

## **1. Description of Bahir Dar University**

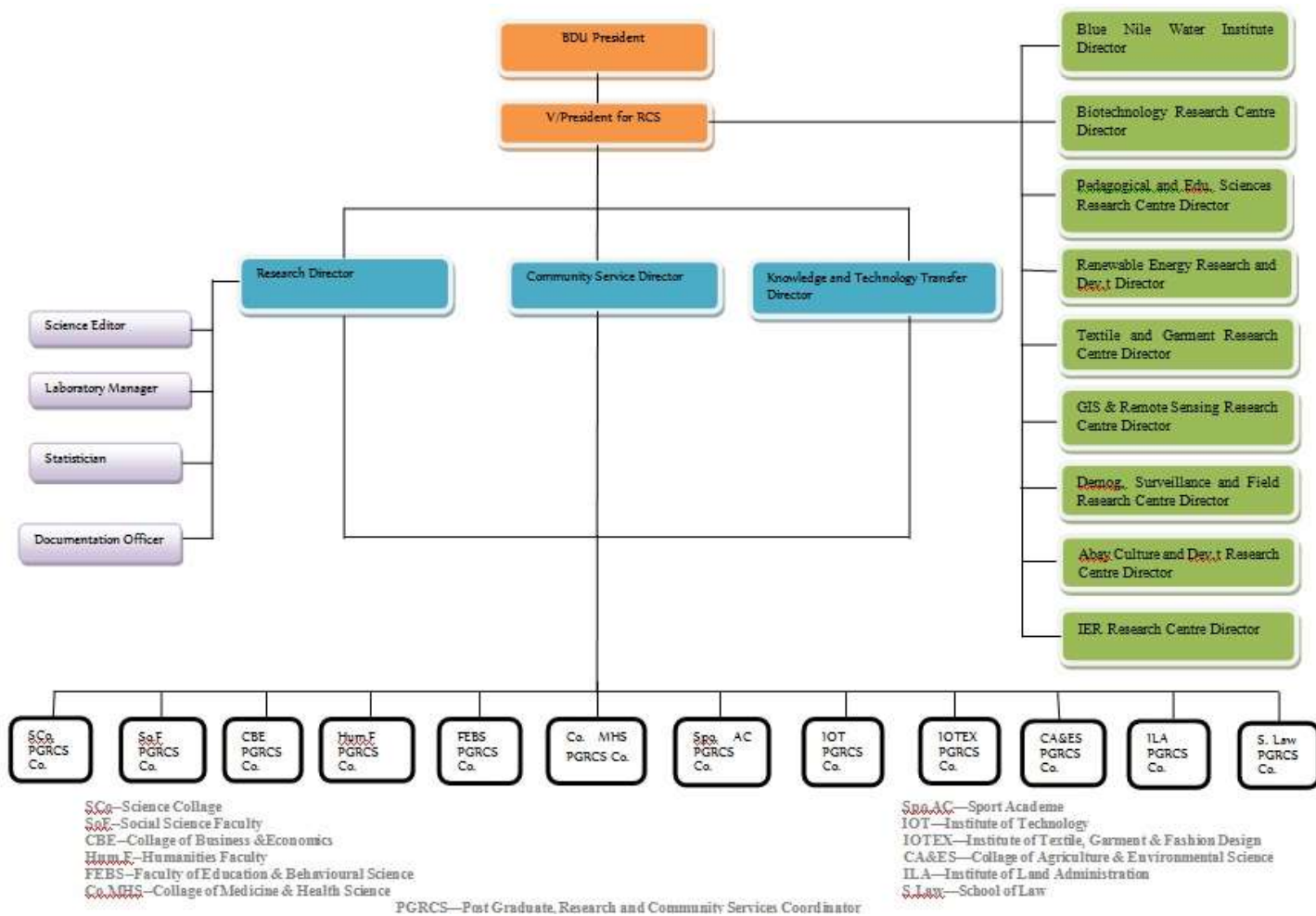
Prior to the establishment of Bahir Dar University, the Polytechnic Institute and the Bahir Dar Teachers College upgraded all their diploma programs to a degree level in 1996. Then in May, 2000, the two colleges were united to form Bahir Dar University. While the former Polytechnic Institute became the Engineering Faculty, the Bahir Dar Teachers College was renamed the Faculty of Education. In less than a decade, new schools, faculties and colleges came into existence. At the Engineering Faculty, all departments were raised to school levels in 2010. Then, a year later, they evolved into two technology institutes. The main campus also witnessed the emergence of new faculties and colleges. In the meantime, student enrollment jumped to over 45,000 in all the regular, continuing and distance education programs. By 2010, therefore, BDU was the leading university in the country in terms of student enrollment followed by Addis Ababa and Jimma universities. Likewise, the budget for the construction of new campuses skyrocketed to 1.3 billion Birr in 2010/11. Even though BDU is just 13 years old, it currently runs 65 undergraduate and 67 postgraduate programs, a commendable and prideful achievement by any standard! In addition, the University has 1,420 academic and 3,154 administrative staff members. In terms of research, BDU is making big strides towards backing one of the leading research universities in Africa in 2025. So far, it has established 9 research centers.

