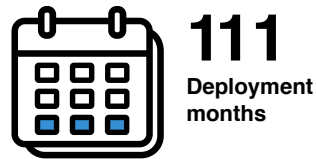
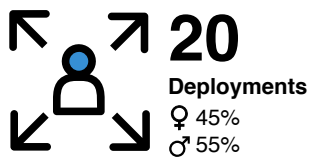


Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation



The COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with compounding global emergencies, including the effects of climate change, has increased both the demand for and the relevance of the Australia Assists program. The program has continued to strengthen disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emergency preparedness through strategically positioned humanitarian expertise.

Supporting National Disaster/Emergency Management Organisations (NDMOs/NEMOs)

Seven disaster risk management (DRM) experts supported Pacific NDMOs and NEMOs to become **more effective in leading** disaster preparedness and response.

NEMO Tonga

Suresh recommended changing the Emergency Management Act to Disaster Risk Management Act to cover all elements in the identification of risks, relief and recovery processes at the onset of an emergency. This led to the development of the **Emergency Road Map** which is the **first of its kind in the region**. The Road



"Last month was a critical time for NEMO as we were at the finalisation stage of our DRM bill of which Suresh is taking the lead on. This is NEMO's highest priority area now and I'm glad to share with you that the DRM bill was approved by Cabinet yesterday and this is a great milestone for NEMO Tonga. We owe it to you and wish to acknowledge the support from your side through the deployees, malo aupito!"

— NEMO, Tonga.

Map was endorsed by [SPC Fiji](#) and launched in August 2021. Along with Australia Assists colleague Maureen, Suresh also helped re-draft the **recently passed DRM Bill**, which broadens the NEMO's scope to include **safeguarding, protection and inclusion** elements. Maureen also supported **policy development**, including drafting preparedness and response plans for volcanic eruptions/ash and tropical cyclone risks.

NDMO Samoa

Ameen tailored an online information management system to help NDMO and the National Emergency Operation Centre with planning and decision making.

Simione worked with strategic DRM leaders (including [SPC](#), [OCHA](#), [UNDRR](#) and [IFRC](#)) to help redesign a Response Agencies Toolkit. The toolkit provides resources to help regional agencies develop fit-for-purpose but standardised DRM plans that **guide future preparedness, response and recovery work**.

NDMO Vanuatu

Deployees Rowan, Rebecca and Allen supported the NDMO to advance a **common operating model of DRM across the Pacific**, while achieving **fit-for-purpose local emergency response** plans that coordinate agencies in times of crisis. In a simulated cyclone exercise, a team of 30 staff from government agencies, non-government organisations and province offices produced a strong situation report to update the Secretary General within five hours.

Climate resilience in Timor-Leste

Kate and Marina deployed consecutively to the [FAO](#), working alongside the DRM-Climate Change Adaptation Task Force in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. This work resulted in the drafting of a *DRM Strategy for Agriculture* and the *Multi-hazard DRM Plan for Agriculture*. The **Ministry-endorsed strategy** sets out a vision for the management of disaster risks, including pests, disease and climate change, while the plan can be used by **practitioners and technical experts**. Marina's work included developing and socialising a Hazard, Vulnerability, Risk Assessment Tool among government counterparts while also supporting the National Disaster Operation Centre with database management and Situation Reports during flash flooding in early 2021.



The focus of Kate's assignment was to set the foundation for the institutionalisation of agriculture DRM in Timor-Leste. This is a significant contribution that will, in due time, make a difference for communities vulnerable to the numerous hazards affecting Timor-Leste.

— Team Leader, FAO Timor Leste, on deployee, Kate.

Food security in the Pacific - practical approaches to resilience

Emergency and Resilience Expert, Kara provided assistance to **vulnerable populations** as the focal point for FAO's sub-regional Office for the Pacific Islands and the Regional Pacific Food Security Cluster Coordinator. Kara's role was essential to cyclone affected communities and those bearing the brunt of COVID-19 restrictions as her reports and proposals resulted in **increased funding** and **enhanced humanitarian programming**. Working with FAO and the Food Security Cluster, Philippe **established the Climate and Disaster Risk and Resilience Unit** within Fiji's Ministry of Agriculture. The foundations he laid were put to the test when Tropical Cyclone Yasa caused significant crop damage in Fiji. Philippe's well integrated standard operating procedures allowed district level actors to rapidly mobilise and complete a comprehensive damage assessment within days of the disaster. This is testament to the **efficacy of preparedness planning** that Philippe had fostered to safeguard communities against food shortages.



Kate, a Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Advisor with FAO in Timor-Leste, meets community members on a field trip to villages in the Municipality of Manatutu.

Interoperability across the Pacific

The program's longest-serving deployee, Gina has worked with [SPC](#) since 2018 to enhance **interoperability between disaster management agencies**.

Specifically, she has:

- Developed the SPC **Post Disaster Response Framework** and supporting tools that **guided SPC's network of Pacific agencies** through TC Harold and COVID-19 responses in its test phase.
- Customised an **Incident Management System** with online awareness training implemented across 80 organisations within 18 countries. The system strengthens national and regional response capability by instilling **common procedures and training standards for emergency services**.
- Prepared a **Pacific TAFE Certificate IV qualification in DRM Team Leadership**, in partnership with the Pacific Resilience Programme and the University of the South Pacific. This is the first of its kind and will significantly **increase capability** through competency-based training that is **accessible across the region**.



*The Government of Kiribati now has a **Cabinet-endorsed Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Act and comprehensive Regulations** which will provide guidance and direction to emergency responders. This will enable a much **more effective and efficient whole-of-government emergency/disaster response**.*

— Deputy Secretary, Kiribati Office of the President, on deployee, Christine.

Pacific DRM analysis

RedR has begun examining the nature and extent of Australia Assists' contribution to building institutional DRM capability across the Pacific. Research indicates that in its first four years (2017-2021), the program's **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability have continuously improved**. While there are clear lessons on the importance of building longer-term capability to ensure the sustainability of response deployments, early findings confirm that:

- *Australia Assists deployees were of high quality and were able to provide **high quality technical assistance** which resulted in development or updates of fit-for-purpose Standard Operating Procedures and legislation, and improved human resource capacities.*
- ***Localisation** is a key component in sustaining DRM/DRR institutional development reform efforts. RedR Australia has begun this important action, which should continue to **be scaled up**.*

Through the review, we are learning:

- There is an opportunity to further increase **partnerships with the private sector and private non-government organisations**, in Australia and the Pacific on disaster preparation and response, fragility and conflict, especially in the **food security** area.
- A deployment model with a humanitarian/development lens that incorporates a **long-term programmatic approach**, rather than a short-term problem-solving approach, would further strengthen Australia Assists' efforts in reforming institutional development of DRR/DRM.
- Australia Assists deployees to the Pacific would benefit from a **regular communications platform** (such as a Community of Practice) to share institutional knowledge, experience and networks relating to DRR and management.