

An Investment for Sustainable Development in Pacific Island Countries

Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management

Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters

A Framework for Action 2005 - 2015

FINAL DRAFT

Agreed to by officials attending the 12th Pacific Regional Disaster Management Meeting

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Preamble

1. There is ongoing and increasing vulnerability of Pacific Island nations and communities to the impacts of disasters. This has led to increased national and regional commitments to disaster risk reduction and disaster management on an ‘all hazards’ basis in support of sustainable development. These commitments derive from the Pacific Forum Leaders decision in Madang 1995 and the Auckland Declaration in 2004. This Framework for Action 2005 – 2015 has been developed to respond in part to these commitments.
2. This Framework will also contribute to the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy and the Hyogo Framework for Action, which underscore the extreme vulnerability of small island developing states to disasters.
3. This Framework complements other relevant regional frameworks and policies including those relating to climate change¹, oceans², freshwater³, HIV/AIDS⁴ and agriculture⁵.
4. Hazards in Pacific island nations and communities pose enormous threats at both community and national levels. The “big ocean, small islands” context contributes to environmental and economic exposure of these nations and communities. Disaster risk reduction and disaster management planning is impeded by resource constraints and a serious lack of capacity in many Pacific island nations and communities. Incomplete hazard information, a shortage of models of good practice and the lack of strong legislative framework add to the vulnerability as do shortcomings of warning arrangements and communications systems.
5. Disasters can result in short and long-term social (including health, security and governance), economic and environmental consequences with effects often felt countrywide. For example, entire community survival and livelihood systems can be severely disrupted by a single disaster. Pacific island nations also face major difficulties in supporting response and recovery activities, which potentially divert a large percentage of gross domestic product in the short term and set back hard-won development gains in the longer term.
6. At the regional level, the strengthening of a coordinated approach on an ‘all hazards’ basis across the region would significantly improve the capacity of individual Pacific island nations and communities to reduce their vulnerabilities and manage disasters when they occur.
7. At the national level, an integrated framework will involve a whole of government approach to disaster risk reduction and disaster management with key agencies coordinating closely with relevant local, national, regional and international stakeholders. Strengthening national legislative and regulatory frameworks may be necessary. Models of best practice will need to be developed and adopted to support disaster risk reduction in development planning and capacity building in disaster management.
8. At the local level, partnerships between government, community groups and civil society will be necessary to engage, support and enhance the existing capacity within Pacific island communities.

¹ The Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Change

² The Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy

³ The Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management

⁴ The Pacific Regional Action Plan on HIV/AIDS

⁵ The Pacific Regional Framework on Agriculture

Framework for Action 2005 - 2015

Vision

9. Safer, more resilient Pacific island nations and communities to disasters, so that Pacific peoples may achieve sustainable livelihoods and lead free and worthwhile lives.

Mission

10. Building capacity of Pacific island communities by accelerating the implementation of disaster risk reduction and disaster management policies, planning and programmes to address current and emerging challenges through:

- a) development and strengthening of disaster risk reduction and disaster management, including preparedness, response and relief/recovery systems;
- b) integration of disaster risk reduction and disaster management into national sustainable development planning and decision-making processes at all levels; and
- c) strengthening partnerships between all stakeholders in disaster risk reduction and disaster management.

Guiding Principles

11. These guiding principles address the specific gaps and challenges identified by Pacific island communities, the SOPAC Pacific Islands Regional Progress Report 1994 – 2004, the Pacific Regional Position Paper for the Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction, and as highlighted in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015. The order of these principles has been adapted to Pacific needs that apply at all levels, nationally, regionally and internationally, with priority given to national and local actions to support community-based needs and initiatives.

(i) Governance – Organizational, Institutional, Policy and Decision-making Frameworks.

National governments have the key responsibility for disaster risk reduction and disaster management policy development and planning, ensuring they reflect the principles of good governance, and security within the context of sustainable development.

(ii) Knowledge, Information, Public Awareness and Education.

Capacity building for disaster risk reduction and disaster management is facilitated by information gathering, storage and dissemination leading to knowledge acquisition and management, education, training and professional development programmes, and information management systems and technologies which underpin the successful implementation of policies and plans.

(iii) Analysis and Evaluation of Hazards, Vulnerabilities and Elements at Risk.

Developing a better understanding of hazards, together with analysis and evaluation of their vulnerabilities and risks, enables people to be well informed and motivated towards a culture of prevention and resilience.

(iv) Planning for effective Preparedness, Response and Recovery.

