# **Session 5.** **Thursday 2 May 2019, 2.00pm**

# **Japan-Pacific ICT Centre and Oceania Pavilion *(parallel sessions)***

# FRDP Goal 3: *Strengthened Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery*

## Introduction

The Pacific region is highly susceptible to the effects of climate change and extreme weather events with frequently occurring natural disasters such as cyclones, tsunamis, droughts, floods, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes. On average, the region experiences three major disasters each year, which result in very high annual disaster losses as a proportion of economic activity. The economic losses from Tropical Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu in 2015 was over 60% of the country’s GDP and over 20% in Fiji in 2016 as a result of Tropical Cyclone Winston[[1]](#footnote-0). A number of highly exposed countries are disproportionately affected including the Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga. Between 2014-2018 the region has experienced multiple tropical cyclones of high intensity and the impact of earthquakes, flooding and El Nino induced drought.

The experience of Tropical Cyclones Gita, Josie and Keni in 2018 and the ongoing concerns of the volcanic eruption on Ambae Island, Vanuatu, are recent examples of the region’s vulnerability to disasters. Overall, natural disasters have affected over 1 million of the region’s population of 2.4 million people in the last five years[[2]](#footnote-1). The Pacific Island countries vary greatly in geography, size, history, culture, socio-economic and political environment as well as their capacity to cope with disasters. Major challenges in the region are associated with lack of access to basic public services, such as drinking water, sanitation, reliable sources of energy, education and health care, lack of connectivity through transport, limited human capacity and limited investment, trade and aid flows which are exacerbated by natural disasters and climate change[[3]](#footnote-2).

The FRDP in promoting an integrated approach to tackling Climate Change and Disaster Risk, acknowledges that the Pacific can no longer progress its development priorities in silos. The FRDP provides the Pacific region with a unique opportunity to optimize its geopolitical position as large ocean states to own and implement resilient development measures that ensures the most effective and efficient use of its scarce resources. Historical trends and scientific evidence in relation to climate change and disaster risk, point to the fact that, in order to achieve the development aspirations of the Pacific, whether it be embedded in the Sendai Framework, the SDGs and 2030 Agenda, or within the FRDP, institutional mandates and national policies, there is a need to ensure a shift in focus to systematic changes rather than the usual incremental short term solutions. Without just focusing on technical solutions and additional financing, there needs to bold and transformative steps that ensures a focus on equal distribution of resources and power and tackles the root causes of poverty, discrimination and inequalities to build a more resilient Pacific community.

This session of the Pacific Resilience Meeting will focus on comprehensive discussions on Goal 3 of the FRDP which is *‘Strengthened Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery’*. Pursuing this goal includes improving capacity of PICTs to prepare for emergencies and disasters, thereby ensuring timely and effective response and recovery in relation to both rapid and slow onset disasters, which may be exacerbated or caused by climate change. Disaster preparedness, response and recovery initiatives will reduce undue human losses and suffering, and minimize adverse consequences for national, provincial, local and community economic, social and environmental systems[[4]](#footnote-3).

The Role of Youth

The theme of the meeting, *‘Youth Futures in a Resilient Pacific’*, emphasizes the important role that young people play in finding solutions to improve sustainable development and seeks to place importance on the need for youth to have an active role in the implementation of the FRDP. Young people through advocacy and awareness raising within their communities’ have the power to be a strong force of accountability for their national governments. [[5]](#footnote-4). As they live and play in their communities they often gain unique insights into the local environment, its strengths, weaknesses, and the ways in which it is changing. In addition, young people are often creative and open-minded in their problem solving: they have energy, commitment and initiative to take action to reduce the impact of climate change and to prepare to face emergencies. Children and young people have a right, enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (www.unicef.org/crc), and supported by other international treaties and agreements, to have their voices heard on matters that affect them. Climate change and disaster risk management certainly counts in this category[[6]](#footnote-5). This Pacific Resilience meeting provides an opportunity to harness the creativity and energy of young people by providing them with a platform to express themselves through active participation in policy dialogue and be real agents for change.

## Key Issues

Climate change is increasing the risk of weather-related disasters in the Pacific and is predicted to increase in the future[[7]](#footnote-6). Pacific Island countries are showing leadership in mainstreaming climate change and disaster risk reduction. Example of this include: Fiji’s presidency of the COP 23 and the hosting of these climate talks in the Pacific; and the Pacific Island leader’s adoption of an integrated approach to address climate change and disaster risk management through the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific. Despite these positive developments, significant challenges and vulnerabilities remain and development partners continue to play a critical role in supporting countries the region.

