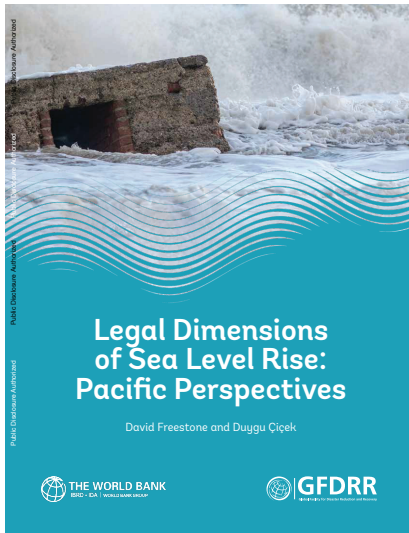
In fiscal year 2021, the World Bank approved 2 new disaster risk management (DRM) projects for the East Asia and Pacific region, adding \$730 million to the portfolio of 2 countries (China and the Philippines). In that same fiscal year, GFDRR provided a total of \$7 million in financing to address interventions within four priority areas: 1) risk-informed decision making, 2) reducing risk and mainstreaming DRM, 3) financial preparedness to manage disaster and climate shocks, and 4) disaster preparedness and resilient recovery.

Below are a few project highlights from World Bank and GFDRR DRM engagements in East Asia and the Pacific in FY21.

Building Resilience in Pacific Atoll Island Countries

A key objective of the Building Resilience in Pacific Atoll Island Countries study, which is supported by GFDRR, is to develop a knowledge base to strengthen the capacity of Pacific Atoll Countries to prepare for disasters and build resilience to long-term climate change impacts. The study is focusing on the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) though the findings are expected to inform resilience efforts by other Pacific atoll islands and development partners.

The first phase comprised a series of technical notes which identify challenges and opportunities when it comes to enhancing long-term resilience and habitability. The scoping of climate change impacts and possible innovative adaptation measures is explored in *A Technical Note on Underpinning Long-Term Adaptation Options*. Meanwhile, *A Technical Note on Land Tenure and Management* provides an analysis of existing legal, customary and policy frameworks that inform land management in the RMI. *A Technical Note on Human Settlement Patterns in Marshall Islands* explores where and how people live, what the patterns of migration reveal for future settlements, and possible considerations for urban planning and management to enable future resilient and habitable settlements.



Finally, a paper on the [Legal Dimensions of Sea Level Rise](#) reviews key legal and policy questions and implications for coastal states and small island developing states (SIDS) in particular.

Addressing Seismic Vulnerabilities in Metro Manila

On June 2, 2021 the World Bank Board approved the \$300 million [Philippines Seismic Risk Reduction and Resilience Project](#) which will enhance the safety and seismic resilience of selected public buildings in Metro Manila and strengthen the capacity of the country's Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) to prepare for and respond to emergencies.

The project will structurally upgrade approximately 425 buildings, including school buildings and health centers, to reduce damage from natural hazards such as earthquakes and other geophysical and climate-related events. This will reduce risk for approximately 300,000 teachers, students, doctors, patients, and staff who are users of these facilities. The project

will also improve the capability of the government to systematically prepare for and respond to potential compound emergencies, including typhoons, floods, volcanic eruptions, and pandemics, particularly in line with its mandate under the different national emergency response plans for multiple hazards. The project will finance essential equipment to upgrade its capability for communications and restoration of mobility and transport in Metro Manila after a major earthquake and improve core capacities and capabilities to organize operations and coordinate resources to respond to other emergencies.

This new project is the result of over 10 years of engagement, supported by GFDRR, which included partnership with the Government of the Philippines on policy reforms and technical assistance related to disaster risk management. Notably, technical assistance was mobilized for the revision of the National Building Code of the Philippines through the Second Disaster Risk Management Development Policy Loan (DPL) with a Catastrophe-Deferred Drawdown Option, in which provisions were integrated in the building regulatory framework to address the risk to existing buildings. In its implementation of an overarching program for the earthquake resilience of Metro Manila, the Philippine government received analytical and advisory support from the Bank.

Strengthening Coastal Resilience in Vietnam

Meanwhile, in Vietnam, the GFDRR-funded report [Resilient Shores - Vietnam's Coastal Development: Between Opportunity and Disaster Risk](#), published in October 2020, has helped catalyze Bank engagement

with the Government of Vietnam on an ambitious investment program to address systematic vulnerabilities along the country's coast. The report, prepared in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, received strong interest from the National Assembly during the Party Congress and was presented to the Central Economic Commission. The report raised awareness across high-level decision makers and helped build momentum towards what will likely translate into a nationwide risk reduction effort.

The report revealed that rapid urbanization and economic growth along the coast are substantially increasing the disaster risks in Vietnam. Further, the report provided in-depth analytics on the disaster risks and economic losses to each of the key economic sectors and public services, including urbanization, industry, agriculture, aquaculture, fishery, forestry, energy, transport, tourist, education and health care in each of the 28 coastal provinces. The Report highlights five key coastal resilience actions for the national government and provinces to take; these actions will be financed by the future Bank-financed investment program.

Building on the momentum generated by the Report, support from GFDRR is enabling the establishment of a coordination platform that includes government ministries, bilateral agencies and donors. The objective of this platform is to embed disaster risks into the core of development planning, moving from a sectoral to a spatial approach. The coordination group will also support improved management and sharing of data, which will improve planning and investment processes.