Breaking the Silos: an online serious game for multi-risk DRR management

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Abstract.

The increased complexity of disaster risk due to climate change, expected population growth and the increasing interconnectedness of disaster impacts across communities and economic sectors, require Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)
10 measures that are better able to address these growing complexities. Especially Disaster Risk Management (DRM) practitioners need to be able to oversee these complexities. Nonetheless, in the traditional risk paradigm, there is a strong focus on single hazards and the risk faced by individual communities and economic sectors. Breaking the Silos is a serious game designed to support various stakeholders (including policy makers, risk managers, researchers) in understanding and managing the complexities of DRR measures in a multi-(hazard) risk setting, thereby moving away from hazard-silo thinking. What sets
15 Breaking the Silos apart from other disaster risk games, is its explicit focus on multi-risk challenges. The game includes different hazard types, intensities, and their interactions, different impact indicators, and (a)synergies between DRR measures. Moreover, the spread of expert knowledge between different participants and the high levels of freedom and randomness in the game design contribute to a realistic game. The game was successfully launched during the World Bank GFDRR's Understanding Risk 2020 Forum and later played again with the same settings with researchers from the Swiss Federal Institute
20 of Technology (ETH) in Zurich. Before and after playing the games, participants were asked to complete surveys asking them about their perception of the challenges of DRM and whether the game raised their awareness of these challenges. The preliminary findings indicate that Breaking the Silos was found useful by the participants in increasing awareness of the complexities of risk.

1 Introduction

25 Since 1980, the number of recorded disasters related to natural hazards has more than doubled (Cutter et al., 2015). The occurrence of disasters is not a geographically isolated problem and many countries face the threat of multiple hazards (Cutter et al., 2015; De Ruiter et al., 2020). The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) found that globally, the last 20 years have seen a 151% increase in direct economic losses from climate-related disasters alone (Wallemacq & House, 2018). The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk
30 Reduction (UNDRR, 2015b) explicitly calls for a multi-hazard and multisectoral approach to disaster risk reduction (DRR)

practices, leading to calls from the international community to move towards a better understanding of systemic risk: accounting for the many, growing complexities of risk (UNDRR, 2019). Therefore, there is a high urgency to recognize the importance of perceiving disasters holistically, rather than as stand-alone, single-hazard events. Nonetheless, the prevailing hazard-silo risk paradigm typically represents risk as static, both within science as well as in disaster risk management

35 (AghaKouchak et al., 2020; Cutter, 2018; De Ruiter et al., 2020; Scolobig, Komendantova, & Mignan, 2017). However, both the hazards and the impacts of multi-risk disasters can be distinctly different from disasters occurring in isolation (De Ruiter et al., 2020). Moreover, the different dynamics of multi-risk disasters introduce many challenges for disaster risk management (DRM). For example, DRR measures taken to decrease the risk of one hazard, can have conflicting impacts on the risk of another hazard (De Ruiter et al., 2021; Ward et al., 2020). For example, wood-frame buildings may perform well in

40 earthquakes, but could sustain high damages during flooding. We refer to Box 1 for an overview of the definitions of the different risk-related terms used in this paper.

In recent years, a large number of serious games relating to DRM have been developed. Solinksa-Nowak et al. (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of DRM serious games and found that the majority focus on floods (27 out of 45 reviewed games),

45 earthquakes (10 out 45), and droughts (7 out of 45), while storms (including cyclones, hurricanes, etc) are rarely the main hazards in a game (Solinska-Nowak et al., 2018). Several studies have demonstrated the successful use of these serious games in increasing risk awareness (e.g., Cremers, Stubbé, van der Beek, Roelofs, & Kerstholt, 2015; Mossoux et al., 2016; Pereira, Prada, & Paiva, 2014; Taillandier & Adam, 2018) . However, there appear to be several gaps between these games and the need to transition from a single to a multi-risk paradigm. Past games tend to focus on individual types of extreme weather-

50 related disasters, such as coastal floods (*SPRITE*; Taillandier & Adam, 2018), river floods (*WTP for a probabilistic flood forecast*; Arnal et al., 2016), a flash flood or strong wind (*ANYCaRE*; Terti et al., 2019), floods caused by different extreme weather events such as typhoons, rainstorms and thunderstorms (*Battle of Flooding Protection*; Tsai et al., 2020), or a specific hazard group such as geohazards (*Hazagora*; Mossoux et al., 2016). Furthermore, in previous games combinations of different hazards are not examined in one mode and, as a result, (a)synergies between DRR measures are not included. In *Hazagora*,

55 multiple hazards can occur in one year (the equivalent of one round) but the game does not account for hazard interactions (Mossoux et al., 2016). B-SaFe! (Cremers et al., 2015) looks both at human-made and environmental hazards, but it does not account for systemic risk or DRR interactions. The *Stop Disasters!* Game (Pereira et al., 2014; UNDRR, 2004) has several different modes, with each mode focusing on a different hazard type (hurricanes, earthquake, wildfire, tsunami or flood).

60 Moreover, DRM commonly remains a reactive rather than proactive process (Mojtahedi & Oo, 2017). However, most DRM serious games focus on the (long run) preparedness phase of the DRM cycle (Solinska-Nowak et al., 2018), with *ANYCaRE* being one of the few role-playing games to aim at the emergency response phase (Terti et al., 2019). Very few games include lessons learned from past events (Solinska-Nowak et al., 2018). Several studies recognize the importance of including a participatory, multiplayer approach as a reflection of the need for collaborative approaches in DRM (Gampell et al., 2020;

65 Solinska-Nowak et al., 2018). Finally, Taillandier and Adam (2018) also recognise other shortcomings in existing disaster risk serious games, including a focus on: increasing the awareness of one particular audience (commonly the general public), optimization based on the financial aspect of risk management, and long game play (game time exceeding several hours).

To address the aforementioned gaps in current disaster risk serious games, we developed the *Breaking the Silos* game. *Breaking*
70 *the Silos* is a multiplayer role-playing game where the roles represent different decision makers and stakeholders in the DRM process. The players are a team who advise the president of a fictional country on the implementation of DRR measures after different disasters, while considering potential (a)synergies of these DRR measures. The DRM process is mimicked by spreading knowledge and objectives throughout participants and by including randomness to the storyline. The game was developed to help various stakeholders (including policy makers, risk managers, researchers) better understand the
75 complexities of multi-hazard risk and the potential (a)synergies of DRR measures. Unlike past games, this game includes multiple hazards and their spatiotemporal interactions. It also explicitly includes both the response and planning phase of the disaster risk cycle and promotes the examination of (a)synergies between different DRR measures. In doing so, we aim to create a game with a more realistic representation of the growing complexities of risk.

