

GFDRR on Capacity Development

GFDRR's Capacity Development Program advances the analytical and professional skills of disaster risk management practitioners through a growing network of partnerships with training centers worldwide.

Why Capacity Development Matters

Sustainable progress in disaster risk management requires practitioners—including policymakers and disaster management agency officials—to have the knowledge and experience necessary to influence policies and spread good practices. Without sustainable capacity development in this area, initiatives aimed at reducing a country's vulnerability to natural hazards may result in short-term gains, but will not effectively change longer-term outcomes.

What We Do

GFDRR supports training and professional development programs over the course of several years in partner countries and with regional and global organizations.¹ GFDRR takes a long-term approach, providing technical assistance, mentoring, staff exchange programs between partner countries, and networking and knowledge sharing opportunities.

The program relies on a core curriculum offering:

- Standardized and accessible knowledge products and tools for training, workshops, and other learning initiatives;
- Diploma and degree programs, delivered through universities and other academic and technical partners; and
- Limited just-in-time training activities requested by development partners and governments.

Over **260**
capacity development and learning events
offered by GFDRR
since 2008.¹

More than
20,000
policymakers and technical experts
trained since GFDRR's inception.



Guatemala

GFDRR Project: Seismic Risk Reduction Knowledge and Capacity Building

Partners: Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) and the Guatemalan Association of Seismic Engineers (AGIES)

Description: Following the 2012 earthquake, EERI provided technical assistance to AGIES to assess the earthquake's impact and improve engineers' ability to do similar assessments in the future, while connecting the Guatemalan Association to a global network of earthquake experts.

GFDRR Project: Capacity Building for Disaster Resilient Leadership

Partners: Tulane University, Higher Education Alliance for Leadership Training in Health, Ghana's University of Health & Allied Sciences – School of Public Health, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Description: More than 80 disaster risk management practitioners and university faculty from the Health Alliance Network Universities in Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya as well as from other African universities in Ghana, Djibouti, Nigeria, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Togo, Somalia and Cameroon have participated in workshops on identifying weaknesses and opportunities to improve disaster risk management in the region. The program's graduates developed tailored action plans for taking leadership roles in improving disaster risk management in their countries.

GFDRR Support

- Directly Supported Training Program
- Partner Training Program
- GFDRR
- Capacity Development Engagement²

Where GFDRR Works

GFDRR works with a core network of training centers across the world, while supporting capacity development through other engagements in more than 100 countries.

How GFDRR Leverages Impact

GFDRR works with a core network of training centers and a range of development partners to leverage:

- Wide experience in effectively integrating the role of disaster risk management into development planning, including in water management, education, urban planning, and other important government sectors;



India
GFDRR Project: Capacity Building Program in Disaster Education
Partners: National Institute of Disaster Management, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, University College London, and the Middle East Technical University
Description: The engagement helped improve the capacity of India's National Institute of Disaster Management to provide training in disaster risk management. The Institute now offers online courses reaching more than 1,500 practitioners in India a year.

- Wealth and breadth of knowledge on disaster recovery and reconstruction;
- Ability to test, pilot, and scale up new risk management solutions; and
- Convening power and access to policymakers.

Snapshot: Leveraging in Practice

GFDRR's support for capacity development is leading to a growing network of partners and larger-scale gains, including:

- **Online Disaster Risk Management Training in Turkey.** Collaboration with Turkish universities has resulted in an online diploma program in disaster risk management under the umbrella of the Disaster Management Center of Ankara's Middle East Technical University. Since its start in 2008, more than 500 professionals have been certified as disaster risk management specialists.
- **Earthquakes and Megacities Initiative.** GFDRR's partnership with the Initiative, a technical non-profit organization based in the Philippines, has trained more than 1,400 practitioners, with a strong focus on reaching African disaster risk professionals and helping graduates attain leadership roles in their organizations.
- **Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Capacity Development.** Working with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Union (EU), GFDRR has continued to make the post-disaster needs assessment methodology an increasingly important tool for capacity development in vulnerable countries, such as the Philippines, which has conducted its own assessment to mobilize resources after disasters.

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 capacity development

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Highlights

Working with its partners, GFDRR has become one of the world's largest providers and supporters of training activities for disaster risk management professionals.³

- Participants of GFDRR-organized workshops and knowledge sharing events completed 6,700 training days in 2013, up from 1,500 in 2008.
- GFDRR-supported preparedness training has helped build considerable in-country capacity with over 2,000 experts in more than 20 high-risk countries now trained in post-disaster assessment methodology.
- Since 2008, policy forums and global dialogues supported by GFDRR have attracted nearly 8,000 high-level officials and opinion leaders, raising awareness and fostering learning between different country contexts and risk profiles.
- GFDRR has developed standardized resources, such as the Damage, Loss and Needs Assessment (DaLA) Guidance Notes, available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish. The consolidated training materials and self-paced online course are accessible via www.gfdr.org.
- GFDRR's Training of Trainers workshop in February 2012 in Vienna, Austria, educated regional partner organizations on the post-disaster needs assessment methodology, preparing their staff to train students in this skill set.