While all hazards cannot be eliminated, or some even substantially mitigated, improving disaster preparedness, response and recovery can significantly reduce their devastating impacts on vulnerable communities.

(v) Effective, Integrated and People-Focused Early Warning Systems.

Warnings must be timely and understandable to those at risk, take into account the demographics, gender, cultural and livelihood characteristics of target audiences, and support effective operations by decision-makers.

(vi) Reduction of Underlying Risk Factors.

Risk factors relating to changing social, economic and environmental conditions need to be addressed in national sustainable development strategies or similar documents, as well as sectoral development policies, plans and programmes in order to provide a basis for effective disaster risk reduction and disaster management.

Thematic Areas

12. Each of the thematic areas which follow addresses one of the Guiding Principles enunciated in Paragraph 11, and consists of an opening statement and a listing of expected outcomes by 2015. Suggested key national and regional activities directed towards the achievement of the expected outcomes are also identified.

Theme 1: Governance - Organizational, Institutional, Policy and Decision-making Frameworks

13. National government has the primary role in disaster risk reduction and disaster management. However, it is a shared responsibility requiring effective partnership between all levels of government and other stakeholders. The application of good governance principles are also essential to ensure timely and cost-effective outcomes.

14. The adoption of a holistic and integrated 'whole of country' approach and the integration of disaster risk reduction and disaster management considerations into national policies, planning processes and decision-making at all levels and across all sectors is critical.

15. The establishment and/or strengthening of existing decision-making processes and organizational arrangements will ensure timely and effective disaster risk reduction and disaster management outcomes.

16. Recognizing the presence of limited technical and financial resources and institutional capacity at the national and regional levels, collaboration and partnerships between CROP agencies in support of national efforts, consistent with the Pacific Leaders vision, is critical in harnessing key disciplinary skills and expertise across the region.

17. Good governance ensures the 'whole of country' adoption of core principles of accountability and transparency at all levels, which is critical for effective and efficient disaster risk reduction and disaster management.

18. Theme 1: expected outcomes by 2015

- a) Disaster risk reduction and disaster management mainstreamed into national policies, planning processes, plans and decision-making at all levels and across all sectors.
- b) Partnerships and organizational arrangements between government agencies, civil society, development partners, communities and other stakeholders strengthened.
- c) CROP agency partnerships coordinated, harmonised and strengthened to ensure country- and outcome-focused delivery of services.
- d) Good governance by all stakeholders in disaster risk reduction and disaster management at regional, national and local levels strengthened.

19. Theme 1: key national activities

- a) Integrate economic, social and environment risks and management of all hazards in national planning and budgetary processes.
- b) Include disaster risk assessment in development and investment decision-making right down to the community level.
- c) Identify, assess and implement regulatory and incentive based instruments for disaster risk reduction and disaster management, including financial risk sharing and insurance related strategies.
- d) Strengthen whole of government and stakeholder collaboration in disaster risk reduction and disaster management, identifying lead agencies, roles, and responsibilities.

- e) Coordinate and harmonise development partner assistance to ensure effective use of resources.
20. Theme 1: key regional activities
- a) Develop new and strengthen existing guidelines, tools and training programs to assist national governments to mainstream disaster risk reduction and disaster management.
 - b) Strengthen decision making through the use of information systems on hazards and their impacts.
 - c) Develop guidelines for appropriate indicators for monitoring and evaluating disaster risk reduction and disaster management activities at regional, national and local levels.
 - d) Strengthen CROP collaboration and partnerships, adopting an integrated and programmatic approach to support disaster risk reduction and disaster management at the national level.

Theme 2: Knowledge, Information, Public Awareness and Education

21. Information management is a vital element of disaster risk reduction and disaster management necessary for retaining and/or strengthening cultural, traditional and contemporary knowledge. Use of information systems will increase the effectiveness of disaster management and risk reduction at national and community levels.
22. Public awareness and education, incorporating traditional coping mechanisms and local knowledge, will enhance individual and community resilience.
23. Formal disaster management training, institutionalised through national and regional educational programmes, will improve professional capabilities.
24. Theme 2: expected outcomes by 2015
- a) Better informed and more resilient communities as a result of quality public awareness and education programmes.
 - b) Sustainable, user-friendly information management networks in use at national and regional levels.
 - c) Improved knowledge of social, economic and environmental impacts of disasters in Pacific island nations and communities to monitor the effectiveness of disaster risk reduction measures.
 - d) Disaster risk management training programmes institutionalised at national and regional levels.
 - e) Accredited and recognised qualifications in disaster risk management.
25. Theme 2: key national activities
- a) Strengthen training programmes to enhance professional development in disaster risk reduction and disaster management amongst all stakeholders.
 - b) Expand and focus public awareness and education programmes to enhance community resilience through community-driven approaches, initiatives and information sharing.
 - c) Strengthen collaboration among government and non-government agencies to more effectively underpin information management, public awareness and education.
 - d) Develop strategic, long-term approaches to the design, implementation and evaluation of public awareness, education and training programmes.
 - e) Develop resources for, and delivery of, media-based public awareness and education programmes.
 - f) Affirm, record and protect traditional coping mechanisms.
 - g) Integrate traditional knowledge into information management systems.
 - h) Integrate disaster risk management training where appropriate into formal education programmes.