Coordinated and collaborative humanitarian action is vital to avoid duplication and enhance collective efforts to support PICTs in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Disaster preparedness and response must be situated within an enabling environment with the political will and commitment to build capacity of all relevant government agencies, development partners and humanitarian actors to respond to slow and sudden onset hazard events in a coordinated and integrated manner[[8]](#footnote-7). Well-coordinated, fast and effective disaster preparedness, response and recovery, combined with long-term initiatives on disaster risk reduction and risk prevention, help reduce losses and strengthen the resilience in the Pacific. There is a need to build awareness and capacity not just within the disaster management community but across the wider population at regional, national and local level, to broaden its practices[[9]](#footnote-8).

With regards to data, efforts have improved in the area of research and information gathering to better understand and develop methods and processes to support and inform adaptation decision-making. With approaches such as forecast based action and financing which focuses on early preparedness and community level actions based on credible forecasts, data and information is critical to ensure that actions are implemented before the disaster strikes. Using science and technology to anticipate and respond more quickly to disasters, reduces loss of life, assets and livelihoods. The Pacific whilst having made some progress in terms of data collection and dissemination over the last five years, still faces significant statistical challenges with regards to limited statistical collection and dissemination capacity and reliance on surveys which can be erratic, costly, sample-based and externally funded.

**Partnerships**

IFRC One Billion Coalition - <http://media.ifrc.org/1bc/>

## Objectives of the session

***FRDP Goal 3 Strategic Objective:*** *Improved capacity of PICTs to prepare for emergencies and disasters, thereby ensuring timely and effective response and recovery, and to ensure future risk is reduced, in relation to both rapid and slow onset disasters.*

## Island Solutions

* Draw on experiences, existing best practices and lessons learnt from the Pacific region on disaster related short and long term displacement and how humanitarian response and assistance both existing and new approaches are adapted to the cultural, environmental, social and economic context of Pacific communities.

Leading Questions:

* What are some of the current challenges for Pacific government systems and capacities in dealing with displacement during disasters and how can these be mitigated as a means of strengthening resilience within disaster preparedness, response and recovery?
* What are current approaches to integrating migration-related strategies in national policies and how are these being supported in terms of capacity building and resourcing?
* Share lessons learnt, challenges (new risks and issues impacting resilience building) and successes in adapting national approaches to the cultural, environmental, social and economic contexts of your country.

Leading Questions for Development Partner presenters:

* As international responders, what are the guiding principles, challenges and lessons learnt to supporting and strengthening capacities and coordination mechanisms at regional, national and subnational level to assist communities to better prepare for and respond to situations of short and long-term displacement?
* What are some guiding principles, available resources, partnerships and networks that are available that can support the integration of gender-responsive and human rights-based approaches into disaster preparedness, recovery and response across all levels of implementation particularly with regards to situations that involve short or long term displacement across islands?

Case Studies and Resources to be highlighted:

* AMCDRR Outcome Statement 2018
* Ambae Disaster and Response
* Cash based transfers as a new approach to humanitarian assistance – Vanuatu
* Kiribati or Cook Islands – Remote Island response, logistics aspects/constraints, minimum standards of Island preparedness
* Youth engagement as first responders and participation/strengthening capacity to undertake needs assessments
* ADRA mapping work on church-based facilities for emergency response
* IOM – displacement Tracking

## Legislative Frameworks

1. ***Ensuring climate smart disaster risk management laws that empower local action***

Identify good practices and partnerships for climate smart DRM frameworks that promote cross-sectoral inclusive approaches and provide an enabling regulatory environment for local action, DRR and inclusive community engagement.

1. ***Preparedness for International Disaster Assistance and Cooperation in the Pacific***

Draw on experiences, existing best practices and lessons learnt from the Pacific region on large scale disaster response and coordination of international humanitarian assistance and identify ways to strengthen regional disaster response coordination for a strong Pacific response.

Leading Questions:

* What are the key challenges for increasing disaster resilience at local level and make sure no one is left behind in disasters? How can law and policy strengthen local action for climate smart DRR?
* Drawing upon experiences of large-scale disaster responses in the Pacific, how can we improve regional disaster response coordination in the Pacific and ensure efficient and effective regional support that keeps national authorities in the driver’s seat?

Case Studies and Resources to be highlighted:

* Best practices from Tonga and Vanuatu on disaster legislation reviews – Ambae and TC Gita disaster response
* Update on the ongoing Solomon Islands disaster legislation process
* Fiji Humanitarian Code of Conduct
* [Samoa Protection, Gender, Inclusion and Disaster Law case study](https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2019/01/SamoaRC_PGISnapshot_FINAL.pdf)
* IDRL impact study (2017): [From Pam to Donna: How Vanuatu strengthened its legal preparedness for international disaster assistance](https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/12/IDRL-Advocacy-Brochure-Final-LR.pdf)

## Early Warning Early Action and Effective Response

* Identify ongoing partnerships and approaches in Early Warning Early Action policy, financing facilities and resource requirements, its challenges and benefits in relation to disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response, what developments are needed in forecasting science to support EWEA and who are the actors involved in EWEA.

