

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN EL SALVADOR: A Q&A WITH LUIS ERNESTO MIXCO DURÁN, MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (MARN)

El Salvador lies in a seismically active region, making earthquake preparedness a crucial matter. Luis Ernesto Mixco Durán, representing the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN), plays a vital role in understanding and mitigating this risk. In this insightful Q&A, Mr. Mixco Durán offers his perspective on the impact of the FORCE workshops, highlighting key takeaways and future plans to strengthen earthquake risk reduction in El Salvador.

How do you see the FORCE workshops contributing to earthquake risk reduction in El Salvador?

The FORCE workshops have made significant contributions to earthquake risk reduction in El Salvador in several ways:

Bringing together key stakeholders: The workshops have brought together representatives from various government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector, who are all essential to effective earthquake risk management. This collaboration has fostered a shared understanding of the seismic hazard and risk in El Salvador and has identified opportunities for collaboration.

Promoting a comprehensive approach to earthquake risk management: The workshops have emphasized the importance of taking a comprehensive approach to earthquake risk management, which includes hazard assessment, exposure assessment, vulnerability assessment, and risk communication. This approach ensures that all aspects of earthquake risk are considered and that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

Developing practical tools for risk assessment and communication: The workshops have provided participants with training on using the OpenQuake engine, a powerful tool for earthquake risk

assessment. This training has equipped participants with the skills they need to develop their own risk assessments and to communicate their findings to decision-makers.

Establishing a strong foundation for long-term earthquake risk reduction: The workshops have laid the groundwork for a long-term earthquake risk reduction program in El Salvador. By strengthening technical capacity, developing practical tools, and fostering collaboration, the FORCE workshops have set the stage for a more resilient El Salvador.

What are some of the key takeaways from the workshops that you will implement in your work?

I will implement the following key takeaways from the FORCE workshops in my work:

Sustainability in strengthening technical capacity: I will ensure that my team is continuously trained on using the OpenQuake engine and other tools for earthquake risk assessment. This will help us to maintain and update our risk assessments as new information becomes available.

Keeping and updating hazard, exposure, and vulnerability models: I will regularly review and update our hazard, exposure, and vulnerability models to ensure that they reflect the latest information. This will help us to make more accurate assessments of earthquake risk.

Developing an Interactive Dashboard: I will collaborate with other stakeholders to develop an Interactive Dashboard that will allow users to access and visualize seismic risk information. This dashboard will be a valuable tool for communicating risk to decision-makers and the public.

How do you plan to continue collaborating with GEM and other partners to improve earthquake risk management in El Salvador?

I will continue to collaborate with GEM and other partners in the following ways:

Maintaining close communication with GEM experts: I will keep in touch with GEM experts to share our progress and to seek their guidance on technical issues.

Staying up-to-date on the latest developments from GEM and OpenQuake: I will regularly review GEM's publications and announcements to ensure that we are using the latest tools and methodologies.

Sharing information between MARN and GEM: I will maintain regular communication with GEM to share information about our risk assessments and to receive feedback on our work.

By continuing to collaborate with GEM and other partners, we can ensure that El Salvador has the tools and resources it needs to effectively reduce earthquake risk.