- India: Reaching Thousands through Online Training

India was one of the first countries in the world to launch its own online disaster risk management training program. Taking advantage of GFDRR's online curriculum materials and financial support, the National Institute of Disaster Management—India's leading institution for disaster risk management training and research—worked to create a unique online program. From the beginning, the Institute's management championed the e-learning program, making it an integral part of its teaching strategy. The Institute offers 15 courses per year and has tailored the content to India's institutional and disaster risk context. It has trained more than 5,000 practitioners since the launch of the first course in 2007 and will be expanding to neighboring countries in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

- Disaster Risk Leadership: Working with the Gates Foundation and Tulane University

Leadership skills for disaster risk management professionals are important for achieving results. Together with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Tulane University, GFDRR launched the Strengthening Leadership in Disaster Resilience Program. In Africa, more than 50 disaster risk management practitioners and over 30 university faculty members from the HEALTH Alliance



Strengthening Leadership in Disaster Resilience Program
Credit: Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy

Participants
have completed
61,533
training days through GFDRR
programs since 2008.

Network Universities in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda, as well as from other African universities in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, and Togo, have already participated in workshops on identifying weaknesses and opportunities to improve disaster risk management in the region. The program's graduates, called Resilience Fellows, have tailored action plans they are using to improve disaster risk management in their home countries. Building on that initiative's success in addition to another one in Haiti, the program is expanding to countries in the Middle East and North Africa and in South Asia.

- Understanding Risk: A Global Network for Local Actions

Understanding Risk is a GFDRR-supported global community of practice in the field of disaster risk analysis. Community members share knowledge and experience and discuss innovations and best practice, creating a unique capacity development opportunity for disaster risk management professionals. Today, the Understanding Risk community consists of 2,850 leading experts and practitioners from more than 135 countries. At the Understanding Risk Forum, which convenes every two years, practitioners have access to specialized technical training. In 2012, this included hands-on learning events with professionals working on the

seismic assessment tool Global Earthquake Model, the disaster risk information and decision tool Central American Probabilistic Risk Assessment, community mapping software OpenStreetMap, and the geographical data sharing platform GeoNode.

Lessons Learned

Management buy-in at partner organizations is key.

The head of India's National Institute of Disaster Management championed its e-learning partnership with GFDRR. The Institute took full ownership of the program, including day-to-day management and marketing. Without this level of leadership, it is unlikely this engagement would have reached its current level of success.

Ensure program sustainability through a viable business plan.

GFDRR's partnership with the Earthquakes and Megacities Initiative, which started in the Philippines and has expanded globally, has proven the sustainability of training programs built on sensible business plans. By accurately gauging supply and demand for disaster risk management education, the Initiative has ensured that expected student demand covers the program's operating expenses.

"The online [disaster risk management] program provided a much-needed learning platform for a large number of practitioners who were working in the area of disaster management, but never had access to formal training and education. ... It became a very well-recognized program in India, and almost everyone working in the area of disaster management in the country, [has] subscribed to one course or the other."

- Krishna Vatsa, Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor, South Asia, UNDP

Institutional assessments are important for designing customized capacity development programs.

Before starting the GFDRR Leadership Program, Tulane University conducted an institutional assessment that helped identify the strengths and weaknesses of potential partner universities. Based on this analysis, the program was able to customize content to fill existing gaps and begin to develop a longer-term leadership pipeline.

Tailor program content to participants’ backgrounds to make training relevant and accessible.

In Turkey, GFDRR technical assistance helped universities translate the content of GFDRR’s global online disaster risk management program into Turkish and create new content based on the country’s risk experience. For example, course modules on financial protection cover aspects of Turkey’s Catastrophe Insurance Pool, while modules on urban resilience detail efforts to make Istanbul more resilient to earthquakes.

- **Middle East and North Africa:** GFDRR is working with the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO) to offer e-learning courses and training to public officials throughout the Arab states. The joint project is expected to reach nearly 7,000 participants within three years and will also support the establishment of distance learning programs in francophone countries through the University of Djibouti.
- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** GFDRR is supporting the launch of an online program in the Comoros and curriculum development support in Nigerian universities.
- **Asia and the Pacific:** GFDRR will continue to expand its work with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community—Applied Geoscience and Technology Division.
- **GFDRR’s University Partner Network:** Working with its existing network of university partners, including Pavia University, University of the West Indies, University of Nigeria, and Istanbul Technical University, GFDRR will help make standardized courses on post-disaster needs assessments and the Recovery Framework methodology—an emerging approach to disaster recovery that helps better prioritize and manage the process—into graduate and post-graduate programs.

Looking Ahead

GFDRR’s capacity development strategy will allow the program to continue to build its network of partners.

Strategic Partners

GFDRR works with a wide variety of partners, including:



United Nations Development Programme



Tulane University



Earthquake Engineering Research Institute



International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis



International Recovery Platform

East Asia



Secretariat of the Pacific Community—Applied Geoscience and Technology Division



Earthquakes and Megacities Initiative



Korea’s National Emergency Management Agency



Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

Europe and Central Asia:



Middle East Technical University



Istanbul Technical University



Pavia University



Istanbul University



Marmara University



Gazi University



Karlsruhe Institute of Technology



Joint Vienna Institute



University College London

Latin America and Caribbean:



UNDP Barbados



Catholic University of Peru



University of West Indies



Organization of Eastern Caribbean States



Guatemalan Association of Seismic Engineers



Haiti's Directorate of Civil Protection

Middle East and North Africa:



Arab Administrative Development Organization



Regional Center for Disaster Risk Reduction in Egypt



Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport



University of Djibouti



National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)



South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation Disaster Management Center (SAARC Center)

Africa:



IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Center



University of Comoros



Higher Education Alliance for Leadership Training in Health (HEALTH) Alliance



University of Health & Allied Sciences, School of Public Health

NOTES

¹ GFDRR started offering training events and activities in 2008, while the formal program was launched in 2010.

² Denotes countries where GFDRR grant or team engagement has supported capacity development.

³ The figures in this section reflect the direct activities and achievements of the GFDRR Capacity Development Program and its partners.



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