



G20

SOUTH AFRICA 2025



Solidarity

Equality

Sustainability

**G20 DISASTER RISK REDUCTION WORKING GROUP
NEWSLETTER - 1st Edition (October 2025)**

Advancing Global Disaster Resilience

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Under the overarching theme of “Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability,” South Africa has proudly led the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group through a series of impactful meetings aimed at accelerating collective action on disaster resilience and climate adaptation. These gatherings marked significant progress toward embedding Disaster Risk Reduction into global development and financial frameworks.



Dr Bongani Elias Sithole
Chairperson, G20 Disaster Risk Reduction
Working Group 2025

Editorial Comment by the Chairperson of the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group

As Chair of the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group in 2025, I am pleased to reflect on the continued progress our members have made in advancing global cooperation for a safer, more resilient world. Over the course of this year, we have deepened dialogue, strengthened partnerships, and reaffirmed our collective commitment to integrating Disaster Risk Reduction across all sectors of sustainable development.

Our deliberations and technical engagements have demonstrated that Disaster Risk Reduction is not only a humanitarian imperative but also a driver of economic stability, climate resilience, and social equity. Through the implementation of the Voluntary High-Level Principles for Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction, we are beginning to see tangible actions that translate political commitment into practical outcomes — from enhancing Early Warning Systems to scaling up risk-informed investments.

The meetings held in 2025 have underscored the importance of solidarity and shared responsibility. We have seen convergence around the need for inclusive risk governance, Anticipatory Action, and stronger linkages between public and private sectors. These areas of consensus provide a solid foundation for the continued work of the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group under future Presidencies.

As we look ahead, let us remain guided by our shared vision to ensure that no one is left behind in the face of disaster risks. The G20's collective strength lies in its ability to catalyse global action, inspire innovation, and promote resilience that benefits all communities.

I extend my appreciation to all G20 Members, Invited Countries, International Organisations, and Knowledge Partners for their unwavering collaboration and commitment to this vital Agenda.

I would not be doing justice if I do not extend my gratitude to the Organising Committee and the UNDRR that worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group meetings in 2025.

"Together, we are not just managing risks — we are shaping a safer future."



1st Meeting: Video-Conferencing 5 March 2025

The first meeting focused on presenting the Priorities of the G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group (DRR WG) under South Africa's Presidency with an Overarching Focus on Solidarity and Global Cooperation.

G20 Members, Invited Countries and International Organisations were given an overview of the six Priorities of the G20 DRR WG: –

- (i) Priority 1: Addressing Inequalities and Reducing Vulnerabilities,
- (ii) Priority 2: Global Coverage of Early Warning Systems (EWS),
- (iii) Priority 3: Disaster Resilient Infrastructure,
- (iv) Priority 4: Financing for DRR,
- (v) Priority 5: Disaster Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, and
- (vi) Priority 6: Ecosystems-based Approaches (EbA) for DRR and Nature based Solutions (NbS).





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2nd Meeting: Durban 8–11 April 2025

The second G20 DRR WG meeting under South Africa's G20 Presidency took place from 10 to 11 April 2025, at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre, in Durban, within eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Province.

The Executive Mayor and Deputy Mayor of eThekweni during the Opening Session of the meeting were on board to welcome Delegates to the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality and also delivered remarks that highlighted the importance of the work of the DRR WG.

The Mayor, Cllr Cyril Xaba, underscored the importance of a united global response to shared challenges brought about by disasters. He reminded the meeting participants that they were gathered in a Province that had witnessed its fair share of disasters but had equally spared no efforts in improving its disaster preparedness and response plans. The Executive Mayor spoke of the need to 'Build-Back-Better' to minimise the impact of disasters.

This meeting was preceded by two Side Events on 8 April 2025, one on Advancing EW in Africa, which is aligned to Priority 2 of the G20 DRR WG: Global Coverage of EWS, and another on Addressing the Multidimensional Risk Posed by Extreme Heat. The Item on Extreme Heat was as a result of discussions from Belem, Brazil whereby South Africa was requested to take this issue forward in 2025.

On 9 April 2025, Delegates undertook Site Visits to several sites where disaster response efforts in the Province of KZN were showcased. This exercise was to provide the Delegates with practical approaches of what South Africa has done following the 2022 floods that impacted not only the livelihoods but, among others, also the destruction to infrastructure within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality.