80 In this paper, we demonstrate preliminary insights from the use of *Breaking the Silos* as a tool to better understand the complexities of DRM in a multi-(hazard) risk setting in both mitigating the impacts of an earlier disaster and in preparing for a next disaster. We first discuss the objective, set-up and rules of the game (Section 2). Then, we describe the development and testing of the game (Section 3). Third, we report on the implementation of the game and provide preliminary findings on how the players experienced the game and reflected on the potential impact of the game within the field of DRR (Section 4).
85 Finally, we provide an outlook on potential improvements to the game and concluding remarks (Section 5).

BOX 1. Glossary of terminology on risk, multi-hazards and their interrelations
We use the definitions of multi-hazard below, and refer to the different hazard interrelations according to a major recent review in the UK (Ciurean et al., 2018):

90 - *Disaster risk* can be defined as a function of hazard, exposure, and vulnerability, where ***hazard*** is defined as a potentially damaging event; ***exposure*** is defined as the elements subject to damage and losses as a result of a hazard; and ***vulnerability*** is defined as a community's susceptibility to the impacts of a hazard as influenced by a community's physical, social, economic, and environmental conditions (UNDRR, 2016).
- ***Multi-Hazard*** **is** (1) the selection of multiple major hazards that the country faces, and (2) the specific contexts where
95 hazardous events may occur simultaneously, cascading, or cumulatively over time (Gill & Malamud, 2014).
- The term ***consecutive disasters*** has been used to describe two or more disasters that occur in succession, and whose direct impacts overlap spatially before recovery from a previous event is considered to be completed (De Ruiter et al., 2020). These can include a broad range of multi-hazard types, such as those listed above.

- ***Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)*** aims at preventing or decreasing the existing disaster risk and increasing resilience (UNDRR, 2016).
- Disaster Risk Management (DRM) is the use of DRR policies and measures to preventing or decrease disaster risk (UNDRR, 2016).
- ***(A)synergies of DRR measures*** are potential adverse effects of DRR measures. DRR measures that are aimed at reducing the risk of one hazard, can have opposing or conflicting effects on the risk of another hazard (De Ruiter et al., 2021).

2 Objectives, setup, and rules of the game

2.1 Game objective

Breaking the Silos is a role-playing game in which players aim to reduce the impacts of separate and consecutive disasters in a fictional country or region under certain time and financial constraints. The game was designed to help decision makers and practitioners better understand the complexities of multi-hazard risk and the potential (a)synergies of DRR measures. It is designed as a narrator-led board game in which DRR measures to be implemented are collectively discussed and ultimately decided by the leader of the game board (the President). Each player is assigned a role and is provided with information about their own expertise and responsibilities. They are also provided with information about their own relationship with some of the other roles. Information about different hazard types, DRR measures and their effects, (a)synergies, and costs are spread over all roles. Therefore, meeting the game's objective can only be achieved by collaborating. The impact of the decisions taken is assessed at the end of each round by checking three criteria (explained in the next section) and comparing the impact of a new disaster with and without the DRR measures implemented following a previous disaster.

2.2 Game design and setup

The game was originally conceived to be played face to face. However, as the game was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the first version of the game (reported in this paper) has been developed for play using online tools and interfaces. Whilst we report on this online version in this paper, it can easily be used in a face-to-face setting once the pandemic is contained.

The game requires a moderator, who is not actively participating in the game but narrates the storylines, runs the impact and DRR calculations in the background, and keeps track of time. All participants (and the moderator) communicate using an online meeting software such as Teams, Zoom or Skype. The game board and players cards are all shown on the MIRO platform, an online whiteboard for visual collaboration (see Fig. 1). Actions in the gameplay take place on this game board. Additionally, the moderator has access to a calculator tool for keeping track of the score. This is a series of spreadsheets

containing the exposure, hazard and vulnerability relationships between the disasters. As the moderator enters the DRR
130   measures selected by the team, summary tables are automatically updated. These tables indicate whether the team met the
round's objectives, the updated budget for the next round, and the difference in risk with the DRR measures selected to a
situation in which no DRR measures would have been taken (in terms of population, building and critical infrastructure
impacted).

135   As Fig. 1a shows, the MIRO board consists of a map of the team's fictional country, placed in the centre of the board, and
surrounded by the different players' role cards. The game map (Fig. 1b) shows the areas impacted by a disaster (the red
crosses), the location of selected critical infrastructure (the main hospitals, airports), and some geographic features (e.g., rivers
and coastline). The game includes eight roles: the president, the Minister of Finance, the representative of international aid and
emergency responder, the agricultural representative, the national housing and urban development agency chief, the engineer,
140   the national flood agency coordinator, and the representative of the citizens. Each of the role cards has the same structure (Fig
1c). It explains to the player the characteristics of their role including some background information about their position in the
team, and their relationship with some of the other members of the team. It also provides some detailed knowledge on certain
DRR measures, including information such as their costs, their advantages, limitations and potential asynergies with other
hazard types, the time it takes to implement them (discretized between weeks, months or years) and, depending on the role,
145   information about particular hazards, demographic information, etc. Each DRR measure has a different symbol, and a
numerical subscript is used to indicate the round during which these DRR measures can be implemented (Fig. 1c). Some of
the DRR measures cannot be built in particular cells of the map; for example, because they cannot be built together with
another DRR measure or because they are invalid (e.g., a seawall can only be built in coastal cells), and some of the descriptions
of DRR measures warn the player of potential (a)synergies (Fig. 1c).

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While it is possible to play the game with fewer than eight players, we advise at least six people to ensure coverage of most
expertise concerning the hazard types and DRR measures and uncover important asynergies. The president is responsible for
taking the final decisions and the Minister of Finance has information about the available budget and expenses. In case fewer
than eight players are playing, this would mimic the concept that in real life, important stakeholders can also be absent from
155   key meetings. Note that even though participants can navigate anywhere on the MIRO board and in theory could read about
other roles, in practice there is limited time to do this.

2.3 How to play the game

Before the start of the game, the moderator distributes the roles among the players, and randomly selects a series of three
hazard types (tropical cyclone, drought, flood), intensity (low, medium, and high) and time between disasters (weeks, months,
160   years). These selections are not shared a priori with the players and will define the storyline of the game. The moderator

introduces the players to the overall game set-up and leaves some time for the players to read more about their role. They then read the background story to give all players' general information on the setting of the game.

Round 1

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- The game starts after the fictional country is hit by a disaster and mimics a situation in which the president brings together their team of key experts and stakeholders to address the situation and to decide whether, and if so which, DRR measures they want to implement. The moderator adjusts the map in the centre of the board to highlight the cells that were impacted by the disaster and narrates the storyline (see supplementary material, Section I). They encourage the team to give their fictional country a name, to increase the team's sense of commitment, and then sets the timer on the MIRO board visible for all players to start the first round and gives the floor to the president.

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- As information is scattered between different roles, the team needs to try to exchange knowledge about all aspects of risk. On their role card, the president is actively encouraged to give the floor to all team members to share their insights and to make a pitch for their preferred DRR measures. The Minister of Finance is responsible for keeping an eye on the budget as the team is not allowed to spend more than the available budget. While the moderator should interfere as little as possible with the team, they may intervene to help ensure respectful interactions between players

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  and to ensure that all players are included in the discussions.

