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DMO

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## Exercise 'Pacific Wave' 2017 15 February



*Participants in discussion during the simulation exercise*

Exercise Pacific Wave 2017 or more commonly known as 'ExPacWave17' is a pacific-wide exercise involving over 40 countries over 15-17 February 2017. The ExPacWave series of exercises are an effective tool for evaluating the readiness of Pacific Tsunami Warning System (PTWS) countries and aim to identify changes that can improve the systems effectiveness. The international tsunami exercises were first conceived and conducted in 2006 is generally held over two years.

For Samoa, ExPacWave17 was held on the 15 February 2017 and the aim of the exercise was to test the revised National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) 2016-19 arrangements (including the National Tsunami Plan Arrangements). This year, 'ExPacWave17' consisted of a village tsunami drill in the village of Savaia at Lefaga, where residents were expected to simulate their village response plan that is already in place. Additionally, the members of the Disaster Advisory Committee (government sector agencies, development partners and NGO's, personnel from the cluster systems) participated in a functional tabletop exercise at the Gym 3 - Faleata Sports Complex from 7.30am - 2pm.

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The functional and field based exercise was developed so that participants were able to simulate duties performed within their respective workplaces and communities. Resources and logistics for the exercise were coordinated by the Disaster Management Office (DMO) with financial support from the New Zealand Ministry for Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM).

The series of events that made up the scenario of the exercise simulation brought in the Samoa Meteorology Office- Geo Science division to test their standard operating procedures (SOP) with regards to interpreting and dissemination of accurate and relevant information to the public. Similarly, the DMO was also evaluated on their SOPs regarding the activation of the NEOC as well as the actions required to deliver relevant information and coordination instructions to the DAC members, responding agencies as well as the community members involved.

For ExPacWave17, it was relatively important that a clear line of communication was established between the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and all entities of the exercise. Prior to the exercise simulation, a comprehensive risk assessment was carried out by DMO at all locations of the event to ensure safety of all participants and ease of flow of the exercise. A hot debrief was conducted after the exercise simulation for the DAC members at the Gym3 where many of the participants emphasized the need for all relevant sector representatives to be actively present in such an event as PacWave17 to ensure that all DAC members are aware of their duties when a disaster occurs.

Furthermore, the evaluators of ExPacWave17 described the event as successful as all participants both from the DAC and the community performed well given the format of the exercise.

## CDCRM Program for Tafua



*Lepale going over the Situational Analysis of Tafua with the villagers*

The Community Preparedness Section (DMO) together with Disaster Response Agencies (FESA, SRCS, MWTL, SLAC, and MWCSD) completed the delivery of the Community Disaster and Climate Risk Management (CDCRM) program at the village of Tafua in March 2017. The delivery was separated into two visits to the village due to unavailability of some of the response agencies to complete the entire program at one go.

Thus, the first visit which was carried out in December 2016, consisted of 2 workshops that focused firstly on the Situational Analysis so to evaluate how vulnerable the village is to potential hazards and climate change, and secondly on Mitigation Planning whereby the villagers were encouraged to set out appropriate and useful actions for themselves, that will contribute or lead to the reducing of the adverse impacts of climate change and potential disasters. The results of these two workshops forms the Disaster Risk Reduction component of the village disaster management plan (VDMP)

The second visit which was later in March 2017 also included two sessions; the first ...*Continued on next page.*



session focused on the Disaster and Emergency Response Planning for the whole village, and second session was the conducting of the trainings of the village's Response Teams (VRTs) on functions, duties and actions to undertake when an emergency or disaster strikes. To complete the program, a Disaster Response Simulation was conducted on the final day to test the VRTs responses during and after a Tropical Cyclone.

The village was eventually presented with their draft Disaster Management Plan (VDMP) which will be finalized by the Disaster Advisory Council for implementation soon.



*Ms Tuanaina of SLAC educating the participants on the importance and the value of having a Life Insurance*



*Lead facilitator Lepale of DMO conducting a briefing with the Response Agencies representatives before the start of the program at Tafua.*



*Mr Tafa of SRC conducting a first aid session for the village*

## **Pacific Young Leaders Invitation Programme on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction**

14 young representatives from 14 Pacific Island countries were invited by the Japan government through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs to participate in this year's Young Leaders Invitation Programme from the 22/02 to the 01/03 focusing on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction as the main theme for briefings and discussions. MNRE through DMO had the privilege of being the recipient of the invitation programme and was attended by DM Officer Fetalai Gagaeolo.

