Massive Open Online Course on Nature-based Solutions for Disaster and Climate Resilience

PEDRR
Ecosystems for Disaster Risk Reduction and Adaptation

Final report - 2025

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Report - 13/10/2025

The *Nature-based Solutions for Disaster and Climate Resilience* MOOC, developed by UNEP and the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR), with funding from the European Commission. It was hosted by the SDG Academy on the EdX platform , introduced participants to how ecosystems such as forests, wetlands and coastal dunes can act as natural defences against environmental and climate threats. Launched in January 2021, the MOOC ran through August 2025 and was relaunched twice due to its popularity. It became the most popular course hosted by the SDG Academy and UNEP's most successful MOOC to date. Building on this success, the SDG platform is considering offering a shorter, non-certification version as an introductory course.

Designed for a broad audience and requiring no prior experience, it combined key concepts with practical examples to explain why Nature-based Solutions (NbS) matter and how they can be applied in planning, policy and everyday practice. The course fostered critical knowledge that not only enhanced global awareness but also empowered participants to influence policy frameworks, drive governmental actions, and implement sustainable practices. By learning about NbS, learners were better equipped to strengthen resilience against climate and disaster risks both locally and globally.

The MOOC achieved remarkable success, with 128,060 enrolled students and 32,502 graduates. The course equipped participants with in-depth knowledge of leveraging NbS to mitigate disaster and climate risks while supporting the implementation of global frameworks such as the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Total enrolment: **128,060**
Total number of graduates: **32,502**

Course completion rate:
25.38%

1. Daily Learner Enrolment

Designed for global accessibility, the course was offered in seven languages: Arabic, English, Spanish, French, Hindi, Bahasa Indonesian, and Chinese. This multilingual approach ensured inclusivity for diverse learners worldwide.

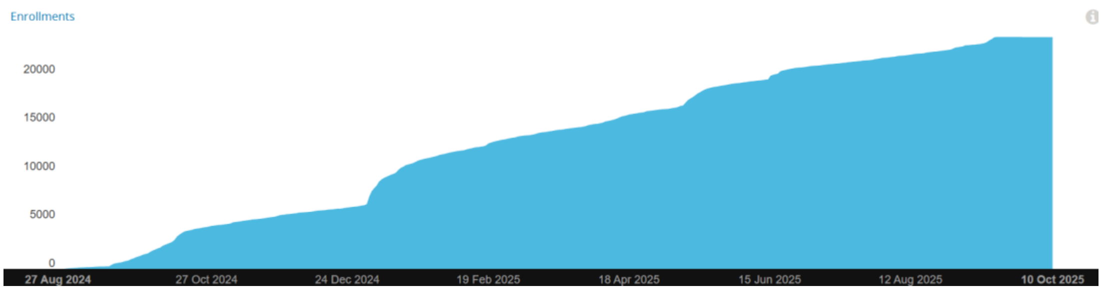


Figure 1 Trends in total enrolment over time.

The course attracted new participants in waves, often following high profile webinar events, newsletter or social media campaigns.

2. Demographics

Geographic Distribution

Participants come from 196 countries or regions, with India accounting for the largest share of enrolments at 39.8%, followed by China (3.4%) and Kenya (3.4%). Participants from the United States (2.7%) and Nigeria (2.7%) made up smaller but comparable shares. Overall, the sample is geographically diverse, with a strong representation from India and smaller contributions from multiple other countries.