- When the timer goes off, the moderator tells the president that they have 10 minutes to make a final decision and sets the timer. Team members are responsible for placing their DRR measure(s) on the map in the cells in which they want to implement their DRR measure(s). The Minister of Finance needs to complete the calculator to ensure that the team remains within its budget. The end of the second timer signals the end of round 1 and a break of 10 minutes for

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  participants to relax.

During the break, the moderator inputs the DRR measures into their calculator tool, not accessible to the players (see supplementary material, Section II) and checks whether the team remained within budget. If the team spent more than its allowed budget, the moderator randomly removes a DRR measure to stay within the budget. As part of the international aid

185 and emergency responder's role, the team can receive extra funds if by the end of round 1 they meet a set of short-term recovery objectives including: (1) the rebuilding of damaged airports and hospitals; (2) evacuating or rebuilding homes for the people who were impacted by the first disaster; and (3) restoring food production (agricultural needs), see Fig. 2a. The moderator checks whether the team meets these requirements. Finally, the moderator prepares the board for the start of the second round, by adjusting the country map to show the location of the impacts of the second disaster. The calculator tool automatically

190 assesses the impacts of the new disaster and what the impacts would have been had the team not taken any DRR measures at the end of round 1 and the difference between the two (the achieved change in risk), see Fig. 2b. Note that due to (a)synergies of DRR measures, both an increase and decrease in risk is possible after the implementation of DRR measures. Both the short-term recovery objectives table and the overview table are then copied into the MIRO board.

Round 2

At the start of round 2, the moderator tells the players whether they met the requirements of the international community to receive extra funds. They also communicate the updated budget to the Minister of Finance (see supplementary material, Section III). They then continue narrating the story, telling the players about the second disaster, the impacts and the effects of their DRR measures. Here, the moderator briefly discusses with the players possible reasons for the observed change in risk (increase, decrease or constant). For example, the team may have spent its budget on protecting against one hazard type only, but the new hazard is of another type. Also, if the time between the two disasters is shorter than the DRR implementation time, this measure is not operational at the time of the second event (even though funds have already been spent). This is indicated on the board with the addition of a crane symbol on top of the affected DRR measures. The second round then follows the same steps as round 1. During the break, the moderator follows the same steps as detailed above.

Round 3

The final round can be played partly or completely depending on the available time. At a minimum, it is recommended to inform the players of the effects of their DRR measures on a third disaster, by sharing the overview tables.

At the end, the participants are encouraged to reflect on the game. This can be done by first looking at the overview tables obtained or discussing open questions.

3 Development and testing of the game

The game was originally conceived as a face-to-face board game for the World Bank GFDRR's Understanding Risk 2020 Forum (UR2020), which was planned for May 2020 in Singapore. As a result of COVID-19, UR2020 took place fully remotely in December 2020, and we therefore developed the first version of the game to be played remotely at this event. The game was played with the same settings with researchers from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich in February 2021. The testing phase was spread out over the course of a month to allow for an iterative process to develop and improve the game.

3.1 Game development

We developed two different game modes, each with their own storyline, socio-economic and political characteristics, hazard types, available financial funds, DRR measures and DRM roles. The primary game mode reflects a fictional country, with a strong economic dependence on the agricultural sector, facing tropical cyclones, droughts, and floods. Other game modes can be developed based on the needs of the players.

225 In many disaster situations, DRM commonly remains a reactive rather than a proactive process (Mojtahedi & Oo, 2017). To reflect this, the game starts right *after* the occurrence of a disaster. The different hazards that can occur are tropical cyclones, droughts, and floods in the national game mode. Different game modes with other local settings and hazards can be developed based on the needs of the players. In line with common indicators of disaster impacts (Cardona, 2005; De Ruiter et al., 2017; UNDRR, 2015a), the game includes damages to people, buildings, key economic sectors (such as agricultural areas and the

230 tourism industry), and critical infrastructure (including hospitals and airports). Disasters can occur at three different intensities, namely: low, medium, and high. We set local discrete vulnerability curves for each hazard type and indicator to determine the number of people, buildings, and critical infrastructure that are affected by the hazard. For example, we assume that hospitals, usually designed with higher design standards have a lower failure probability and will therefore not be affected by a low tropical cyclone, nor by a drought of any intensity.

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The game uses DRR measures and their potential (a)synergies as identified in recent scientific literature (e.g. de Ruiter et al., 2021; Fraser et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2020). The DRR measures can have multiple potential advantages or disadvantages for one or more hazard types. The changes in risk due to the impacts of hazards and the effects of the implemented DRR measures are automatically calculated in the calculator tool used by the moderator based on pre-defined conditional vulnerability curves

240 for each indicator and consecutive sequence of disaster. The (a)synergies of multiple DRR measures are reflected by multiplying values to the vulnerability curves before updating the indicator layers (population, buildings, etc.) A value of 1 indicates no effect in impact, a value higher than 1 increases exposure and lower than 1 decreases exposure.

Research has demonstrated that DRM requires the involvement of different stakeholders including local to national

245 government representatives, administrative staff and NGOs, and representatives of key sectors (Modgil, Singh, & Foropon, 2020; Mojtahedi & Oo, 2017; Solinska-Nowak et al., 2018). To reflect this, the roles for our game were developed such that there are close ties between some of the stakeholders while others have conflicting preferred DRR measures, knowledge, and different willingness to spend money on DRR measures. The storylines are fictional as the series of events and intensity are randomly selected, but draw experience and learning from historic events (e.g., the 2019 consecutive disasters hitting the

250 African east coast including cyclones Idai and Kenneth, the summer droughts, winter floods and subsequent crop losses). The moderator can decide to select a series of hazards themselves instead of using the random generator. This may be desirable if the moderator wants to highlight specific temporal or spatial risk dependencies. The storyline, the hazard types, the possible DRR measures, and the roles can be adjusted, or new ones can be developed based on the training needs of the players. Finally, to prevent any association with an existing country, the game uses a fictional currency (coins).

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Several studies have argued that including feedback on actions within the game, so-called "learning by doing", increases learning (Bogost, 2008; Kolb, 2014; Solinska-Nowak et al., 2018; Terti et al., 2019). Therefore, we decided to create three rounds, which demonstrate disaster and DRR interactions and allow players to change their approach to DRM in each round.

Each round starts after a disaster and the team is asked to agree on the implementation of (a set of) DRR measures. We expected
260 to see the teams responding to the particular hazard type that just caused a disaster rather than to also anticipate future risk of
other hazards. Each round begins after a new disaster, and with the moderator explaining the impacts of that disaster as well
as highlighting the impacts of DRR measures that were taken in the previous round. We expect that this influences the team's
behaviour during the next round. During the development of the game, we estimated that the first round would take 30 minutes
and the second round 20 minutes. Based on feedback received during the testing phase, each round was broken down into two
265 parts. The first part is meant for a general discussion between the team members. This is especially important and time
consuming during the first round as players need to understand their own role and that of the other members of the team and
to get comfortable with the MIRO environment. The second, shorter, part of each round is allocated to make final decisions
about which DRR measures to implement and to place them on the map.

