

UNITAR Women's Leadership in Tsunami-based Disaster Risk Reduction for World Tsunami Awareness Day 2025



Programme

Summary

“UNITAR Women’s Leadership in Disaster Risk Reduction Training Programme for World Tsunami Awareness Day 2025” seeks to equip participants – especially women – from living in or from Pacific Island countries and territories or Asia with lifelong skills in disaster risk reduction and inclusive leadership through interactive learning in an online space.

This programme is made possible with the generous financial support of the Government and the People of Japan.

Who is it for?

This programme is for 100 women living in or from Pacific Island countries and territories and Asia. People of other genders and from around the world are also welcome to participate, with the understanding that the material is contextualized towards the Pacific Islands and Asia.

When is it?

The programme will run from September 2025 to March 2026 in two phases: Phase I online learning (September to November 2025) and Phase II specialized training with experts (March 2026, for top participants only)

How do I apply?

Participants will be selected through an open call for applications and must meet the following criteria:

- Adult (18 years old and over)
- Interest in disaster risk reduction
- Strong desire to make a difference in their society
- Access to stable internet connectivity
- Good command of the English language (oral and written)
- A commitment of 1-3 hours per week to complete each section of this 10-week course

Women will receive priority. Geographical representation of the Pacific and Asia regions will also be considered.

Deadline for applications: 3 September 2025 (11:59 p.m. JST [UTC+9])

(See page on How to Apply for more details.)

Programme

Context

The Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in March 2011, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2009 Samoa-Tonga Earthquake tsunamis, and the 2022 Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption highlight the destructive and devastating impact of natural hazards. The Pacific Islands and Asia region, situated along the Pacific Rim of Fire, are constantly under threat of earthquakes and tsunamis.

Those who are socially vulnerable – often including women, older persons, children and youth, people with disabilities, Indigenous people, refugees and migrants – face heightened risks during emergencies due to systemic inequities and limited access to essential resources, information, technology and services. In addition to being at a disadvantage themselves, women often assume primary caregiving roles and responsibilities in many societies. Thus, integrating women into disaster risk planning and decision-making processes is vital to effectively educate and support not only women but others who are socially vulnerable in emergency events.

As the frequency of geological and hydrometeorological disasters continues to rise, sharing disaster experiences and lessons can help communities and countries plan effective disaster risk mitigation measures.

Focus

Areas

The programme seeks to help participants build their knowledge of disaster risk reduction. Through e-learning, live webinars and assignments, participants will learn about the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Sustainable Development Goals, gender-responsive disaster risk reduction, multi-stakeholder coalition in disaster risk reduction, community-based disaster risk reduction and climate change. Participants will also be exposed throughout the programme to Japan's experiences with major disasters and its reconstruction efforts, as well as experiences drawn from the Pacific and Asia region.

By the end of the programme, participants will be able to:

- Develop an inclusive country disaster risk reduction plan
- Describe the key principles of disaster risk reduction, with a focus on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
- Discuss the international and regional framework on disaster risk reduction
- Describe ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction
- Develop an understanding of the links between climate and disaster risks
- Describe climate-resilient and peace-oriented leadership
- Outline community-based disaster risk reduction and what it means for an all-of-society approach
- Explain key lessons from Japan's experience with disasters including the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami
- Illustrate the importance of gender-inclusive leadership in the context of disaster risk reduction

- Describe good practices in gender-inclusive disaster risk reduction in the Asia, Pacific and Japan
- Report on and discuss norms and challenges regarding gender-inclusive disaster risk reduction in the Pacific, Asia and Japan
- Describe key elements of the multi-hazard-approach, including biological hazards
- Describe multi-stakeholder coalition
- Describe important characteristics necessary for leadership and management
- Develop a technical understanding of hazards and assessment tools
- Demonstrate effective communication skills in DRR and for the media
- Discuss the needs of vulnerable groups
- Develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for nature-based solutions, Indigenous and traditional knowledge, and local resilience
- Understand other risks, including stress and mental health

Phase I Online Learning

Phase I of the programme consists of three sections and a final presentation.

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Section 1: Introduction to Disaster Risk Reduction and Japan's Experiences

Participants will learn about the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, the 2018 heavy floods in Western Japan, and the importance of having a solid disaster risk reduction plan. They will learn the basics of the Sendai Framework, Sustainable Development Goals, and the disaster risk reduction initiatives of Sendai City and witness the difference in outcomes between having and not having a disaster risk reduction plan.

- Introductory webinar
- On-demand online modules delivered through EdApp
- Online questions and discussions
- First webinar by international experts on gender and disaster risk reduction, and Japan's experiences in disaster risk reduction

Section 2: Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction in the Pacific and Asia

This section will be divided into Asia and Pacific focused materials. The participants will learn about linkages between climate change and disaster risk reduction. They will explore international frameworks on disaster risk reduction in the context of the region. In addition, they will learn about multiple hazards including the COVID-19 pandemic and necessary responses. Participants will review case studies from Japan, the Pacific, and Asia, including interviews of Pacific women, to contextualize the concepts of disaster risk reduction and climate change in their environment.