Leading Questions:

* What are some ongoing and emerging approaches and best practice to ensure inclusive and people centered early warning, early action that are currently being implemented in Pacific countries? Ensuring bottom up and top down approaches are working together – integrated. Providing inclusive platforms
* How can humanitarian response benefit from these approaches and what are the challenges in implementing them?
* What are some ways to make warnings/information more available, accessible, understandable, actionable and sustainable?
* Who are the actors involved in early warning early action and how can we all work together to support the culture shift that is required to do more anticipatory and early action?
* Share lessons learnt, challenges and successes of translating information into action at the community, sub-national and national level from the perspective of community actors and first responders.

Case Studies and Resources to be highlighted:

* Case studies on early modalities of response – cash-based assistance approaches and disaster risk financing facilities
* Highlight case studies of slow onset disaster response such as droughts – Examples from the North Pacific
* Case studies on partnerships that promote inclusive engagement between local actors/first responders and donors
* Japan – disaster risk preparedness work in the Pacific
* OFDA’s work in the Pacific
* Tonga & Vanuatu – disaster preparedness and response
* PNG – disaster in a conflict environment
* Solomon Islands - Preparedness

## Protection, Gender and Inclusion

* Provide practical guidance for policy and legislative arrangements that encourages inclusive gender-responsive decision-making systems and human rights-based approaches across all implementation levels that takes into account the differing needs of persons of all gender identities, ages, disabilities and backgrounds for fast and effective humanitarian action, disaster response and recovery.

Leading Questions:

* What actions can States and other humanitarian actors take to ensure women, men, girls and boys have equal access to assistance and participation in humanitarian action? How are the specific needs and voice of persons with disability, LGBTI and women considered? What are the key issues with regards to accountability and good governance in community engagement and protection issues when it comes to humanitarian action?
* How can CSO and Private sector stakeholders support governments and partners to institutionalize Protection, Gender and Inclusion in strengthening capacities and coordination mechanisms and planning arrangements at regional, national and subnational level to assist communities to better prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters?
* Why is it important to ensure partnerships, planning and implementation approaches are inclusive of cultural, environmental, social and economic context? Provide examples of good practice and/or challenges.

Leading Questions for Youth presenters:

* What are challenges youth, young men, women, LGBTI and persons with disability face in participating in development policy and practice particularly for disaster management strategies?
* What are some strategies that would need to be established that are specific for including all vulnerable groups, including young people in policy and practice at the subnational, national and regional level?
* Share stories, lessons learnt, challenges and successes in engaging with other stakeholders in a disaster or crisis.

Case Studies and Resources to be highlighted:

* Ambae and TC Gita Disaster Response
* Ongoing legislative review – stakeholder engagement, gender responsive and human-rights focused

## Intended Outcomes

***FRDP Goal 3 Outcome:*** *Disaster preparedness, response and recovery initiatives prevent undue human losses and suffering, and minimize adverse consequences for national, provincial, local and community economic, social and environmental systems.*

Key outcomes of these sessions will include:

* Identifying sustainable, results-oriented and practical modalities and approaches of inclusive cooperation that focus on the commitment to strengthen humanitarian actions and coordination for improving the lives and well-being of the most vulnerable in Pacific communities with strong consideration for cultural, environmental, social and economic context.
* Participants will gain a stronger understanding of ideas, approaches, available resources and requirements to integrate disaster preparedness, response and recovery in policy, legislation, capacity building and advocacy for building resilience across the various sectors and levels of implementation.
* Developing recommendations that will inform political decision-making at national, regional and global level policy discussions.

1. Vanuatu Post Disaster Needs Assessment, Tropical Cyclone Pam, March 2015; Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, Tropical Cyclone Winston, Fiji, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. EM-DAT: The Emergency Events Database - Université catholique de Louvain (UCL) - CRED, [www.emdat.be](http://www.emdat.be) Brussels, Belgium; SPC Statistics for Development Division, <https://sdd.spc.int/en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. ESCAP Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2018. <https://www.unescap.org/publications/economic-and-social-survey-asia-and-pacific-2018> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. FRDP p.g. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. [https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/youth/AYCEOs\_climate-change\_take-action-now\_EN.pdf p.15](https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/youth/AYCEOs_climate-change_take-action-now_EN.pdf%20p.15) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. [https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/youth/AYCEOs\_climate-change\_take-action-now\_EN.pdf p.15](https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/youth/AYCEOs_climate-change_take-action-now_EN.pdf%20p.15) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) <http://gsd.spc.int/frdp/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
8. FRDP, p.g. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
9. FRDP, p.g. 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)