270 **3.2 Testing of the game**

Prior to its launch, the game was tested three times with the help of master students in geo-related fields (Hydrology, Earth
Sciences, and Global Environmental Change). Each test game was played two weeks apart to allow for an iterative process of
implementing suggestions from the participants regarding game design and gameplay. As the design of the game changed over
the course of the testing phase, the participants were not asked to complete the questionnaire. Due to the COVID-19
275 restrictions, the game was tested in a fully digital environment. The testing of the game provided very valuable feedback on
the game's design, the clarity and level of involvement in the game of the different roles, the conflicts between them and their
preferred DRR measures, the balance between the available budget and costs of the DRR measures, and the time component.
Finally, the testing phase also allowed for the training of the moderators. As has been suggested by other studies (e.g., Tsai et
al., 2020), the moderators learned the game first by playing it without receiving any background information (similar to the
280 other test participants).

4 Game implementation and preliminary findings

4.1 Implementation

Breaking the Silos was first played during the virtual UR2020 Forum in December 2020 and subsequently by colleagues from
285 the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich in February 2021. UR2020 is a free of charge event that attracts
"an open and global community of over 9,000 experts and practitioners interested and active in the creation, communication
and use of disaster risk information". The game was launched within the session *Breaking the Silos: from single to*

comprehensive multi-risk frameworks[1]. Due to logistical constraints, a limited number of participants could take part in the session, and we were able to play the game on two separate boards (i.e., two teams). In order to better compare game play

290 between the teams, they both played the national game and faced the same hazards, namely: a tropical cyclone of medium intensity at the start of round 1 (its location is identical to that shown above in Fig. 1b); a drought of high intensity at the start of round 2 (Fig. 3a); and a flood of medium intensity at the start of round 3 (Fig. 3b). Due to the limited time available in the UR2020 session (one hour for the game), the game consisted of two full rounds and the start of a third round. The impacts of a third disaster and the DRR measures from rounds 1 and 2 were discussed but the third round was not completed. Both games

295 were moderated by trained moderators. At ETH, we also played the game on two separate boards (Fig. 3c and d) and the series of events and intensity was kept the same to allow for comparison for the purpose of this study.

Even though the sequence of disasters and storyline were similar, the teams adopted different DRR strategies as shown in Fig. 3. This is also reflected in Fig. 4, which shows the different investments in DRR strategies between round 1 and 2,

300 demonstrating the many possible choices and outcomes of the game, underscoring its high degrees of freedom. We refer to supplementary material, Section IV, for a detailed overview of the coins spent per round, per DRR measure and per team.

4.2 Preliminary findings

We assessed the opinions of the participants about game play and learning using a pre- and post-game survey (Table 1). Unlike other studies, such as Tsai et al. (2020), who created a survey consisting of 93 questions our survey was intentionally kept

305 short with a set of 5 and 7 questions for the pre-/post-survey. While in theory using a large number of questions can provide very detailed feedback, the risk of receiving many incomplete surveys increases significantly. Moreover, due to the limited time available during both the UR2020 and the ETH sessions, our surveys had to be concise. The surveys consist of open and closed questions. Similar to other studies (e.g., Pereira et al., 2014), the closed questions use a 5-point scale and were designed based on the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI; a multidimensional measurement device used to measure participants

310 intrinsic motivation and their subjective experience in experiments). We purposefully kept these surveys short in order to maximise the participants' feedback. The pre-game survey consists of five questions focusing on participants' professional background and DRR aspects and challenges they encounter in their work, while trying not to influence the players' multi-risk and DRR (a)synergies awareness. The post-game survey consists of three questions that assess learning and recommendations to improve the game.

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In the pre-game survey, the majority of the participants of both UR2020 and ETH reported working in a field related to the implementation or evaluation of DRR measures (respectively 57% and 80%). Of the respondents who reported working on topics related to DRR, six out of 23 felt well-equipped to do so (rating their ability at least a 4 out of 5), while all other

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[1] https://understandrisk.org/breaking-the-silos-from-single-to-comprehensive-multi-hazard-risk-frameworks-2/

participants who work in the field of DRR rated it a 3 or less out of 5. Among the main challenges in implementing and
320 assessing DRR measures, participants reported a lack of contextual knowledge, including contingencies that influence DRR
assessments and the long-term impacts of DRR measures, and a lack in available data and uncertainty.

As shown in Fig. 5a, in the post-game evaluation of the *Breaking the Silos* game play at UR2020, participants (n=20) reported
having highly enjoyed the game (an average of 4.3 out of 5 with no scores below a 3), they rated its representation of the
325 complexities of real-life DRR decision making as highly realistic (average of 3.7 out of 5), and participants rated both game-
immersion and increasing understanding of the complexities of DRM with an average score of 3.5. The feedback from the
game played at ETH showed similar results (Fig. 5b): the 16 participants reported having highly enjoyed the game (an average
of 4.5 out of 5 with no scores below a 4) and its representation of the complexities of real-life DRR decision making was rated
highly realistic (average of 3.8 out of 5).
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However, when asked whether they plan to change future DRR actions the average scores from the UR2020 and ETH
participants is respectively 2.9 and 3.1, with a large spread across the UR2020 participants. When asked through an open
question about the main lessons learned, replies include learning about and reflecting on the "wealth of benefits and drawbacks"
between DRR measures; the ongoing challenge in balancing risk of different hazards, and between recovery and long-term
335 preparedness; "the complex interplay between sectors (tourism, humanitarian, agriculture, etc.) as well as between short-term
and long-term consequences of choices made". Despite the limited sample size, our preliminary findings support the calls from
international organisations and platforms that there is a growing need for DRM researchers, practitioners, and decision makers
to better understand the complexities of disaster risk. Finally, the participants were asked to reflect on the game itself and how
it can be improved. Based on the feedback from the participants on the game's design, we will expand the available time.
340 Others recommended to improve the visuals, for example by adding a 3D interface.

5 Concluding remarks and outlook

To the best of our knowledge, the growing need for multi-risk thinking is not reflected yet in serious games that help decision
makers and practitioners become aware of the complexities of risk. *Breaking the Silos* is a role-playing game in which a team
of eight key decision makers, experts and stakeholders need to decide on the implementation of DRR measures after a disaster
345 has hit their country or region. What sets *Breaking the Silos* apart from other disaster risk games, is its explicit focus on multi-
risk challenges and includes different hazard types, intensities, and their interactions, different impact indicators, and
(a)synergies between DRR measures. Moreover, the spread of expert knowledge between different participants and the high
levels of freedom and randomness in the game design, contribute to a realistic game.

