



# Disaster risk: Towards equitable resilience in Southern Africa





### Working Group Focus:

- Critically examining the concept of resilience, addressing its oversight of differential vulnerability and issues related to social justice, equity, and inclusion.
- Bridging the gap in research on equitable resilience by exploring its conceptualization within the context of Southern Africa (SADC).

The Disaster Risk working group explored the concept of equitable resilience in Southern Africa, addressing the differential vulnerabilities and capacities within societies. Through mixed-methods research and community engagement, they provided insights into achieving equitable resilience, highlighting the importance of methodologies like Photovoice in capturing diverse perspectives and advocating for positive change. Their work emphasized the need for inclusive and community-focused approaches to resilience, offering practical recommendations for promoting equity and well-being in disaster-prone regions.

#### **Engagement Process:**

- Mixed-Methods Pilot Study: Conducted an advanced mixed-methods pilot study using group concept mapping to explore perceptions of equitable resilience in Southern Africa.
- **Photovoice Methodology:** Incorporated the Photovoice methodology into the postgraduate psychology programme at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. This engaged students in documenting and advocating for resilience within their communities.
- **Community and Student Engagement:** Empowered students to explore resilience from diverse perspectives, fostering engagement within their communities and enabling them to identify and document defining elements of resilience.
- **Strategic Dissemination:** Shared findings through research briefs and applications of methodologies, providing practical insights and recommendations for promoting equitable resilience.

## What is Group Concept Mapping?

GCM is a participatory research method that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to capture a group's collective ideas on a topic.

#### **Steps of Group Concept Mapping:**



#### **Brainstorming:**

Participants generate statements related to a

#### Why is GCM Important?

GCM provides a structured yet flexible approach to understanding and organizing complex, multifaceted concepts by integrating the perspectives of diverse stakeholders. The participatory method is significant for several reasons:



- Community-Focused **Methodologies:** Highlighted the effectiveness of methodologies like Photovoice in engaging communities and capturing diverse perspectives on resilience.
- **Barriers and Strategies:** Identified barriers to achieving equitable resilience, such as socio-economic inequalities and lack of community resources, and the strategies employed by communities to overcome these challenges.
- **Empowering Change:** Demonstrated how student engagement and community-focused research can advocate for positive change, enhancing resilience and well-being within communities.
- **Group Concept Mapping (GCM):** The application of GCM successfully identified key factors and themes relevant to equitable resilience in Southern Africa. GCM's ability to capture and analyze diverse perspectives was valuable in a region with significant socio-economic and environmental challenges.

specific prompt.



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**Sorting:** Participants organize these statements into piles based on conceptual similarities.

**Rating:** Participants evaluate the statements on various scales.

#### Data Analysis: The

sorted and rated data are analyzed using multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis to create visual maps that represent the group's collective thinking.

**Inclusive Participation:** It allows diverse groups to contribute their perspectives, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of complex issues.

Structured Process: The method provides a clear, systematic way to gather and analyze complex information.

Visual Representation: It translates abstract concepts into visual maps, making it easier to understand relationships and priorities.

**Actionable Insights:** GCM identifies key themes and areas of consensus, which can inform decision-making and policy development.

## **Thematic results from Group Concept Mapping**

The maps highlighted several key themes central to equitable resilience in Southern Africa:

- Social Justice Approaches: Addressing historical and systemic inequalities to ensure fairness in resilience efforts.
- **Development:** Fostering economic and social development to enhance the resilience of communities.
- **Inclusive Strategies:** The findings emphasize the need for inclusive, contextspecific resilience strategies that address the unique vulnerabilities and capacities of communities in Southern Africa.
- **Actionable Insights:** Despite challenges in recruitment and participation, the study demonstrates GCM's power to generate comprehensive, actionable insights that can inform policy and practice in the region.



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**Research Summary Brief: Group Concept Mapping** and Equitable Resilience in **Southern Africa** 



- Legislative and Policy Frameworks: Developing and implementing policies that support equitable resilience.
- Collaboration and Co-creation: Engaging communities and stakeholders in resilience planning and implementation.
- Capacity Building: Strengthening the abilities of individuals and communities to respond to and recover from adverse events.
- Inclusion and Participation: Ensuring all community members, especially marginalized groups, have a voice in resilience initiatives.
- **Transformative Change:** Promoting significant shifts in systems and structures to support long-term resilience.
- Preparedness Measures: Developing strategies to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of future disasters and climate change.
- Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies: Implementing actions to reduce vulnerability and enhance adaptive capacity.



## **Key Outputs:**

**To read the briefs and** learn more on the Disaster risk working group:

**Photovoice brief:** Exploring community resilience: an application of photo voice in post-graduate studies

**Research Summary Brief:** Group Concept Mapping and Equitable Resilience in Southern Africa

