

# IDRIM Lecture Series

7<sup>th</sup>

Date: 5th November 2024

Time: 12:00 pm (UTC)

Lecturer: Prof. Robert Goble

## Title

Can the Social Amplification of Risk  
Framework (SARF) help efforts to  
improve disaster risk management?

# Guest Lecturer



## Robert Goble

**Rob Goble** is Research Professor of Environmental Science and Policy in the George Perkins Marsh Institute, Clark University's interdisciplinary research center concerned with human-environment interactions. He was its director 2006-8. Professor Goble earned a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Wisconsin. He combined teaching with research in theoretical particle physics at Yale University, the Universities of Minnesota and Utah, and Montana State University. He joined the faculty of Clark University with new interests in technology assessment and in risks and hazards. His research has ventured into such topics as air pollution, energy systems (small and large), climate change, toxic chemical risks, occupational health, disease risk, radiation hazards, emergency planning for nuclear accidents, and risk perspectives in international development. His concern for environmental justice has led to sustained community-based work with Native American communities exposed to chemical and radiation hazards and with urban neighborhoods in Worcester. Ongoing themes are understanding the implications of variability in people's responses to hazards, and in understanding various ways in which people and institutions cope with uncertainty. Professor Goble's current research follows these themes with a focus on systemic risks, especially the human side of systemic risks. Two examples are i) learning how implementation works or fails to work for projects and policies; a paper from that effort "Implementation gaps are persistent phenomena in disaster risk management: a perspective developed after discussions at IDRiM 2022" with coauthors Norio Okada, Kami Seo, and Guoyi Han, received the paper of the year award from IDRiM in 2024; ii) efforts at updating and applying the social amplification of risk framework. He believes in and enjoys collaborative work.

Professor Goble's research has been funded by a variety of National and International entities, and by private foundations. He has also served on a variety of advisory panels whose service ranges from international organizations and governments to local community organizations, where his particular concern has been improving communication and understanding between scientists and diverse stakeholders. He is a member of IDRiM and the AAAS, and is a Fellow of the Society for Risk Analysis.

# Abstract

## **Title:**

Can the Social Amplification of Risk Framework (SARF) help efforts to improve disaster risk management?

## **Abstract:**

The social amplification of risk framework (SARF) was introduced almost 40 years ago. Observations of serious discrepancies between the assessment of risks by experts and the assessments and concerns of lay people provided the prime motivation. Further observations noted that such discrepancies often had a dynamic nature; triggering events could provoke social processes that raised public concerns and these could have consequences both for the original risk of concern and also for other risks. At that time, social science research concerning relevant social processes such as risk perceptions, risk communication, and behavioral change was extensive, but largely isolated in separate silos. Thus further motivation was a hope that the framework would encourage integration of the social science research and understandings. Because social processes could and often did change risks, another hope was that risk assessments would integrate social aspects with technical ones. Over the years, integration within social sciences has largely happened, but integration of social science with technical risk assessment remains elusive. Also while many original aspects of the SARF are still used, there have been many adaptations in light of new knowledge and new circumstances.

Disaster risks like other risks are susceptible to social processes that can alter or even transform the nature of the risks. Because SARF provides a structure for addressing complexity in human and social behavior, it could, potentially, be useful for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in two different ways: i) it could help create deeper understandings of difficult disaster risk situations; ii) it could be used in creating practical tools for disaster management, warnings of potential difficulties for instance, and possible interventions. Furthermore, SARF offers the potential of informing the development of an implementation science appropriate for DRM: a newly formed IDRiM task force is now working on that challenge. As of now the potential of SARF to aid DRM has not been realized. In this seminar we will discuss some opportunities for making use of SARF and some of the obstacles to doing so.



# Zoom & Time

<https://kyoto-u-edu.zoom.us/j/97873127119?pwd=llhXoMumPzK3dTatEroyfeREqCu2lS.1>

Meeting ID: 978 7312 7119  
Passcode: 117719

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Time Zone	Time
EST	7:00
UTC	12:00
CET	13:00
IST	17:30
JST	21:00