350 By including different rounds, the game encourages learning-by-doing. However, as is the case with all role-playing games, learning is dependent on the immersion and active participation of all players (Solinska-Nowak et al., 2018). By including an external moderator, the game organizer can have some influence on active participation by encouraging individual players and by coaching the president to take a role in motivating the team. Moreover, we noticed behavioural differences between the games played during UR2020 and at ETH. While at UR2020 most participants did not know each other, at ETH they knew

355 the other participants very well. This created very different dynamics within each team. The participants of the games at UR2020 remained close to their role descriptions, especially the relationship aspect of their role with other roles. While at ETH, the solidarity between players was clearly visible and participants reported afterwards a clear sense of team spirit, which was not necessarily in line with the description of the relationships between the roles. The online version of the game could be developed into a fully digital version that does not require an external moderator, while the off-line version can be developed

360 into a physical board game.

While *Breaking the Silos* aims to reflect the complexity of risk and DRM, some simplifications were required. In the current game mode, we selected three hazard types. However, this could be expanded either by adding different game modes or by adding more hazard types to the current game mode. The game could also be tailored to specific training needs by, for example,

365 increasing challenges of synergies between DRR measures.

In post-game surveys during our two initial implementations of the game, participants indicated a growing need to better understand the complexities of disaster risk. They also rated the game's representation of the complexities of DRM as highly realistic. These preliminary findings support the recent call from international organizations and platforms to move away from

370 hazard-silo thinking. We therefore aim for the game to reach a large audience of DRM practitioners through risk conferences and training workshops, to support their abilities of working in an increasingly complex world.

Ethics Statement

All participants of the UR2020 and the ETH games were older than 18. All feedback was collected anonymously using

375 Mentimeter and participation in the game and the pre- and post-game surveys was fully voluntary. Participants of UR2020 agreed with the session being recorded as part of their conference registration.

The ethics department of the Faculty of Science of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam states that if research conforms to the following code, further review by the ethics committee is not required:

380 • *No harm is envisaged for the participants or the population from which participants have been drawn;*

• *Participants receive complete and accurate information about the goals of the research before they participate;*

• *Participants give active consent for participation in the research;*

• *Participants are not deceived without being thoroughly debriefed;*

- *Participants are healthy adults who are not in a vulnerable position;*
385 - *Personal and sensitive data are kept confidential and are stored in a secure environment.*

Breaking the Silos, played during both instances (at UR2020 and ETH) complied with the code and therefore no ethical clearance was required.

Data availability

390 Please contact the authors when interested in playing this game or an adjusted version of the game.

Author contributions

MR and AC conceptualized, designed and developed the game with feedback from PW. AC designed the MIRO environment with feedback from MR and PW. MR prepared the manuscript with contributions from all co-authors.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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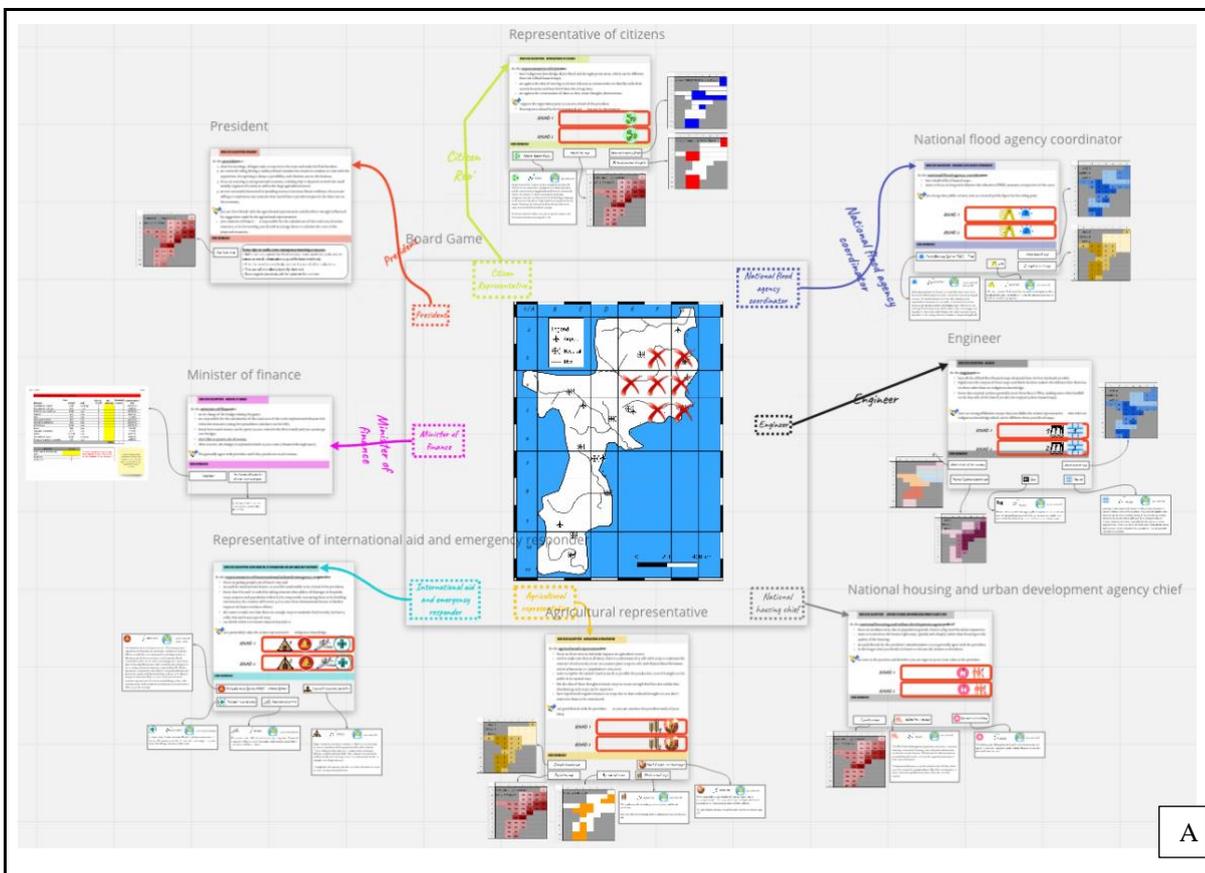
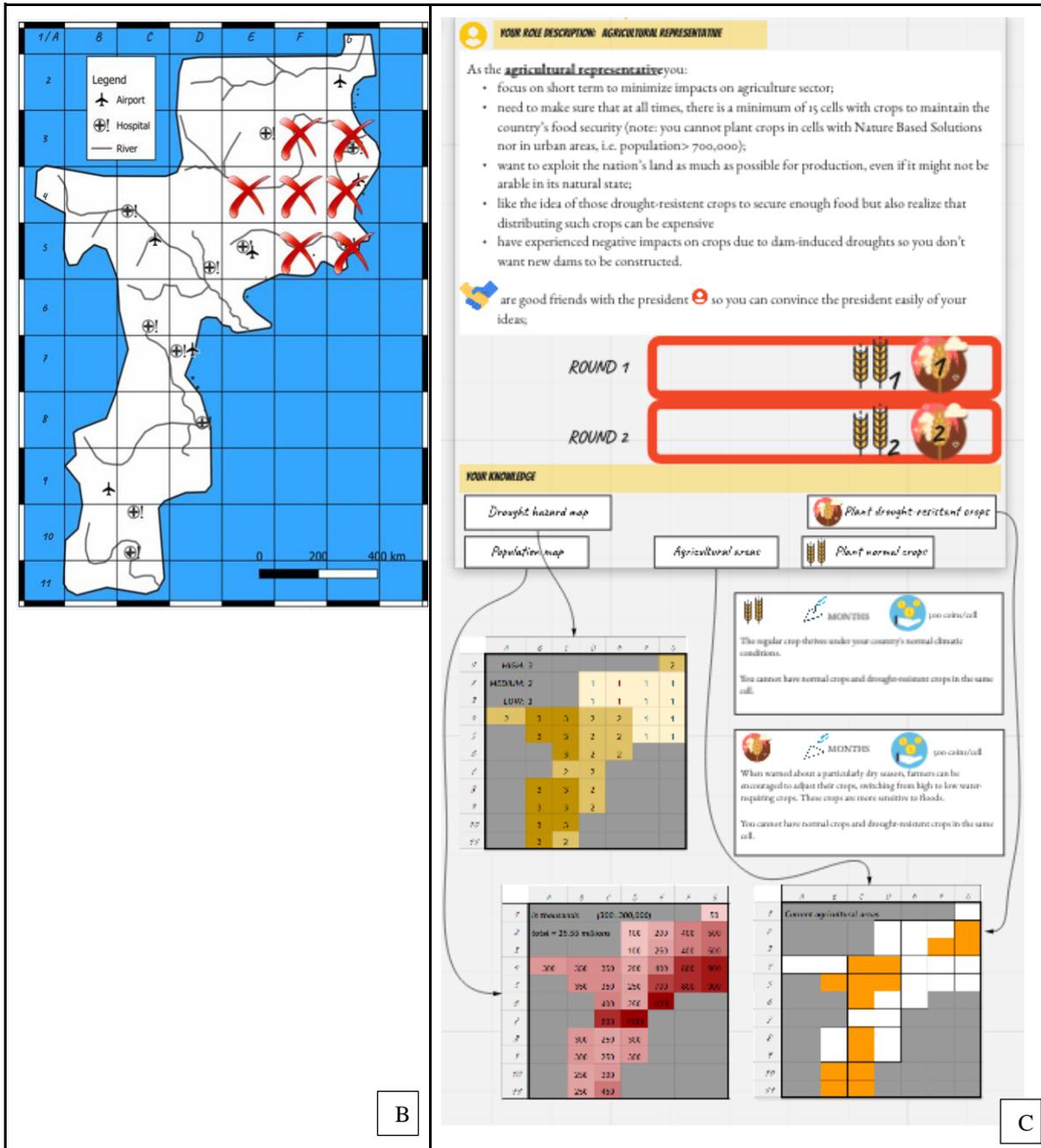


