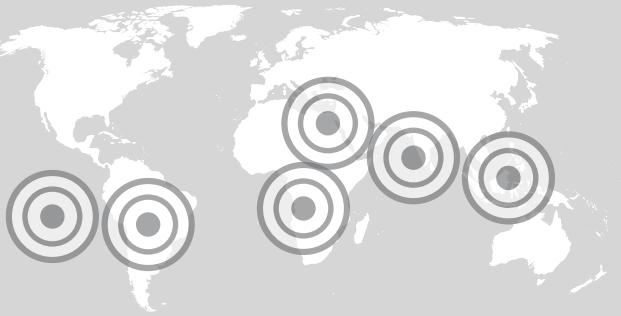


# Program Profiles

*A series highlighting key  
GFDRR-supported initiatives*

## Building Regulation for Resilience

**REGION:** GLOBAL  
**FOCUS:** RISK REDUCTION



### **PARTNERS:**

The Building Regulation for Resilience program is a global partnership that builds on in-depth consultations with key partners, including the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), UN-Habitat, and UNESCO, along with other prominent partners like the International Code Council, the US National Fire Protection Association, academic institutions, think tanks, and the private sector.

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:**

In the last decade, low- and middle-income countries have accounted for 93% of disaster-related fatalities, despite having experienced only 53% of disasters globally. This disproportionate impact stems in large part from unsafe and unregulated urban development. In high-income countries, building codes and regulatory frameworks have been incrementally improved in response to a combination of hazard impacts, structural failures and public health disasters. In low- and middle-income countries, however, regulatory systems have not developed in the same way (if at all) and do not afford the same protection.

The Building Regulation for Resilience program, an integral part of the World Bank's broader Resilient Cities agenda, seeks to develop a new stream of activities to increase regulatory capacity and in turn promote a healthier, safer, and less risky built environment in low- and middle-income countries. By leveraging good practice in building regulation as part of a strategy to reduce both chronic risk and disaster risk, it will set developing countries on the path to effective reform and long-term resilience.

## BACKGROUND:

Nearly 1.4 million people are moving into urban areas every week. By 2050, the percentage of people living in cities is expected to rise to 66 percent, with much of this growth concentrated in Africa and Asia. Nearly one billion new dwelling units will be built to support these growing populations.

Building regulation and land use planning are essential to urban development and determine how resilient buildings are to natural disasters and chronic risks, such as fires and spontaneous collapses. Disasters are increasing both in frequency and intensity and climate change is threatening to exacerbate losses even further. Annual losses in the built environment are expected to rise from roughly \$300 billion to \$415 billion by 2030 and 100 million people may be pushed into poverty.

Today, there is a window of opportunity to address underlying risks affecting the built environment. The implementation of adequate building regulatory frameworks has proven to be the most effective way to improve health and safety and reduce disaster risk.

## APPROACH:

Improved building codes can make a significant difference in the rate of building collapses in fast-changing environments. Japan, for example, has revised and enacted numerous laws over the past century to improve seismic codes and responses to new developments impacting building regulation and safety. This resulted in reduced risk and losses. When the 1995 Kobe earthquake struck, 97% of the buildings that collapsed were built under old building codes, while only 3% complied with the most updated codes.

Similarly, with a specific focus on vulnerable settlements in low- and middle-income countries, the Building Regulation for Resilience program aims to develop the larger regulatory "ecology" of institutions that support effective building code implementation.

The program seeks to achieve this through four main components:

1. National level legislation and institutions
2. Building code development and maintenance
3. Local implementation
4. Knowledge sharing and measurement

The program is a global partnership of governments, international development institutions, and key public, private and non-governmental actors in the building sector.



## FUTURE GOALS:

Consistent with Priorities 2 and 3 of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030), which aim to better understand disaster risks and strengthen governance to manage them, the program will respond to and reinforce the growing international consensus on the importance of building and land use regulation. The program will also form an integral part of the World Bank's broader agenda for resilient cities. The primary priorities of the program are (i) to stop the expansion of disaster and chronic risk in the siting and construction of new settlements and (ii) to reduce disaster risk in vulnerable existing settlements. At the country or city level, this will be achieved by focusing on governance reform, strengthening national and local capacity, and creating building standards appropriate to the poor and vulnerable. At the international level, the initiative will support new partnerships and knowledge resources critical to creating a global impact. The program is testing this approach through three pilot projects in Africa and Asia.

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