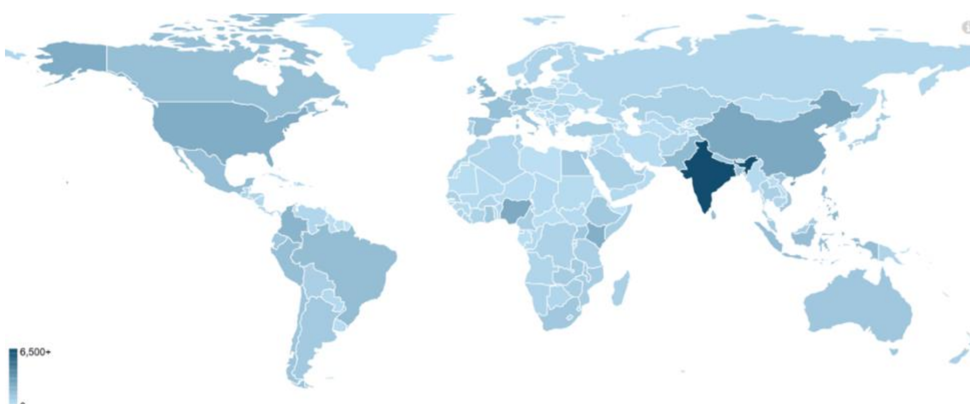
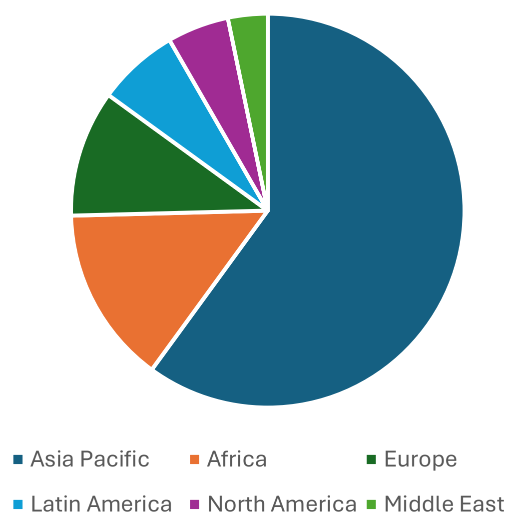


Figure 2 World map showing participant distribution. The gradient colour indicates the number of participants from each country.

Distribution per region

The regional distribution indicates that the majority of participants were from the Asia Pacific region (60%), followed by Africa (15%) and Europe (10%). Smaller proportions of participants were from Latin America (7%), North America (5%), and the Middle East (3%). Overall, the sample demonstrates broad regional representation, with a strong concentration in the Asia Pacific region alongside participation from all other major regions.



Region	Percentage
Asia Pacific	60%
Africa	15%
Europe	10%
Latin America	7%
North America	5%
Middle East	3%

Figure 3 Regional Distribution of Participants (%), showing the proportion of participants from Asia Pacific, Africa, Europe, Latin America, North America, and the Middle East

Gender distribution

Gender distribution of participants shows that 52.01% identified as male and 47.00% as female, while 0.72% preferred not to disclose their gender. A small proportion of 0.27% identified as another gender category.

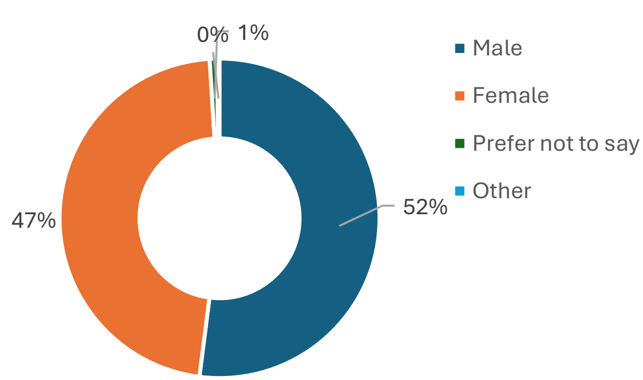


Figure 4 Proportions of participants by gender

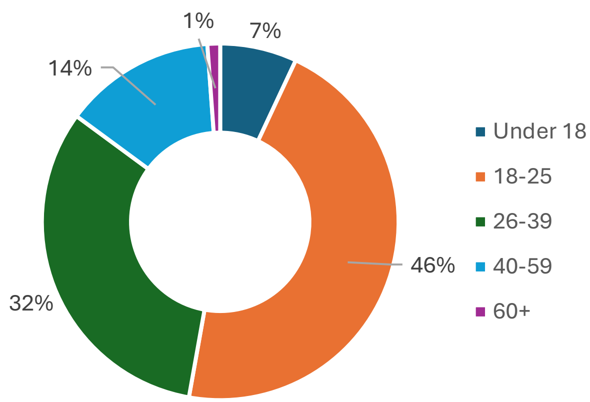


Figure 5 Proportion of participants by age groups

Age distribution

The participants were predominantly young adults, with nearly half aged 18–25 (45.82%), followed by those aged 26–39 (32.27%). Smaller proportions fall into the 40–59 age group (13.74%), while very few participants were under 18 (6.96%) or over 60 (1.15%).