G20 DRR WG Ministerial Side Event: Geneva

5 June 2025

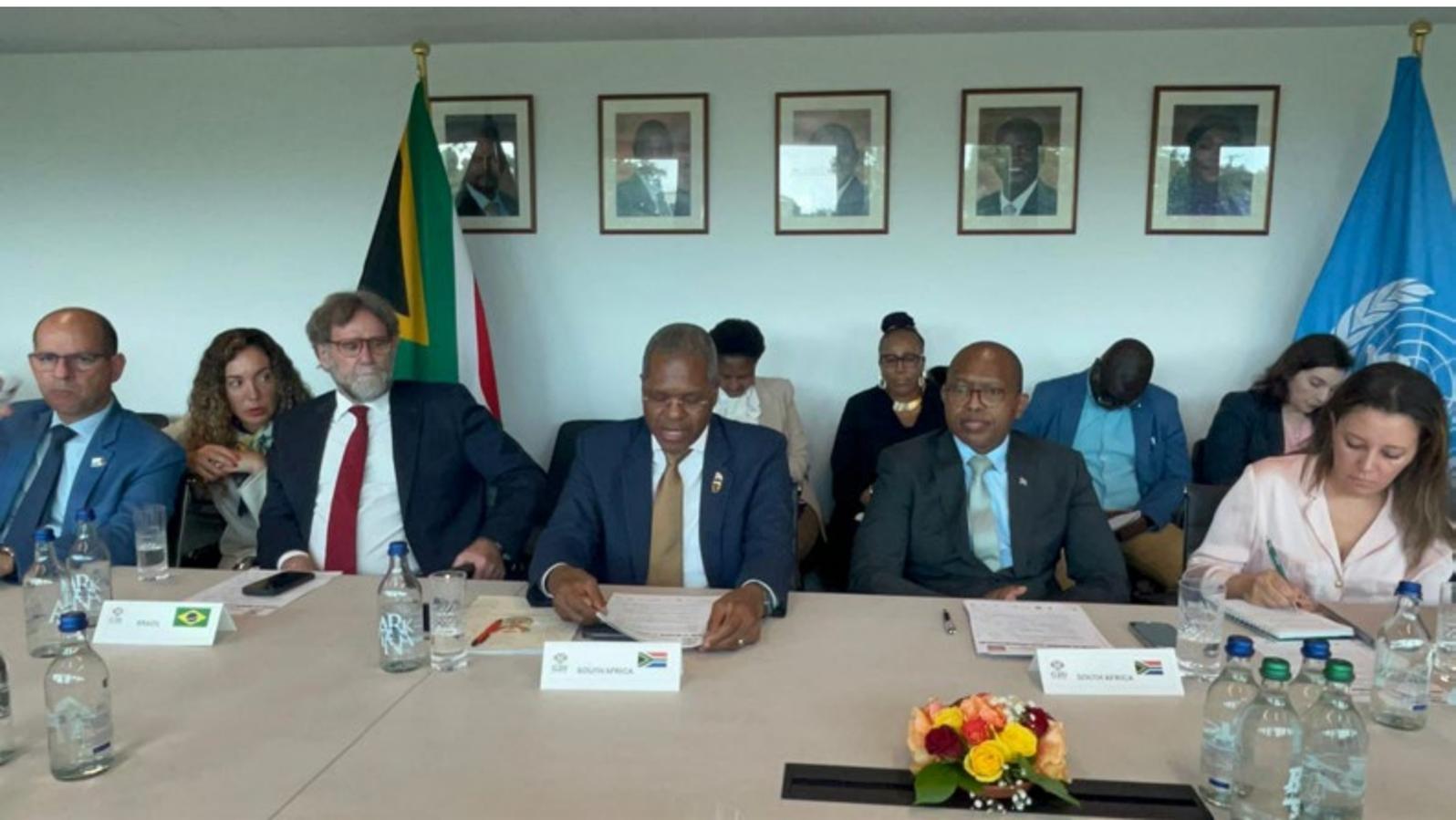
Hosted on the margins of the 2025 Global Platform for DRR, this high-level Round Table convened G20 Members, Invited Countries, and key stakeholders to reflect on progress under South Africa's G20 Presidency and mobilise momentum toward the G20 Ministerial Meeting on DRR in October.

