

PACIFIC RESPONSE TO DISASTER DISPLACEMENT

Displacement associated with disasters is one of the biggest humanitarian and sustainable development challenges facing the world today. Climate change and urbanisation are expected to compound the issue.

Inhabitants of developing island states in the Pacific are one of the most vulnerable populations; at least 50,000 Pacific Islanders are at risk of being displaced each year. In these countries, where almost all major services, settlement and tourism infrastructure are coastal, cyclones, sea-level rise and coastal flooding pose severe economic risks.

Some island states—including Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu—are working to improve their resilience to disasters by strengthening their early warning systems to save lives and protect property in low-lying coastal areas. But while short-term evacuations are crucial, they will not be sufficient for dealing with the long-term impacts of future natural hazards and the displacement they cause.

A lack of Pacific-focused information and data on disaster displacement and management has led governments to lead with reactive choices instead of proactive ones. Knowledge and experience on the issue is less developed in the region and there is a recognised capacity gap to monitor the issue at all levels of government.

With funding from the European Union, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) are working to generate new evidence to help governments better understand, plan for, prevent and respond to disaster displacement in the Pacific. The project will contribute to better policy responses and disaster planning, as well as new and improved operational tools.



AT A GLANCE



Displacement risk:

At least 50,000 Pacific Islanders are at risk of being displaced each year by natural hazards



Beneficiaries:

Governments and Regional Organisations or mechanisms



Objective:

To support regional and national efforts to reduce the risk and impact of disaster displacement on persons at risk of being displaced in developing small islands states in the Pacific



Lead Agency:

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)



Location:

Regional focus in the Pacific with country level engagement in Fiji, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu



Implementing partners:

International Organisation for Migration (IOM); Platform for Disaster Displacement (PDD)



Duration:

August 2019- April 2022

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: Displaced children from Manam Island in Papua New Guinea play in the sea with their active volcanic homeland in the background, which is an hour-long boat trip away. Several communities lived on the island for centuries until the volcano erupted in 2005 covering their home in lava and ash. The people of Manam Island were relocated to internally displaced camps on the mainland where they have struggled with adjusting to a new way of life. Despite the hardships they have faced over the past decade, community members say being able to see their homeland in the distance brings them hope and strength for a better tomorrow. Photo credit: IOM/Muse Mohammed, 2016.

WORK AREAS

| Data Collection

We are helping the national disaster management offices in the Pacific to systematically collect, analyse, and disseminate existing and new disaster displacement risk information across sectors and at all levels of government in the region.

| Research & Policy

We are mapping legislation on disaster displacement in the Pacific, conducting new research on slow-onset and urban displacement, and helping to review and develop evidence-based policies and frameworks to help guide action on disaster displacement.

| Risk Modelling

We are combining climate change scenarios and current displacement information to identify disaster displacement risk hotspots in the Pacific, map evacuation centres, and generate decision-making tools to inform planning and policy work.

| Tools and Training

We are developing country-specific tools, methodologies, standard operating procedures, analytical frameworks, and training modules and workshops to help strengthen the operational response capacity of governments in our target countries.

CONTACT

For further information about this project, please visit internal-displacement.org/pacific-disasters or contact Nacanieli Bolo Speigth, Project Manager, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, at nacanieli.bolo@idmc.ch.



PARTNERS



PLATFORM
ON DISASTER
DISPLACEMENT
LEADER BY THE IOM AND UNHCR



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

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