



University students and their faculty advisors in the US and in developing nations are invited to join an international student-centered consortium on Mapping for Resilience. The consortium organizes a global community of learners and scholars to create and use open geographic data that directly address locally defined development challenges worldwide. Student-led chapters of Youth Mappers work collaboratively across countries to help create resilient communities. The program supports university efforts to offer meaningful global learning experiences, build a socially engaged citizenry, enhance long-term scientific capacity around the world, and foster youth leadership.

The Youth Mappers network of chapters enlists and supports the talents of the world's university faculty and students to expressly link supply and demand for knowledge by addressing specific needs for geographic information to specific development objectives in targeted countries, creating new, quality, localized geospatial data in unmapped places of the world where USAID works to end extreme poverty. This effort for the first time leverages academic community involvement to synergize with and fill a unique niche among an expanding set of efforts by a growing set of actors related to volunteer humanitarian or crisis mapping. The new data created is open and accessible to the public using the OpenStreetMap platform and tools to ensure it is freely available for the greater public good, particularly local populations planning for the welfare and vitality of their own communities. The consortium also encourages that the open spatial data created will be used in meaningful research and analysis to directly address specific international development challenges. Students gain new skills and can also use this data in their own research in a great variety of studies on issues that lend themselves to be visualized through mapping, from locating vulnerabilities to flooding and marking the extent of drought-stricken areas to identifying factors in land use that can improve food security or locating sites with high potential for renewable energy production.

Affiliation offers the chance to network with others around the world and exchange information, ideas, and results. University students and their advisors will receive instruction, model syllabi and teaching and learning resources to develop and improve open mapping inside and outside of the classroom. Participating researchers will benefit from the development and exchange about spatial analytical methods that lead to greater understanding of resilience. For active chapters in eligible countries, Youth Mappers will also offer leadership and fellowship opportunities, focused activities for female mappers and local capacity building support for students and their faculty advisors to work with local communities to make a difference, together. There is no cost for affiliation or enjoying the benefits of being a part of the consortium.

The United States Agency for International Development generously supports this program through a grant from the USAID GeoCenter. Founding partners are Texas Tech University, George Washington University, and West Virginia University. For more information, visit www.youthmappers.org or write to mappers.vpr@ttu.edu.