Figure 1: Panel A shows an overview of the game board with the map of the country in the middle and the roles and their descriptions around it. To support navigation and limit players searching the game board, the map board shows where information of each role can be found. Panel B zooms in on the main board game showing the fictional case study area and area impacted by a disaster. Panel C zooms in on one role card (here the agricultural representative is shown) giving a description of his role, expertise, specific hazard or exposure knowledge and DRR measures.

Element	Recovery objectives
Evacuate people or rebuild	NOT MET!
Hospitals	NOT MET!
Main airport	NOT MET!
Agricultural needs	NOT MET!
	No extra aid :(
	A

	(2)	(3)	(4) = (2)-(3)
	New event: very severe drought		
Summary	Impacts of new event	Impacts w/o previous DRR measures	Your achieved risk change
People	24300	24300	0
Buildings	0	0	0
Hospitals	0	0	0
Main airport	0	0	0
Agricultural needs	5	5	0

Figure 2: Panel A shows the four elements that, if damaged, need to be recovered to be eligible for international aid in the subsequent round. All requirements need to be met to be eligible for international aid. Panel B shows the calculator tool, which automatically assesses the impacts of the new disaster and what the impacts would have been had the team not taken any DRR measures at the end of the previous round(s). In this case, DRR measures taken during earlier rounds, did not increase nor decrease the impacts of the next disasters.