- i) Strengthen national capacities for conducting comprehensive disaster impact assessments, and cost benefit analysis of disaster risk reduction and disaster management measures.
 - j) Establish an integrated national information system, for collection and management of comprehensive data and information, for disaster risk reduction and disaster management.
26. Theme 2: key regional activities
- a) Coordinate, develop and promote the process of accreditation for existing and future disaster risk management training programmes.
 - b) Promote and support the integration of disaster risk management education and training into the formal education sectors (i.e. schools/universities/technical institutions etc.)
 - c) Support and where appropriate, coordinate and conduct regional or national training activities.
 - d) Provide guidance for the design and development of appropriate public awareness and education materials and resources.
 - e) Support countries to establish integrated national information systems for the collection and management of comprehensive data and information for disaster risk reduction and disaster management.
 - f) Appropriate regional organisations to provide national disaster risk reduction and disaster management organisations access to common information systems with links to other related central websites.
 - g) Support for countries to develop capacity to conduct comprehensive disaster impact assessments and cost benefit analysis of disaster risk reduction and disaster management measures.
 - h) Continue development of trainers and training management systems through the strengthening of the regional training advisory group (RTAG).

Theme 3: Analysis and Evaluation of Hazards, Vulnerabilities and Elements at Risk

27. The starting point for reducing disaster risks, planning for disaster management and promoting a culture of resilience, lies in a greater level of understanding of the causes and effects of hazards and the physical, social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities to disasters that Pacific island nations and communities face.
28. The effects of disasters can be reduced when people are well informed and motivated to take action towards a culture of prevention and resilience and in addition identify disaster risk reduction priorities, which in turn requires the compilation, analysis and dissemination of relevant information and knowledge on hazards and their impacts.
29. Strengthened networks and partnerships will facilitate better integration of available resources, including local expertise.
30. Theme 3: expected outcomes by 2015
- a) An integrated framework for disaster risk reduction and disaster management planning developed at regional and national levels, and implemented in Pacific island nations and communities.
 - b) Estimates of disaster risk and vulnerability that will enable informed decisions regarding the impact of disasters on physical infrastructure, social, economic and environmental conditions in Pacific island nations and communities.
 - c) Data and statistical information on disaster occurrence and impacts available for the region.

- d) Implementation of a comprehensive scientific and technical regional database enabling spatial analysis of hazard prone areas, and establishment of magnitude frequency relationships and loss functions.
31. Theme 3: key national activities
- a) Adopt and apply the Comprehensive Hazard and Risk Management (CHARM) process to assist disaster risk reduction decision making.
 - b) Conduct hazard and vulnerability assessments and mapping at all levels, which will include the collection of required baseline data.
 - c) Promote and apply community-based disaster risk assessment tools and best practices.
 - d) Collect and analyze comprehensive data on the direct and indirect impacts of disasters on development in both the short and long-term.
 - e) Develop strategies to increase the engagement of communities and incorporate traditional knowledge in risk assessment and disaster management.
 - f) Strengthen capacity at all levels to utilize risk assessment products and tools to enhance disaster risk reduction and disaster management, such as the Environmental Vulnerability Index (EVI) as a monitoring tool.
 - g) Strengthen networks, in particular at the national level, for more effective hazard and risk assessment including data sharing.
32. Theme 3: key regional activities
- a) Develop, and/or improve and promote the application of tools and methodologies for assessing hazards and vulnerabilities;
 - b) Research and compile statistical information and data on disaster risks and impacts including time series and cross-sectoral data at national and regional level;
 - c) Strengthen technical and scientific capacity and resources to enhance data collection, collation, analysis, synthesis, dissemination, maintenance, data sharing, protocols and E-networking.