Occupational Status

Occupational status of participants completing the MOOC during 2023-2025 was primarily characterized by a high proportion of full-time students (31.77%), followed by participants working in the private sector (11.92%), academia (10.91%), and non-profit/NGO roles (9.56%). Smaller shares are represented across government, environmental conservation, part-time study, and international organizations, while only a very small proportion of participants were unemployed, retired, or classified under other categories.

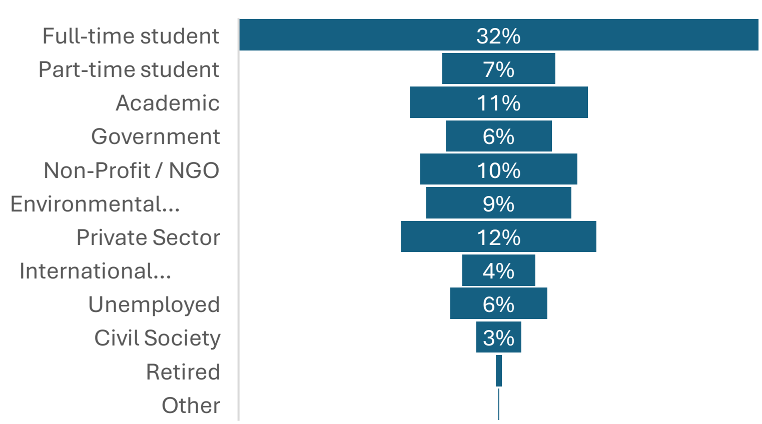


Figure 6 Distribution of graduates of 2023-2025 by occupational status.

Academia includes both researchers and teachers or faculty. The environmental conservation including wetlands and protected area management.

The learner demographic reveals that 40.80% held a college degree, followed by 35.2% with a master's degree.

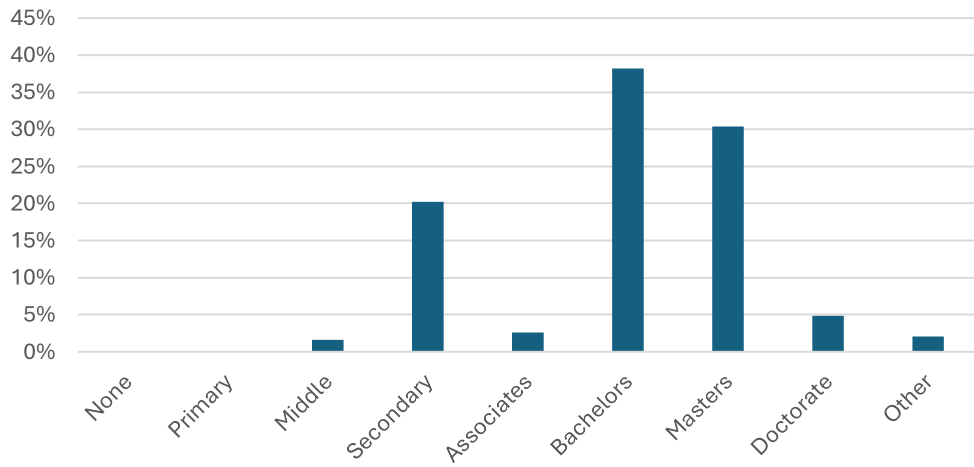


Figure 7 Distribution of participants by highest degree obtained. The chart shows the variety of academic qualifications among participant