### **1.1. Organizational structure and key personnel**

Bahir Dar University has 12 academic units consists of 4 colleges, 3 faculties, 5 schools as well as 9 research centers. The research is organized as a separate entity directly accountable to the President and headed by a Vice president of its own with equal legislative powers as the other three vice presidents. As the University moves forward to achieving the vision of the University, a series of actions were taken: establishing the Research and Community Services Office (since 2003 EC at a capacity of a Vice President), formerly the Research and Publications Office, placing three senior experts (directors) at the University level one for each of Research, Community Services and Technology Transfer and the further assignment of 12 Coordinators

(one for each academic unit- Faculty, College, Institute, School). The measures indicate the seriousness of the University management towards achieving a research University.

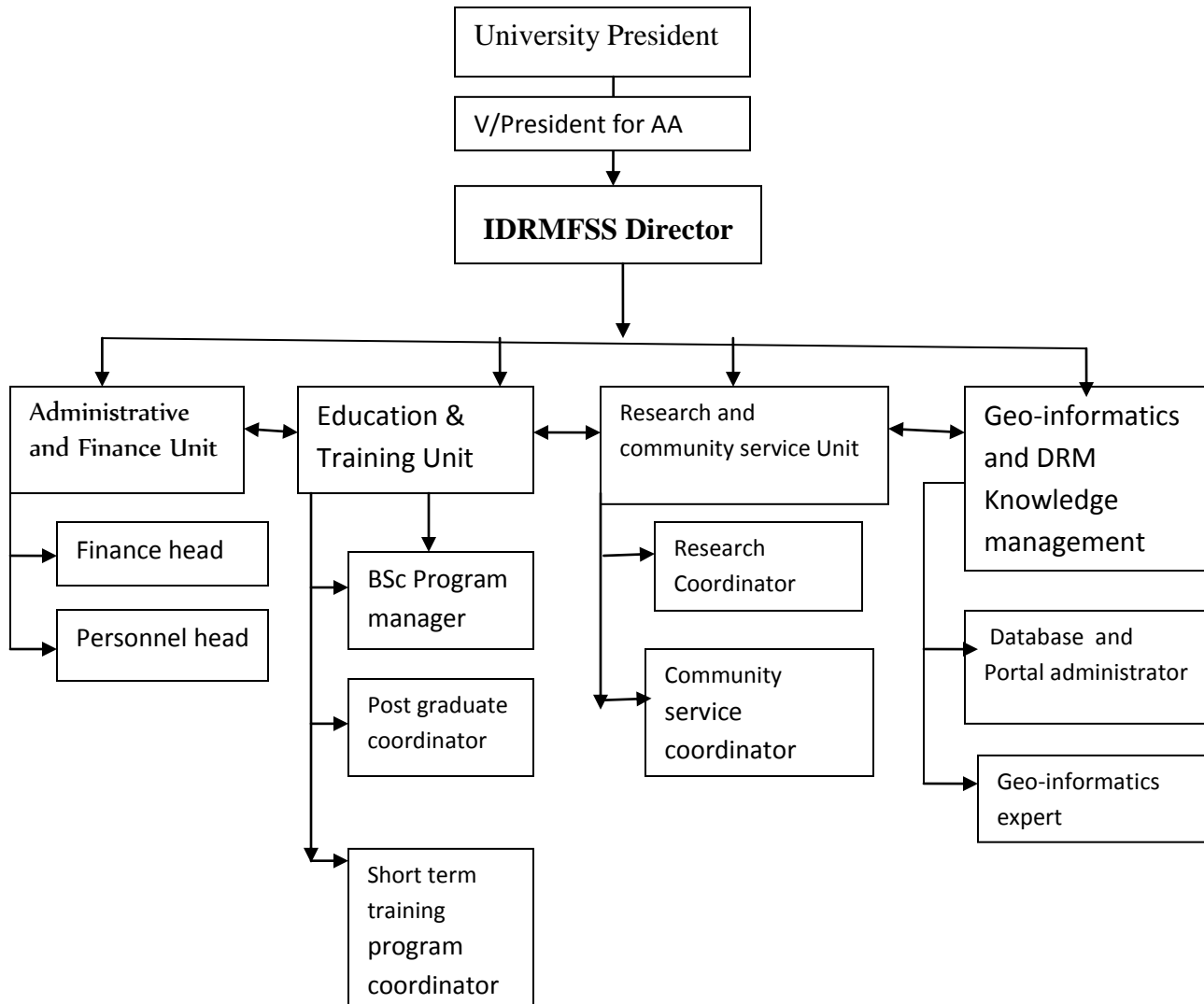
**Figure 1: Organogram of the University Research Unit**