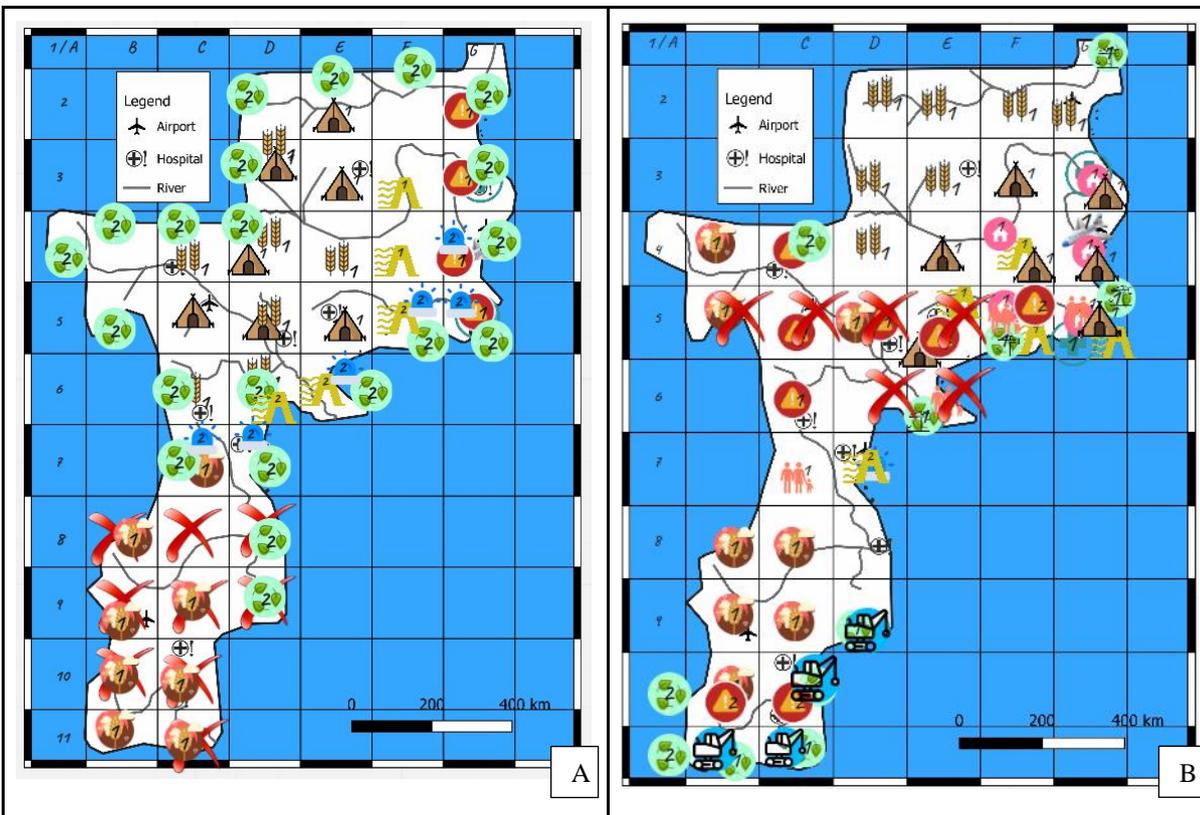
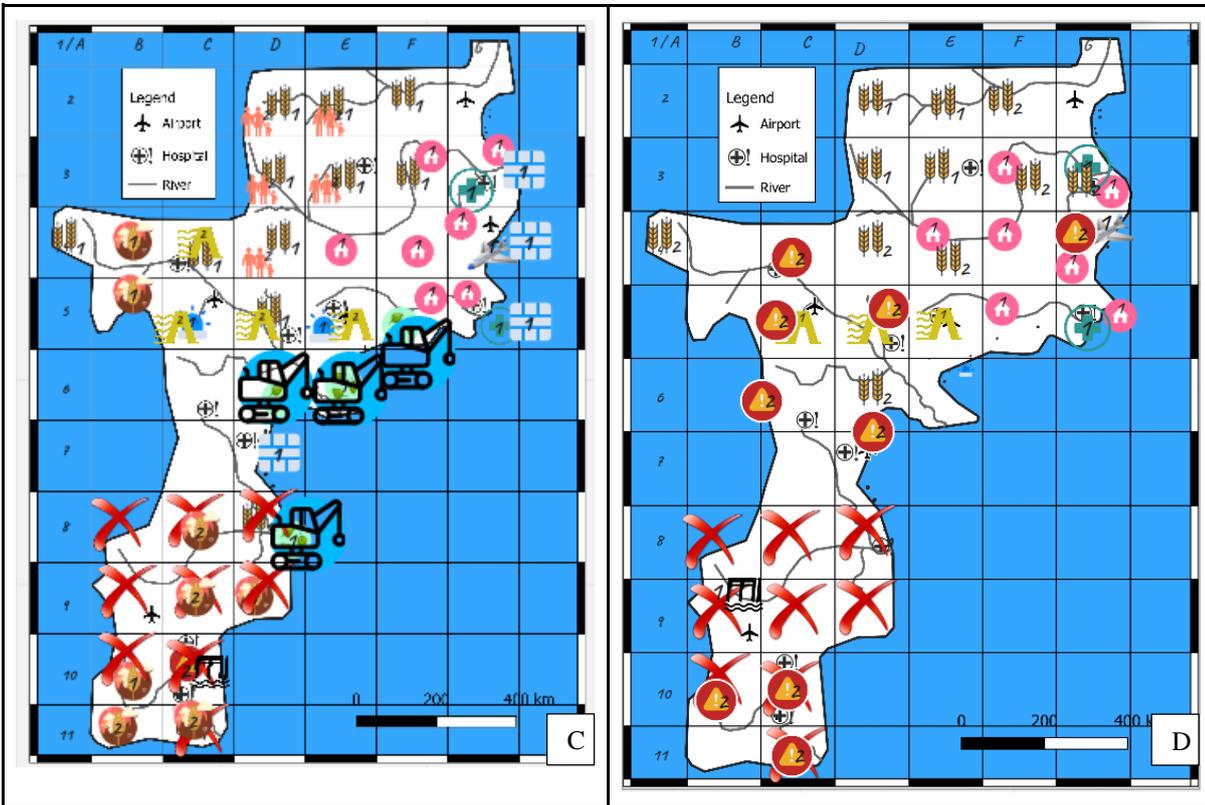
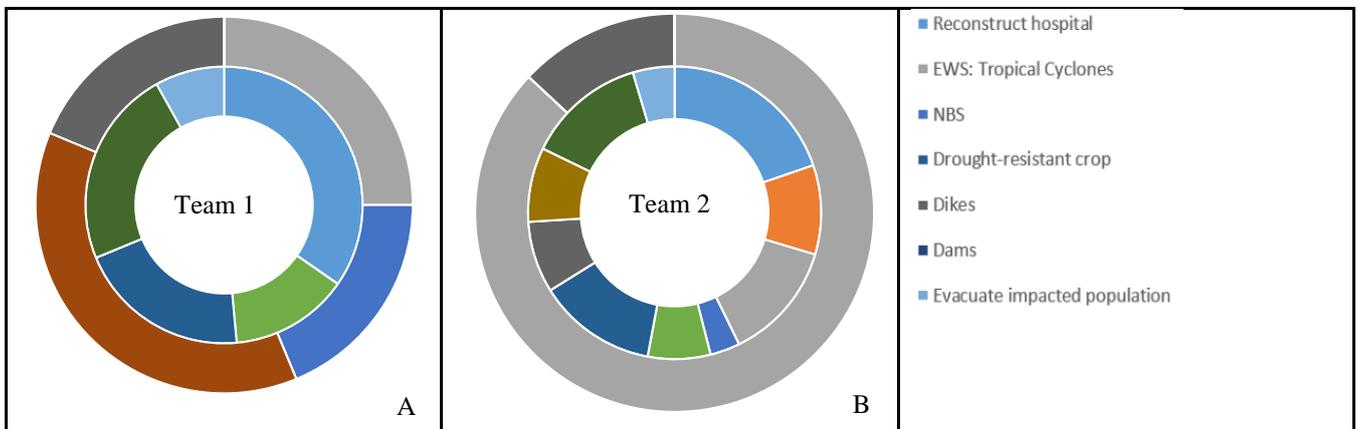
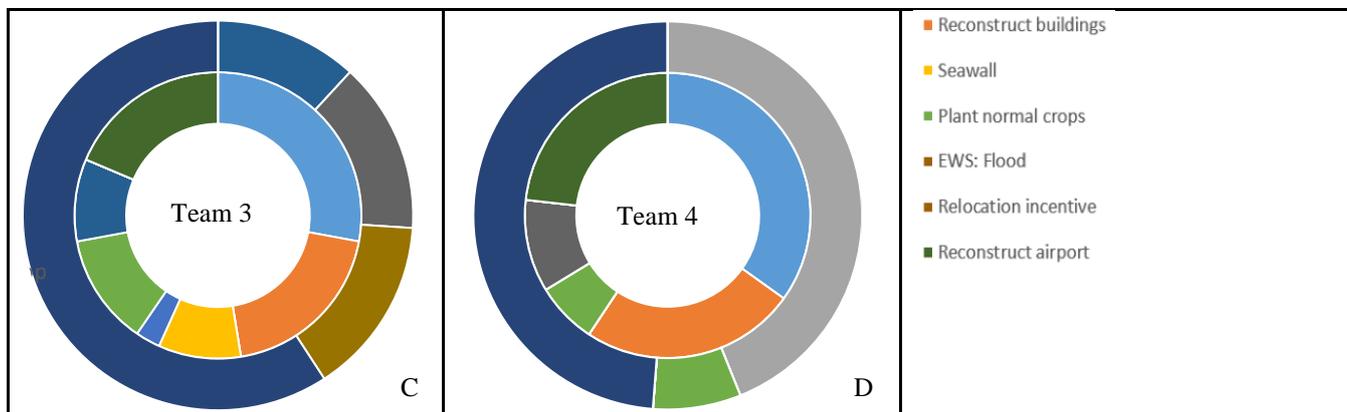