In his opening remarks, Minister Velenkosini Hlabisa reaffirmed South Africa's commitment to a people-centred, inclusive, and action-oriented approach to DRR, aligned with the Presidency's theme of "Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability."

Minister Hlabisa's closing remarks captured the collective sentiment of the session:

"This gathering has reaffirmed our shared understanding that Disaster Risk Reduction is not only a humanitarian imperative but a foundational pillar of sustainable development, resilience, and inclusive growth. Our deliberations today have shown that, while risks are growing in scale and complexity, our collective capacity to address them can—and must—grow stronger."

The event reinforced the importance of international solidarity and sustained political commitment to ensure DRR remains a strategic global priority under the G20 Agenda.





G20 DRR WG Ministerial Outreach: Kliptown, Soweto 28 June 2025

The Ministerial Outreach Programme in Kliptown aimed at promoting DRR in historically marginalised communities. The Outreach Programme managed to put emphasis on:

- South Africa's Commitment to Localised DRR: the G20 DRR WG Outreach Programme brought global priorities to where people face the greatest risk, particularly in high-risk urban areas like Kliptown.
- Winter Preparedness: Messages of emphasis were on preparation for the winter's peak, to step up efforts to prevent fires, improve response times thus ensuring that the most vulnerable are not left behind.
- Intergovernmental Coordination: The various role players within the Provincial and Municipal spheres, reinforced that DRR is a shared responsibility across all spheres.
- Community Voice and Inclusion: Listening to residents enhanced co-creation of solutions that are socially, environmentally, and economically inclusive. The Outreach Programme created an opportunity to stand with communities and demonstrate that DRR starts at the doorstep of the most at-risk.





3rd Meeting: Johannesburg 8–10 July 2025

The third meeting of the G20 DRR WG in 2025 aimed to:

- Implement EbA and integrate NbS into Resilience and Recovery Plans.
- Develop Infrastructure Resilience Strategies to withstand disasters.
- Advance Recovery Planning and Investment Principles through the Recovery Readiness Assessment Framework.
- Foster Integrated DRR Financing Strategies.
- Use the City of Johannesburg case study and Site Visits for knowledge exchange.
- Lay the groundwork for October Ministerial meetings by refining South Africa's DRR WG Deliverables.

This was marked with hands-on Site Visit which marked the symbolic installation of smoke alarm detectors in Kliptown, Soweto. This practical exercise followed the G20 DRR WG Ministerial Outreach Programme whereby the Winter Fire risks were deemed eminent in this community.

It is in this context that the event demonstrated commitment towards reducing vulnerability as aligned to Priority 1 of South Africa's Issue Note whereby Delegates had a first hand-practical approach to observe South Africa's DRR initiatives. This Site Visit further highlighted locally driven initiatives not only designed to reduce vulnerability but to also enhance community preparedness.





G20 DRR WG Ministerial Outreach: Green Point Urban Park and Atlantic Coast

22 September 2025

On 22 September 2025, the G20 DRR WG held a Ministerial Outreach in Cape Town at Green Point Urban Park and the adjacent Atlantic coastline. The event was held under the theme, 'Coastal Protection and Eco-Based DRR.' Led by Minister Velenkosini Hlabisa and hosted by the national Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), the Outreach used Green Point Urban Park and the nearby coastline as live case studies to demonstrate NbS and EbA to coastal resilience. The event aimed to surface practical lessons, showcase local projects and feed policy recommendations into the G20 DRR WG processes.

The event showcased not only Cape Town's NbS and coastal protection measures through EbA, but also highlighted community partnerships, and promoted recommendations for the G20 DRR WG Ministerial Declaration. By linking local experiences with global policy dialogue, the Outreach Programme demonstrated that safeguarding nature is not only an environmental necessity but also a cornerstone of disaster resilience and sustainable development.



Raising the profile for local Programmes, the Outreach further showcased that the City of

Cape Town and Provincial Projects are potential alignments to a global policy audience, increasing prospects for partnerships and technical assistance.

Key Quote:

“We are building a global safety net for the planet's most vulnerable.”—
Chairperson of the G20 DRR WG,
South Africa”