Based on the country's deep-rooted history of disasters and the past disaster management experience, the government has ratified the National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management (NPDPM) in 1993. The NPDPM led the shift in thinking from relief and response to development that provides an opportunity for the integration of disaster risk management and sustainable development initiatives in higher education and research institutions. As a response to the identified policy gap in human capacity skill and research, Bahir Dar University has established the Department of Disaster Risk Management and Sustainable Development (DDRMSD) in 2005, and offered the B.S. DRMSD in the same year and the MSc in Disaster Risk Science and Sustainable Development program in 2007. Since then, the programs have turned out 250 graduates for the B.S. and 60 graduates in the MSc level.

As part of the university's five year strategic plan, which include the already established undergraduate and postgraduate programs, Bahir Dar University is planning to upgrade the Department into an Institute for Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Studies. It will offer academic programs, conduct research and provide community - based DRR services. The Institute is envisioned to be the center of excellence and source of information for disaster risk management endeavors in Ethiopia.

**Figure 2: Organogram of the would be Institute**



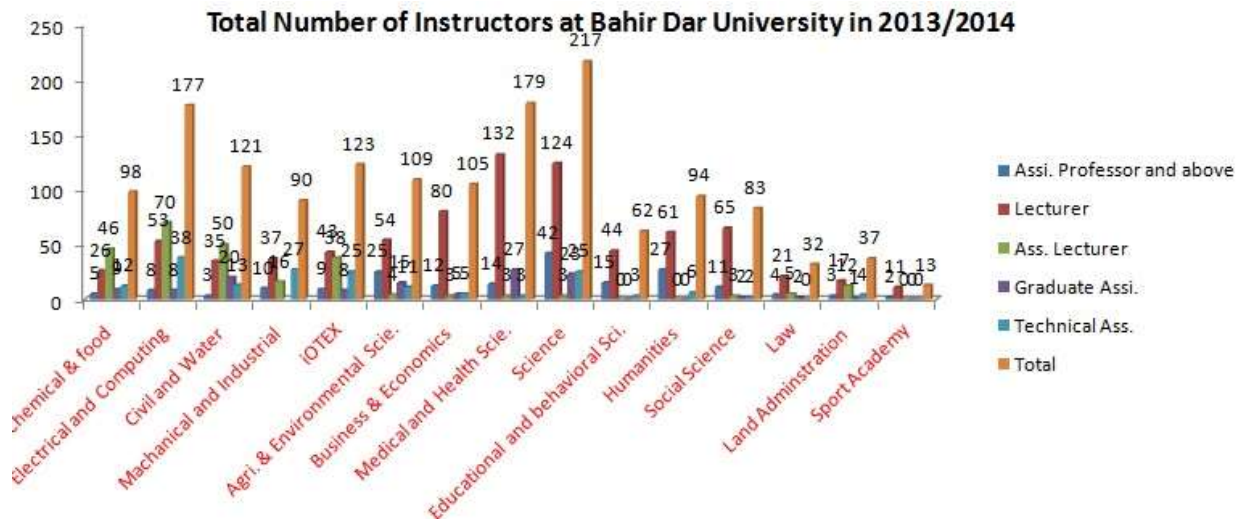
## **1.2. Funding sources**

The major funding source for the program is government. Bahir Dar University allocates budget for salary and the day-to-day activity of the staff. However, the program has been supported with budget from different sources through Bahir Dar University. Currently, the Periperi U Project (University of Cape Town), the University of Ujaume I project (Spain), University of Arizona, USAID/OFDA, UNDP and CORDAID are supporting the program to undertake training and research activities. When the proposed institute is established, the institute will also raise funds through contract training and research activities. Therefore, Huge research grants would be gained through the active network and communication of the experienced and qualified staff members independently in consent with the university higher officials.