Theme 4: Planning for effective Preparedness, Response and Recovery

33. While we cannot avoid hazards there is considerable scope for reducing their devastating impacts on vulnerable communities by improving disaster management arrangements for preparedness, response and recovery activities.
34. Disaster management planning is a continuous process. A disaster management plan does not provide all the answers to managing a disaster – it provides a framework for the coordination of the most effective methods and relationships for dealing with its impact.
35. Funds and resources for disaster management in the Pacific are limited. Nations should strive to achieve models for disaster management that are both effective and sustainable, and include regional cooperation.
36. Theme 4: expected outcomes by 2015
- a) Disaster preparedness, and the capacity for effective and timely response and recovery, strengthened in all Pacific island nations and communities;
 - b) Funds and resources made available to achieve an effective model of disaster management;
 - c) Emergency communication systems established and operating effectively;
 - d) Public awareness programmes addressing all known hazards;
 - e) Emergency response organizations and systems strengthened, including at the regional level.

37. Theme 4: key national activities

- a) Review and strengthen disaster management planning arrangements ensuring clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and an integrated approach involving all stakeholders.
- b) Ensure that the disaster management organisational structure includes an adequately resourced national disaster management office and functional emergency operations centre(s) (EOC) and other infrastructure,
- c) Develop and implement a disaster management training programme including community based disaster risk management;
- d) Determine, establish and maintain sustainable emergency management capabilities including effective communications systems;
- e) Establish a national disaster fund for response and recovery;
- f) Establish a contingency stockpile of emergency relief items;
- g) Adapt regional guidelines and models of best practice for national implementation.

38. Theme 4: key regional activities

- a) Support the strengthening of disaster management capacities and planning arrangements at national level.
- b) Support the development and implementation of community-based disaster risk management programmes.
- c) Develop guidelines including models of best practice for effective disaster management and provide them to all Pacific island nations and communities.
- d) Support the development and/or strengthening of appropriate regional mechanisms in conjunction with key stakeholders, to respond to humanitarian needs at the request of Pacific island nations.
- e) Assist countries in the development of their emergency communications systems.

Theme 5: Effective, Integrated and People-Focused Early Warning Systems

39. One of the most effective measures for disaster preparedness are well-functioning early warning systems that deliver accurate and understandable information in a timely manner.

40. The region has recognized the need to strengthen its early warning systems that respond to specific and urgent needs and the circumstances in Pacific island nations and communities. Included here is the need to communicate over vast ocean distances both within and between countries, and of the generally isolated populations.

41. The early warning systems need to be based on:

- a) prior knowledge of the specific hazards and risks faced by the communities,
- b) sound scientific and technical monitoring and sustainable warning services for these hazards and risks,
- c) dissemination of timely and understandable warnings,
- d) local knowledge and preparedness to act.

42. These systems need to be integrated into the global network supporting early warning, and vice-versa, but must be tailored so that information remains “community-focused” and addresses all hazards.

43. In considering early warning systems, nations should strive to establish sustainable and effective ‘all hazards’ warning systems.

44. Theme 5: expected outcomes by 2015

- a) Robust, effective national and regional monitoring and early warning systems established and strengthened for all hazards incorporating traditional knowledge and appropriate technology and tools.
- b) Community, national and regional warning systems integrated into the global network supporting early warning and vice-versa to improve safety and security to disasters

- c) Effective communication and awareness raising in place as part of these community-focused early warning systems
45. Theme 5: key national activities
- a) Establish and/or strengthen institutional capacities to ensure early warning systems are integrated into governmental policies, decision-making processes and emergency management systems at both national and community levels.
 - b) Complete inventories and needs analyses of national early warning systems ensuring inputs from all stakeholders, including traditional knowledge and community needs are addressed.
 - c) Upgrade or redesign existing national forecasting or early warning systems to cater for major hazards.
 - d) Develop and implement a comprehensive programme for community awareness and preparedness.
46. Theme 5: key regional activities
- a) Complete inventories and needs analyses of regional early warning systems and identify priorities for improved regional early warning systems that will better support national needs.
 - b) Support the provision of regional forecasting, and early warning and monitoring systems of hazards such as tropical cyclones, droughts, flooding, storm surges, tsunamis, earthquakes and volcanic activity.
 - c) Integrate national and regional early warning systems into the global networks and vice-versa.

Theme 6: Reducing Underlying Risk Factors

47. Underlying risks created by changing social, economic, environmental conditions and resource use, and the impact of hazards, including those associated with climate variability, climate change and extreme weather events, must be addressed in national and sectoral adaptation planning and programmes.