Figure 3: Final board team 1 and 2 during UR2020 (respectively Panels A and B), and team 3 and 4 during the ETH session (respectively panels C and D). DRR symbols with a "1" or "2" denote measures implemented respectively during round 1 or 2. In panel A, the red crosses show the location of the second disaster (the high-intensity drought). In Panel B, the red crosses show the location of the third disaster (the medium-intensity flood).

495 **Figure 4: Distribution of the investments in DRR measures during round 1 and round 2 for: team 1 and 2 during UR2020, (respectively Panels A and B), and team 3 and 4 during the ETH session (respectively panels C and D).**

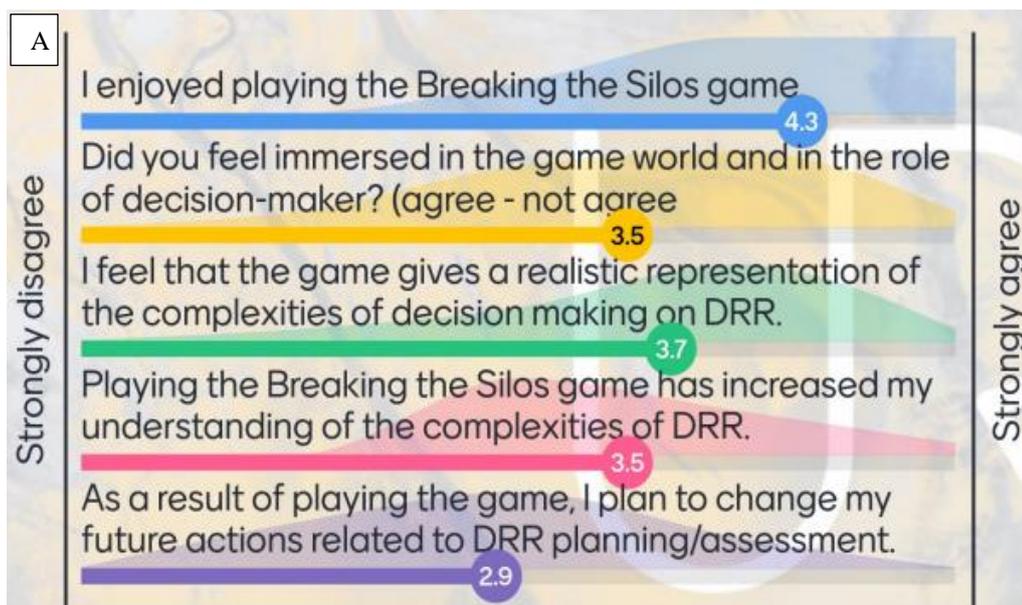
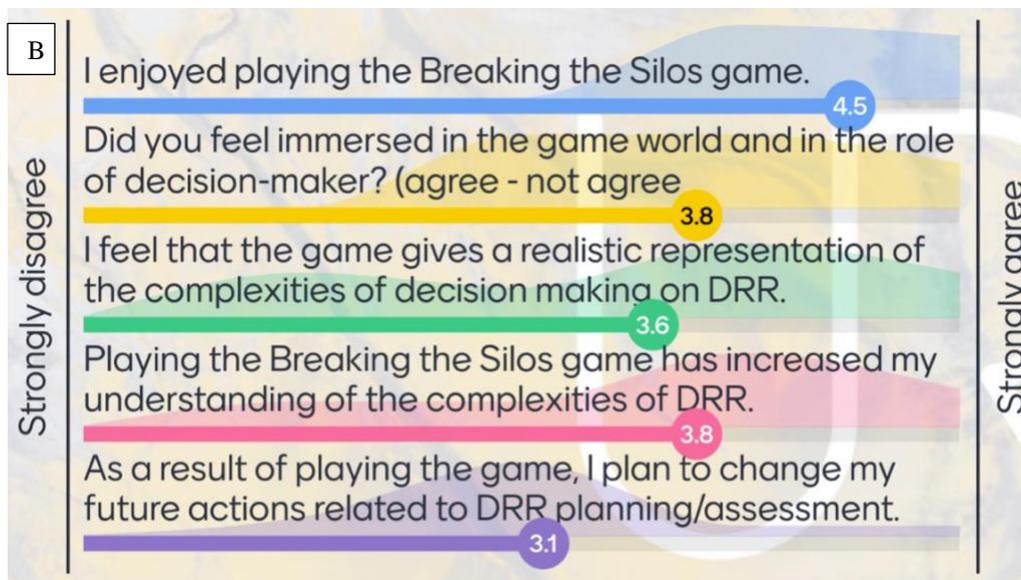



Figure 5: Replies to the post-game survey from the participants during UR2020 (Panel A) and ETH (Panel B).

Table 1. Pre- and post-game survey questions used at UR2020 and the session at ETH.

Pre-game survey questions	Post-game survey questions

1. What type(s) of hazards do you work on in your professional role? *(open question)*
 2. Does your work relate to the implementation and/or assessment of disaster risk reduction measures? *(yes/no)*
 3. If so, what aspect(s) do you account for in evaluating a DRR measure?
   a. costs of implementation
   b. short term benefits in decreasing risk of 1 hazard
   c. long term benefits in decreasing risk of 1 hazard
   d. short term benefits in decreasing risk of at least 2 hazards
   e. long term benefits in decreasing risk of at least 2 hazards
 4. I feel well-equipped to assess and/or implement DRR measures *(agree - not agree 5-point scale)*
 5. What main challenges do you face in implementing/assessing DRR measures *(open question)*
	1. I enjoyed playing the Breaking the Silos game. *(agree - not agree 5-point scale)*
	 2. Did you feel immersed in the game world and in the role of decision-maker? *(agree - not agree 5-point scale)*
	 3. I feel that the game gives a realistic representation of the complexities of decision making on DRR. *(agree - not agree 5-point scale)*
	 4. Playing the Breaking the Silos game has increased my understanding of the complexities of DRR. *(agree - not agree 5-point scale)*
	 5. As a result of playing the game, I plan to change my future actions related to DRR planning/assessment. *(agree - not agree 5-point scale)*
	 6. What did you learn from playing the game? *(open question)*
	 7. Do you have any recommendations for improving the game? *(open question)*