## **1.3. Scientific research capacity**

Research has a lot of stake because the University aspires to become one of the top ten research universities in Africa by 2025. In the University, research is conducted by three groups of actors: research centers, research groups, and academic units. Most of the nine Research Centers and the 12 academic units are fully operational. The expansion of the graduate program has dual advantage in that it helps enhance the research efforts and at the same time improve the quality of graduates. In the field of disaster risk management, over the last 6 years, more than 60 graduate researches conducted related to drought and flood vulnerability, climate change and food security as well as disaster risk issues of urban population.

There are a number of ongoing and completed mega research projects which are designed to answer multiples of questions. We host distinguished speakers to present and share their experiences on selected topics to the largely novice academic and research staff. Each Academic Unit and Research Center regularly organizes seminars, and annually or biannually regional, national or international conferences. Some research groups have managed to write research projects and secure funds for specific research projects. BDU has currently three journals related to science, agriculture and environment as well as education. The staffs of the University publish hundreds of research articles annually. More than 260 journal articles were published in 2013/14.



**1.4. Linkage with international disaster risk research network**

The program has strong partnership with international, regional and national institutions through which access to financial and professional expertise secured in order to provide its services in a sustainable manner. Some of the partnerships established include:

- Partnership with PERIPERI (Partners Enhancing Resilience for People Exposed to Risk) university network of nine African countries, which aims at reducing disaster risks in African countries; specifically to support the progressive development of university-based risk reduction programmes that will build a range of capabilities in formal education, short course training, local research and policy advocacy. By this consortium, Ethiopia is chosen to be a Food Security Research and Training Center for East Africa;
- Agreement is reached with the Centre for Disaster and Vulnerability Studies in Dhaka University ,Bangladesh and the Philippine Association of Tertiary Level Institutions in Environmental Protection and Management which is a Consortium of Universities in the Philippines to collaborate in the Establishment of the Institute of Disaster Risk Management at Bahir Dar University.

- The partnership established since 2009/10 with Arizona University, USA and University of Jaume I, Spain, with the aim of enhancing the capacity in teaching-learning, research and community development related to disaster risk management and food security, could also be mentioned as the source of strength for the proposed institute.

## 2. **An overview of the professional activities conducted sofar**

Some of the major research works so far done and still ongoing include:

- Urban Risk Assessment in the major cities
- DRR and CCA Assessment in rural areas
- Analysis of DRR and CCA Assessment in Regional States
- Exploring Disaster Risks, Vulnerabilities, and Indigenous Coping Mechanisms in pastoral areas
- Effectiveness of Productive Safety Net Programs (PSNP)
- Climate Change Induced Vulnerabilities and Food Insecurity in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas
- Participatory Assessment on DRR, CCA & School Safety in rural schools.

Furthermore, there are immense number of short term trainings and community services offered by the program within Regional States.

### **3. A plan of incorporating IRDR objectives into its own missions and its implementation.**

With the support of DPPA(Disaster prevention and preparedness agency) and other implementing agencies, Bahir Dar University (BDU) came on board as the first higher academic institution in Ethiopia and Africa as well to prepare courses and produce professionals in Disaster Risk Management and Sustainable Development (DRMSD) since 2005. In addition, through funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and partnership with University of Arizona (UA)(US), a master's program in Disaster Risk Science and Sustainable Development (DRSSD) was launched in 2007. The USAID funding enabled BDU to establish a partnership program with UA and run the program for four years. The partnership program has in turn enabled to organize an international workshop entitled: *Risk Science Scholarship and Sustainable Development: Building Educator Practitioner Networks in Africa*. The workshop brought many international participants together. BDU's curriculum in DRSSD was the center of discussion. BDU benefited from this event in many ways. It helped BDU in raising popularity, establishing and strengthening relationship with international universities and eventually providing inputs for curriculum revision.