48. Food preservation and security is an important factor in ensuring the resilience of communities to disasters, particularly in areas prone to drought, flooding and other hazards that can weaken livelihoods. However, the limited physical infrastructure, housing and capacity for many small island states to preserve and secure food stocks needs to be addressed.

49. Critical public infrastructure and housing should be strengthened through proper risk assessment, codes of practice and design standards.

50. Recovery processes should take the opportunity for enhancing disaster risk reduction in order to reduce underlying risks.

51. Financial risk sharing schemes should be considered, particularly insurance and reinsurance and other financial modalities for risk transfer.

52. Theme 6: expected outcomes by 2015

- a) Active steps are taken to address underlying risk factors such as poverty and population trends that negatively impact on community resilience.
- b) Adoption of risk assessment, codes of practice and design standards by key sectors such as private sector, health, transport, communication, construction, and agriculture for improving their resilience.
- c) Disaster risk reduction measures for major infrastructure, industries and projects are covered by planning processes.
- d) Resource-use policies and practices incorporate risk reduction measures.

53. Theme 6: key national activities

- a) Ensure the participation by all stakeholders: government agencies, private sector and communities in adopting and applying risk reduction tools and the sharing of risk reduction information.
- b) Support and enhance the capacity of social and planning systems to ensure vulnerable populations are less exposed to disaster risks and disaster impacts.
- c) Promote risk sensitive resource use policies and practices and ensure compliance.
- d) Implement appropriate building codes and monitor compliance by responsible national administrative bodies and reporting.
- e) Develop financial risk-sharing mechanisms, particularly insurance, reinsurance and other financial modalities against disasters.
- f) Promote food security as an important factor in ensuring the resilience of communities to disasters.

54. Theme 6: key regional activities

- a) Provide scientific support and information on hazards and risks to enable the effective application of appropriate disaster risk reduction tools.
- b) Strengthen information sharing mechanisms on disaster risk reduction.
- c) Develop regional guidelines for hazard resistant buildings including appropriate technology where applicable.
- d) Support the incorporation of disaster risk reduction measures in key areas such as land-use policy, development and practice, and physical infrastructure.
- e) Support the development of financial disaster risk-sharing mechanisms, particularly insurance, reinsurance and other financial modalities for risk transfer.

Implementation and Follow Up

General Considerations

55. The successful implementation of this Framework for Action is dependent on the ownership and combined efforts of governments and all other stakeholders working in partnership to ensure a multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral, integrated approach at regional, national and community levels.

56. Progress towards the achievement of the expected outcomes should be measured against agreed national and regional indicators with clearly defined resources and responsibilities.

National

57. Successful implementation of this framework, is dependent on:

- a) national governments adapting and owning this Framework through the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and disaster management practices into policies and programmes, and
- b) an effective mechanism to coordinate, through a participatory process, the development, implementation, monitoring and reporting of a national action plan that reflects achievable short and medium-term priorities.

Regional

58. Subject to the SOPAC Secretariat seeking its Governing Council approval of this Framework, SOPAC, which has the mandate for the coordination of regional disaster risk reduction and disaster management, will:

- a) actively promote the approved Framework and seek the collaboration of key CROP agencies and other regional partners in its implementation;
- b) ensure work plan priorities are aligned to the Framework, and develop an implementation plan including a process for monitoring and evaluation;
- c) support member countries to develop and implement their national action plans;
- d) coordinate the reporting on regional progress in implementing the Framework;
- e) advocate for resources to support the successful implementation of the Framework, and
- f) coordinate a process of review and reporting on the implementation of the Framework.

International

59. International organizations are encouraged to support the implementation of this Framework and the achievement of national priorities through closer collaboration and partnerships at regional, national and community levels.

60. In partnership with SOPAC, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and its members, in collaboration with relevant national, regional, international and United Nations bodies and supported by the inter-agency secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, are requested to assist in implementing this Framework for Action.

Resource Mobilization

61. National governments to allocate resources to support the implementation of identified strategic priorities.

62. Regional, international organizations and other development partners, through appropriate multilateral, regional and bilateral coordination mechanisms, to provide resources to support the implementation, incorporating principles of good donorship.

63. Develop partnerships to implement schemes that spread out risks, reduce insurance premiums, expand insurance coverage and thereby increase financing for post-disaster reconstruction and rehabilitation, including through public and private partnerships as appropriate. Promote an environment that encourages a culture of insurance in developing countries, as appropriate.

64. Identify and evaluate other financing modalities that can contribute to resilience building in Pacific island communities, and are responsive to the special circumstances of economies of scale.