

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Gender and protection in humanitarian action in the Pacific

THE PACIFIC REGION IS HIGHLY VULNERABLE

WORLD RISK INDEX

VANUATU HAS THE HIGHEST DISASTER RISK

6th Solomon Islands

1st Vanuatu



VULNERABLE TO NATURAL DISASTERS

RISK INDEX

DISASTER RISK LEVEL OF 171 COUNTRIESⁱ

Solomon Islands

16th Fiji

2nd Tonga



DISASTERS CREATE DIFFERENT

After TC Evan in Samoa, **women** mat weavers were affected by the destruction of pandanus.ⁱⁱ

Men typically have less access to psychological first aid

After
Fiji, cl
psyc
in 685



ISSUES FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE

After the Gizo tsunami in the Solomon Islands, reports of **gender-based violence** increasedⁱⁱⁱ

During TC Pam in Vanuatu, **children** were playing unsupervised and faced safety and protection risks.^{vi}

During TC Winston in Fiji, **children** showed **psychological distress** at 75% of sites observed.^{vii}

WHO'S MISSING?

Without clean water, **pregnant and breastfeeding** mothers and infants may suffer more than other people.

During TC Ian in Tonga, no responders specifically focused on the needs and capacities of **elderly people**.^v

Female-headed households may be overlooked for shelter assistance.

During TC Winston in Fiji, toilets in eight of the ten evacuation sites were not accessible for **people with disabilities**.^{iv}



“ **GENDER** mainstreaming approaches are critical and should be applied across the spectrum of all humanitarian action. This helps ensure that humanitarian response is evidence-based, that services are designed in a culturally relevant manner, and that **PROTECTION** considerations including gender-based violence are factored into the design of programs. I am glad that UN Women continues to push its international **MANDATE** in this area ensuring a relevant local response to gender and protection in **HUMANITARIAN ACTION**. ”

Mereseini Vuniwaqa, Fiji Minister for Women,
Children and Poverty Alleviation



WE ARE SAFE

Violence in the Pacific is at epidemic proportions...

2 IN 3

Pacific women and girls aged 14 to 59 experience intimate partner violence.^{ix}

In emergencies this gets worse...

46%

of women interviewed reported feeling unsafe after the 2016 cyclone in Fiji.^x

UN Women works with national partners for an effective and coordinated response.

- ▶ Developing referral pathways for Gender Based Violence (GBV) survivors.
- ▶ Funding local service providers to provide crisis support.
- ▶ Training first responders on GBV in emergencies.



WE ARE DIVERSE

DISCRIMINATION IN EMERGENCIES

Pacific people of **diverse sexual orientation and gender identity** can experience multiple layers of discrimination, which may **limit their access** to many services and the ability to exercise their rights.

In emergencies, people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity often face:

- ▶ **Increased risk of violence** when displaced and disconnected from their usual networks
- ▶ **Barriers in registering for assistance** and in accessing evacuation centres.

After TC Winston in Fiji, advocacy groups reported that affected gay, lesbian and **transgender people did not feel safe** accessing evacuation centres, and many remained in their damaged homes.

UN WOMEN TAKES ACTION

- ▶ Leverages its leadership role in **cluster coordination** to ensure these voices are at the table and to highlight, amplify and address issues raised.
- ▶ Provides **training for advocacy groups** and networks on gender and protection in humanitarian action and on navigating humanitarian coordination structures.



ADVOCATING
AGAINST DISCRIMINATION
DURING DISASTER
PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE



WE ARE INCLUDED

People with disabilities in the Pacific are often marginalised and excluded.

17%

of people in the Pacific have a disability.^{xi}

In the chaos of an emergency, people with disabilities can be overlooked.

75%

of people with disabilities surveyed within the first few weeks after TC Winston in Fiji reported receiving no assistance.^{xii}

In TC Winston in Fiji in 2016:

In its coordination role, UN Women supported an inclusive protection assessment.

UN Women channelled funding to a local disability organisation to reach 563 people with disabilities with individualised packs containing items such as adult diapers and mobility aids.



WE ARE CAPABLE



Women farmers and vendors are highly vulnerable to natural disasters. Two-thirds of working women in the Pacific are engaged in agriculture.^{xiii}

In disaster response, women are often overlooked in livelihoods assistance as they are not always recognised as farmers or agricultural workers.

UN Women supports women farmers and vendors to re-establish livelihoods.