The department of DRMSD at BDU also takes in to consideration the Hygo Framework for Action (HFA) to align its contents with the five internationally recognized priority areas: ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation; identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning; use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels; reduce the underlying risk factors; and strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

Bahir Dar University is envisioning to be one of the premier research Universities in Africa by 2025, Our departments visions is not different. BDU has a vision to reduce peoples' vulnerability to natural and human-induced disaster risks. The university is aggressively working on various researches and outreaches so that it can practically contribute to the nations development:



## **Objectives of IRDR stated in the TOR:**

### **I. Establishing a ICoE which contributes to the IRDR science plan and objectives**

BDU has flagship departments which make it popular , and department of disaster risk management is one of them; to mention some of them ; Institute of land administration, institute of textile and garment ,Maritime Academy and others. BDU- Department of disaster Risk Management is conducting researches on areas related with vulnerability, on cross cutting issues like taking gender role issue at the fore front in achieving food security, characterizations of environmental hazards like flooding, drought etc. Vulnerability to food insecurity and Climate change related researches are also being undertaken in agricultural and pastoral areas of the country. The department has a desire to scale –up this evidence based and applied research in other parts of the country and the continent Africa at large. The department is also planning to be an institute in the near future which has a data base information management unit and could help it to be a knowledge, skill and information reservoir. Moreover, the researches being underway and planned are very much trans-disciplinary, comprising of agricultural disciplines, public health and engineering. As the country’s economy is largely dependent on agriculture (85%), problem solving applied researches will be conducted on crop and livestock production, public health and nutrition security to make it resilient against climate related disasters in the long-term.

### **II. Supporting and developing partnership.**

Currently, the department is working in collaboration with GOs (ex. DRMFSS and Regional offices) UN agencies like, UNDP, FAO, ISDR. Moreover, we have strong collaboration with NGOs, to mention some of them, USAID, Plan international, Red cross and red crescent societies, CARE Ethiopia, OXFAM, Save the Children, CORDAID,Helpage international .we need this networking so that we can work other universities in the country and in Africa to reduce the underlying and immediate vulnerabilities to natural and human-induced hazards.

### **III. As a facilitator for IRDR**

BDU believes that it is the ideal institutions to establish ICoE in IRDR in Africa for number of reasons. Firstly, we are the first higher academic institutions by offering undergraduate, postgraduate courses in disaster risk management. Secondly, we are working community service works in disaster risk management, food security and sustainable development. Thirdly, we are playing the vital role in the Disaster risk network in Africa. BDU is the first university enrolling 42,000 students in Ethiopia in many different programs. Fourthly, we are conducted and conducting number of researches related with DRM. Moreover, BDU-DRMSD is offering courses in Regular, Distance and Evening programs to professionalize DRM. BDU-DRMSD has also played critical role in the recently ratified DRM policy. BDU has been part of the first ever country wide program called Woreda Risk profiling, a basic research being undertaken by the Federal DRMFSS all over the country to document and analyze the hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities so that it will help to develop possible risk reduction measures. As research is at the center of the University's vision 2025, developing and establishing ICoE would hugely support this effort.

#### **4. A vision to develop the IRDR ICoE**

As stated above, we have the department working on the objectives very similar, but in small scale with what IRDR ICoE in different countries is doing. Therefore, we have got enabling environments to develop IRDR ICoE, we have the DRM policy and its implementation modality SPIF. We are located at the most vulnerable part of the country related with Hydro metrological hazards,(the likes of drought, flooding and pest infestation).

## **5. Identification of funding and other supports**

The main budget source for many undertakings in the department is the government of Ethiopia (University budget). As BDU is also planning to be one of 10 best research universities in Africa, it is outlaying vey huge amount of money on research and outreach services. But to realize our objectives of all-inclusive academic, knowledge base, and research services that equip professionals of DRM with contemporary science and techniques and provide with data and research results of DRR and SD, we are working with different partners in terms of financial and technical support. To mention some of them, but not limited to: UNDP,USAID,Peri Peri U , UJI university (Spain). There is a growing need we are witnessing that Donors are supporting the academia in capacity building and research activities in the country which could be taken as a forthcoming potential to be supported financially. For instance, USAID, WFP , FAO and other are supporting the university currently.