- On-demand online modules delivered through EdApp
- Online questions and discussions
- Second webinar by international experts in disaster risk management, resilience and adaptation from Asia and the Pacific.

Section 3: Women's Leadership and an All-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Approach

Participants will learn the values of gender equality and the importance of women's leadership in disaster risk reduction. Participants will appreciate why women's empowerment is necessary for reducing disaster risk and how women's leadership can contribute to more inclusive and equitable planning. They will look at disaster risk reduction through a gender-sensitive lens and develop essential leadership skills so they can take initiative and lead in disaster risk reduction planning. Participants will submit an individual disaster risk reduction plan at the end of this section.

- On-demand online modules delivered through EdApp
- Online questions and discussions
- Third webinar by international experts in gender and women's empowerment in the context of disaster risk reduction

Section 4: Future Disasters and Leaving No One Behind

Each participant will learn the importance concepts to consider in the future, Inclusivity, Community-based Disaster Risk Reduction, the concept of Build Back Better, and the Roll of Artificial Intelligence can play in disaster risk reduction.

- On-demand online modules delivered through EdApp
- Online questions and discussions
- Final webinar by international experts in gender and women's empowerment in the context of disaster risk reduction

Phase I Final Assignment

Each participant will submit a disaster risk reduction plan for a sector of their choice, incorporating the knowledge they gained in the programme. Selected participants who demonstrated high performance and apply will proceed to the second phase of the programme.

Phase II Specialized Training with Experts

Phase II will be a specialized online training with experts, for the top performers from Phase I.

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Phase II Workshop

Selected participants will join an online training to expose them to leadership and management in disaster response. Phase II will focus on the post-disaster and recovery and will include lectures and interactions with experts in disaster risk management.

- Online training with DRM and other professionals.
- Interact with and learn from leading women in the field
- Go in-depth on specialized areas



2025 Programme Activities & Schedule

	August	September	October	November	...	March 2026
Call for Applications for Phase I	Deadline: 3 Sep	Introductory Webinar				
Section 1		Webinar 1				
Section 2			Webinar 2			
Section 3			Webinar 3			
Section 4				Final Webinar		
Final Assignment				Assignment		
Applications for Phase II				Deadline: 23 Nov	Selection	
Online Workshop						2-13 March 2026

Methodology & Delivery

The training will be conducted online using the EdApp microlearning platform, other online tools and modern technologies, such as virtual reality (VR).

Final Assignment

As a prerequisite for completion of the programme, participants will develop an inclusive disaster risk reduction plan in a sector or level of their choice.

Certificate of Completion

All participants who complete the following requirements of Phases I and II are entitled to receive a UNITAR certificate of completion.

Phase I

- Completion of EdApp online courses
- Contribution to weekly discussion and raising questions
- Complete the assignment and final individual assignment
- Completion of final programme evaluation

Phase II

- Successfully complete and participate in the training workshop(s)
- Completion of evaluation and feedback on Phase II

Further details will be provided to participants at the orientation webinar.

Strategic Alignment

The programme supports “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” Specifically, it targets the following [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs):



Goal 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

- 4.5 - By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations



Goal 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- 5.5 - Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life



Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

- 11.5 - By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations
- 11.b - By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels



Goal 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

- 13.1 - Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and disasters in all countries
- 13.3 - Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning
- 13.b - Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities



Goal 16 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

- 16.7 - Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

How to Apply

- 01 Go to
<https://forms.gle/7KKYSNYVmKyWZPrL6>
- 02 Fill and submit the application form
- 03 Contact us if you have any questions or concerns

Application Deadline:
3 September 2025 (Wed)
(11:59 p.m. JST [UTC+9])

Questions?

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About UNITAR

UNITAR was established in 1963 in Geneva as a training arm of the United Nations system with the mandate to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations through diplomatic training and to increase the impact of national action through public awareness-raising, education and training of public officials and local leaders.

Today, UNITAR designs and conducts some 500 different training activities per year for more than 80,000 participants, including diplomats and other government officials, non-governmental representatives and local authorities from around the world.

The Institute has extensive institutional expertise in developing and delivering training on entrepreneurship and leadership. In addition, through the Division for Prosperity and its Hiroshima Office, UNITAR has for many years implemented training in sustainable development and peace for conflict and post-conflict countries, including Afghanistan, Iraq, South Sudan and Syria and has a unique understanding of the needs of participants as they work towards peace and stability.

With its specialization in adult learning and instructional design, UNITAR is all too aware of the shortcomings and challenges of traditional in-person training – such as short training time frames and lack of follow-up and sustained engagement. Acknowledging this, UNITAR incorporates blended approaches, participant-led projects and country-specific facilitated methodology, and makes use of local resources and experts, to enhance both the impact and sustainability of its programmes.

500 trainings

500 different trainings are conducted worldwide each year.

60+ years experience

Established in 1963, UNITAR has more than 60 years of experience in training.

89,000 trained

More than 89,000 participants have taken part in UNITAR training and learning.

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