

Africa Network of Centres of Excellence for Disaster Risk Reduction
Annual Forum
Programme Concept Note
July 22-23, 2024

Background

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), in partnership with regional partners, and with support from the Italian government, has established the Africa Network of Centres of Excellence for Disaster Risk Reduction (NoE) to bridge the gap between academia, scientist, research institutions and practitioners; and to provide a platform for enhanced engagement and collaboration between the science and technology community and regional, national, and sub-national government entities responsible for managing disaster risk across Africa.

The NoE was developed to take forward the 2021 Nairobi Declaration which calls for broad multi-stakeholder engagement, strengthened partnerships, and cooperation through enhancing regional, sub-regional and national coordination mechanisms, as well as North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation to support and advance the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) and the Africa Programme of Action for the SFDRR (PoA) across the continent.

The NoE was formally launched in March 2023 to enhance the collaboration between African research, academic, and science centres to promote knowledge development and innovation for the reduction of disaster risk. During the 2023 launch, stakeholders such as African Member States Institutions, WFP, UNOCHA, UN-Habitat, IFRC, Italy, European Commission, private sector, and other practitioners pledged support to the initiative and concluded with members emphasizing the need for the NoE to strengthen triangular cooperation among Member States, academia, and other research and science institutions. In 2024, its NoE project partners and members are accelerating the establishment and operationalization of the network by building collaborative and inclusive partnerships with public and science-based institutions across Africa, enhancing resident capacity on the application of disaster risk knowledge, and building capacities that informs decision-making and policy development of the public and private sector across Africa.

The NoE is a partnership and platform for members and institutions to collaboratively come together and develop, deliver, and share customized tools, services, products, and training for increased implementation of the SFDRR in Africa; all guided by user needs in Africa. Specific objectives of the NoE are:

- a) Improving knowledge and Access to Risk Information for EW/EA;
- b) Enhancing the capacity of institutions and stakeholders in target countries.;

In October 2023, the NoE actively participated in The Arab-Africa Science, Technology, Policy & Private Sector Nexus for Disaster Risk Reduction Conference and the development of the Tunis “Call for Action” on Science and Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Arab States and in Africa. The Call for Action, calls for the scientific and technology community, alongside private and public stakeholders, to accelerate action towards strengthening regional and transboundary cooperation for risk knowledge sharing and capacity building; enhancing national, regional, and inter-regional collaboration on disaster risk information and science; and enhancing cross-sectoral collaboration, research, and innovation forums to promote data sharing, the exchange of best practices, and technological innovation and expertise to effectively manage disaster risks.

In support of the Tunis “Call for Action”, the NoE Forum aims to annually bring together policy makers, technicians, practitioners and scientific centres of excellence from across Africa, to accelerate implementation of the SFDRR and PoA by strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing generation and application of disaster-risk information and science, and promoting innovation, technology, and exchange on

science-based and data driven DRR. By bringing together these key figures, the NoE Forum aims to turn the goals of the Tunis Call for Action into concrete actions. This annual gathering fosters knowledge exchange, collaboration, and innovation – all essential elements for building disaster resilience across Africa.

The NoE Annual Forum:

In order to achieve the above, and to accelerate implementation of the SFDRR and PoA, the NoE members must endorse and corroborate the establishment of a coordination and management framework of the Africa Network of Centres of Excellence for DRR.

Furthermore, the NoE must establish an annual platform to foster dialogue, strengthen communication between policymakers, scientists, and practitioners across Africa; and pinpoint critical areas where further research, resource allocation, and/or policy changes are needed to address disaster risk in Africa.

The Annual Meeting will be used to foster collaboration and technical exchange amongst DRR centres in Africa providing their resources, assets and expertise to various related activities, visions, and goals. During the NoE Forum, stakeholders and members will establish the priorities of the Network Working Groups (WG) and develop regional action plans outlining concrete steps towards the application of risk knowledge for DRR and DRM. The forum is also meant to create awareness on the expertise, research, and various ongoing initiatives of NoE institutions, in the area of DRR and DRM, to bridge the gap between science and policy. The Network aims to facilitate collaborative partnerships beyond that of the meeting.

The outcome of the forum will be an annual report (or documentation) summarizing best practices, knowledge gaps and research needs identified in the discussions. Outcomes and discussions of the Annual Forum should inform Science and Technology Commitments at the 9th Africa Regional Platform for DRR.

The NoE First Annual Forum Objective:

The forum is aimed at achieving the following:

- Definition of the governance approach, structure, and management of the NoE Secretariat.
- Appointments of the Working Group Chairs
- Development of key priorities and action plans for the NWGs
- An outcome document outlining the priorities for the NoE Roadmap
- Improve communication, foster dialogue, and strengthening collaboration between policymakers, development partners, scientist, and practitioners from across Africa through the exchange of knowledge, expertise, best practices, and lessons learned exchanges on the application of risk knowledge for DRR and DRM

Expected Participants

- Experts and professionals engaged in Disaster Risk Management, Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP), and Early Recovery and Reconstruction efforts.
- Experts from national, regional and international institutions and organizations are responsible for providing space-based technologies and solutions for DRR and DRM, e.g., including experts from UN-SPIDER and its Network of Africa Regional Support Offices.
- Experts from regional and international organizations are active in risk knowledge generation, disaster risk management, including disaster preparedness and early warning systems in Africa.
- Experts part of similar Networks of Excellence in Africa (Ex. STI Green Transition DG-INTPA);
- Experts from universities and research Centers are engaged in DRR, Climate Change, Disaster -Risk Management, Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP), and Early Recovery and Reconstruction, and space technology efforts.

Proposed Agenda:

A more detailed agenda will be shared closer to the event.

Africa Network of Centres of Excellence for DRR		
22 - 23 July 2024		
Location: RCMRD, Building Complex		
Time	Day 1 Monday 22nd July, 2024	Day 2 Monday 23rd July, 2024
08:00-09:00	Registration	
09:00 – 09:30	Welcome	Recap of Day 1
09:30 – 10:30	Plenary 1	NoE Plenary 4
10:30 – 11:00	Tea Break	
11:00 – 13:00	NoE Plenary 2 & Parallel Sessions	Parallel Sessions
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 – 16:00	Parallel Sessions	NoE Plenary 5
16:00 - 17:00	NoE Plenary 3 - Reporting Back	Closing