

The Disaster and Development Centre (DDC) aims to reduce the impact of disasters and increase sustainable wellbeing. DDC focuses on issues that involve disaster management and sustainable development through research, teaching and learning internationally, regionally and locally. DDC addresses human resilience and security, complex emergencies and hazards in an inter-disciplinary manner guided by the needs of civil society. It is a response to demand for an improved interpretation under varied cultural and disciplinary contexts of the role of disasters in development and of development in disasters.

Main DDC themes

i. Disaster resilience and sustainable livelihoods

This contributes knowledge towards the development of the disaster resilience approach by investigating how resilience is enhanced, sustained and lost amongst different local populations. This includes analysis of advocacy and rights, risk reduction, livelihood security, relief and reconstruction in conflict and post-conflict regions of Africa and Asia.

ii. Health security and infectious disease risk management

This addresses a goal of poverty and disaster risk reduction through health security. By health security we understand people's resilience to physical and mental stresses or shocks, reduction of poverty and ill-health and presence of basic rights. An aspect of this has been the Infectious Disease Risk Management (IDRM) programme which promotes health through integrated infectious disease risk reduction in disaster and development contexts.

iii. Social care in disaster and development

This promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships, and empowerment of people at risk to enhance social care intervention and wellbeing in disaster and development. This is in part congruent with social work as a profession which strives to alleviate poverty and to liberate vulnerable and oppressed people in order to promote social inclusion. It is based on working with practitioners in this field in multiple countries enhancing coping skills for when crises and emergencies occur.



iv. Community mental health and wellbeing

This involves the development of community mental health care and wellbeing with an emphasis on the whole person and multiple socio-cultural, physical and economic environments. An aspect of this has been trauma risk reduction activities which develop understanding and methods from empirical working of this approach in disaster and development situations around the world.

v. Integrated emergency management and security

This seeks to stimulate exchange and support for emergency planners in terms of cross sector policy and practice, bridging global disaster and development awareness with local emergency preparedness and response regimes. This includes knowledge for development of civil contingencies and community involvement in risk reduction, based on the experience of emergency management in different parts of the world.

vi. Migration and displacement

This is in response to demand from practitioners, policy makers and the displaced themselves for knowledge, guidance and capacity support in dealing with migration and displacement in disaster and development contexts. It includes

addressing the theoretical and applied issues of integration and representation applied to refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, and those displaced without locating from one place to the other.

vii. Gender and disaster

This is centred on a growing awareness of the significance of gender issues in disaster risk reduction and response in recent years, including recognition of gendered impacts of disasters and the need for gendered approaches to interventions, including in a developed world context. DDC is centrally involved in a global initiative to mainstream gender in disaster risk reduction and is the home of the first ever gender and disaster web presence.

Focus: The centre prioritises integration of disaster reduction and sustainable development in its activities, which may include one or more of the above themes. Examples of cross-cutting issues in disaster and development include risk assessment and management, rights, representation, governance, security, prevention, early warning, communication, and community based approaches. The work of DDC is carried out in conjunction with civil societal groups, NGOs, government departments, the United Nations and other international organisations.