The programme aimed at enhancing participants' understanding of Japan's efforts, technology and countermeasures to tackle and address climate change and disaster risk reduction, and also for the Japan government through its different counterparts and entities to reveal their policies and long term plans towards PICs, for instance the 8<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) in 2018 where all leaders of the 14 invited PICs will be gathered in Japan to be presented packages that the Japan government is willingly ..... *Continued on next page.*

offering to benefit PICs.

Participants were given the opportunity to visit organizations, institutions and especially government ministries which are significantly engaging in mainstreaming climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction into their existing line of work. This set the stage for each of the participants to share, exchange and voice out their concerns and perspectives of climate change and disaster risk reduction as the different countries are impacted by climate change and disasters into different degrees due to differences in capacity, financially and technically; and island topography. Hearing directly from all the PICs representatives' real life experiences and challenges, the Japan government through all its agencies involved were pleased and strongly encouraged to continuously invest into helping PICs mitigate and adapt to impacts brought by climate change and disasters.

Samoa's standpoints and not limited to were basically around the need for technology wise support, to upgrade early warning systems and financial support to implement and execute community climate resilience programmes. As a first timer in Japan, it was overwhelming to just see and experience the advanced and clean, environmental friendly technology and science that Japan has to offer to address CC and DRR. It was even pleasing to learn about the importance of working together of different ministries, organizations and institutions from the Public Sector, Private Sector and Academia right down to local governments to mainstream Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction into their policies, plans and existing works.

Japan is committed to leading international efforts in combating climate change and addressing DRR and is very much committed and dedicated towards helping and supporting the PICs to address such challenges.



*Fetalai Gagaeolo with Samoa's Ambassador to Japan, Fa'alavaau Perina Jacqueline Sila Tualaulelei*



*Group photo of the 14 PIC representatives at one of the site visits.*

## **Eco-system based Disaster Risk Reduction Roundtable**

**08-10 March, 2017**

**Nadi, Fiji**

Representatives from National Disaster Management authorities and Government Agencies responsible for Environment and Natural resources were invited to participate in a roundtable workshop that was aimed at enabling discussions and exploring means of strengthening the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Representing Samoa at this roundtable discussion workshop was Principal Forestry Research and Development.....*Continued on next page.*



Officer, Elizabeth Kerstin and Disaster Risk Reduction Officer, Josephina Chan Ting.

The main goals of the workshops were to:

- Enhance understanding on the role of biodiversity and ecosystems services for DRR
- Appreciating the emerging policy, practice and business case of eco-based approaches when compared to engineered infrastructure or non-action for risk reduction
- Create a forum for discussions on the critical need for integrated approaches to ecosystem, management for DRR and Climate Change Adaptation
- Encourage the sharing of preliminary ideas to implement ecosystem management for DRR at national and sub-national levels and exploring the possibilities of reporting efforts for multiple national commitments such as the Sendai Framework for Action, Sustainable Development Goals and National Adaptation Plans
- Networking with regional and international colleagues for exchange of ideas, knowledge and mutual support in order to catalyze action for ecosystem based DRR
- Discussing the opportunities and challenges for joint advocacy and resource mobilization for conservation, disaster management and climate change adaptation.

The National Disaster Management Plan and the Disaster and Emergency Act 2007 allows for integrated approaches for resilience mechanisms. This workshop provided a platform for participants from conservation agencies as well as other national disaster management offices around the Pacific to discuss ways to better integrate the work that they do for disaster risk reduction. As MNRE houses both these stakeholders under its divisions, the workshop and the lessons learnt worked well to encourage further

cohesive work from both conservation and disaster risk management aspects.



*Participants of the Workshop*



*Field trip to Lomawai village to study a eco-system based community resilience project*



*Group Photo with the villagers of Lomawai village encouraging full participation of women in decision making for resilience projects*

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