

**JOINT MEETING
of the
2013 PACIFIC PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT &
PACIFIC CLIMATE CHANGE ROUNDTABLE**

*8th – 11th July
Sofitel Fiji Resort and Spa, Denarau Island, Nadi, Fiji*

Side Event 4: Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) support to resilience in the Pacific

Introduction:

This session will explore the role of the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) in strengthening resilience in the Pacific.

In an effort to make humanitarian assistance more predictable, coherent and accountable, in 2008 humanitarian partners agreed to establish the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) based on the principles of humanitarian reform and the cluster approach. The PHT is the collaborative mechanism among all major humanitarian actors for humanitarian preparedness and response in the region and was formally endorsed by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2012.

Since 2008, the PHT has assisted Pacific Island Countries (PICs) in more than twenty emergencies and has facilitated numerous preparedness initiatives including inter-agency contingency planning, simulation exercises, and training ranging from Protection to Information Management to Logistics with national authorities.

The Role of the PHT in resilience

Strengthening resilience requires coherent planning of short term interventions that meet basic needs and medium and longer term programming that increases the coping capacity of communities and households and addresses the structural causes of vulnerability.

Organisations that constitute the Pacific Humanitarian Team are already implementing programmes that build resilience. Although the humanitarian system – namely the structures and mechanisms for humanitarian planning, coordination and financing – should not be the primary channel for resilience building activities, it has an important contribution to make based on its comparative advantage.

Some of these PHT functions in building resilience may include:

Emergency Preparedness - Preparedness for emergencies forms an important part of disaster risk reduction and is often undertaken by humanitarian actors. Effective national and regional preparedness can mitigate the effects of shocks and stresses on communities and households. Preparedness includes ensuring that regional humanitarian actors can respond quickly and effectively to emergencies, as well as building the capacity of national and local actors to respond themselves.

Early Action - Making earlier, more effective responses to deteriorating situations can support communities and households to respond to shocks and stresses in ways that do not erode their capacity to cope with future risks.

Early Recovery approaches - Households with access to a broad range of resources and networks will be able pursue a variety of strategies in times of crisis. Understanding and supporting these strategies through livelihood support and emergency safety nets could be much more central to humanitarian programming.

Purpose:

This session aims to identify how Pacific Humanitarian Team, and the range of humanitarian actors that it consists of, can best support local, national and regional efforts

to strengthen resilience across the Pacific. Panellists will represent a range of regional national and local approaches to humanitarian action and the impact on strengthening resilience. The outcomes of the session will contribute not only Joint Meeting, but also inform the PHT three-year strategy that is currently under discussion.

Discussion:

- What is the role of humanitarian action in resilience?
- What is the Pacific Humanitarian Team, and how does it play a part in strengthening resilience in the Pacific?
- What are the lessons learned from the PHT over the past five years related to resilience?
- How have PHT tools and services evolved to support early recovery, disaster risk reduction and development during past response?
- What are the key elements to be considered in improving PHT strategy and tools to facilitate further strengthening of resilience in the Pacific?
- How to ensure humanitarian and development efforts are complimentary in their approach to resilience?

Intended Outcomes:

- Improved understanding of humanitarian actors role in strengthening resilience in the Pacific.
- Identify what added value the PHT partnership brings to the resilience agenda in the Pacific.
- Inform discussions on how PHT tools and services can be more strategic in supporting and strengthening resilience throughout the region.

Format:

Panellist will each provide short presentations (10-15mins) allowing for 45-60min plenary discussion.

Session Coordinator(s):

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