- **Supporting the re-opening of Port Vila markets, so that women vendors could sell their produce, in 2015 following TC Pam in Vanuatu.**
- **Distributing tents for affected markets, and seeds and tools to affected women farmers, in 2016 following TC Winston in Fiji.**

WE ARE LEADERS

WOMEN IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

When women are included in humanitarian action, the **entire community benefits**.

In the Pacific, **women are often left out** of decision-making processes that shape disaster relief efforts.

Despite this, women in their communities and women's non-governmental organisations lead **disaster relief** and rebuilding efforts.

For example, in Fiji following TC Winston, **women's organisations led** fundraising drives, distributed immediate relief items, and provided support and counselling to affected communities.

UN WOMEN RESPONDS TO DISASTERS

- ◊ Works with local women's organisations and networks by channelling funding for disaster response.
- ◊ In its protection coordination role, convenes spaces to bring diverse women's groups to the table.
- ◊ Strengthens women's organisations' capacity to understand disaster response mechanisms.



WE ARE PROTECTED



UN Women is committed to protecting the right of disaster-affected people to needs-based assistance, **without discrimination** based on their age, gender, ethnicity, religion, **political opinion, sexuality** or other grounds.

UN Women, through its mandated role in protection coordination:

- ▶ Raises identified **protection concerns** with responders providing shelter, food, water, etc.
- ▶ Coordinates protection responders, specifically focusing on safety, dignity and **inclusion of vulnerable people**.
- ▶ Provides **protection-related training**, for example in 2016, six workshops were conducted in five countries.

VISION

UN Women sees a future where people affected by natural disasters in the Pacific are supported, based on their needs, taking into account their vulnerabilities, recognising their resilience, capacities and preferences. Our goal is for Pacific governments, civil society and communities to **integrate gender and protection** in preparedness and response to disasters.

VALUE PROPOSITION

- ✦ Uses humanitarian action to promote UN Women's core mandate on gender equality and women's empowerment
- ✦ Leverages UN Women's unique position in the Pacific to support gender-sensitive protection sector coordination

CONCRETE ACTIONS

Supporting local organisations that represent people of diverse gender identity and sexual orientation, as well as groups that represent and support people with disabilities and other specific groups, to ensure inclusion in assessments and assistance.

Advocating for the collection and use of **disaggregated data**, so that there is an **evidence base** for diversity-responsive programming.

Ensuring, during disasters, that a **specific protection assessment** is conducted to identify issues being faced by affected people in affected areas.

Countering gender inequality impacts by highlighting instances where vulnerable women are overlooked in registration, discriminated against in assistance, and exploited.

Coordinating protection responders in their efforts to promote and **protect people's rights** to safety, dignity, consultation, participation and accountability, especially children and those exposed to gender-based violence.

Guiding general responders on **practical responses** to identified gender and protection issues relating to their area, be it shelter, health, food security, education, or water sanitation and hygiene.



Gender inequality during natural disasters presents a risk and an opportunity. The risk is a magnification of gender inequality, where women and girls face not only a disproportionate impact from the disaster itself, but also are side-lined or excluded in the response. The opportunity is for **gender-sensitive protective response** to not only help rebalance gender inequality in the post-disaster period, but also carry this over to normal times.

ⁱ2016, World Risk Index 2016, in World Risk Report 2016, Countries most at risk of natural disaster, <http://weltrisikobericht.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/WorldRiskReport2016.pdf> (retrieved 7/3/17).

ⁱⁱ2013, Government of Samoa, Post-disaster Needs Assessment Cyclone Evan 2012, http://www.gfdrr.org/sites/gfdrr/files/SAMOA_PDNA_Cyclone_Evan_2012.pdf (retrieved 7/3/17).

ⁱⁱⁱ2011, UN OHCHR, Protecting the Rights of Internally Displaced Persons in Natural Disasters: Challenges in the Pacific, http://pacific.ohchr.org/docs/IDP_report.pdf (retrieved 7/3/17).

^{iv}2016, Pacific Development Forum, TC Winston Response for Persons with Disabilities Assessment.

^v2014, Safety and Protection Assessment TC Ian, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/tonga/document/tonga-tc-ian-safety-and-protection-assessment-report-full> (retrieved 7/3/17).

^{vi}2015, Second Phase Harmonized Assessment Report, Vanuatu: Tropical Cyclone Pam, http://www.pacificdisaster.net/pdnadmin/data/original/VUT_TC_Pam_2015_Harmonised_assessment_2nd_phase_Shefa.pdf (retrieved, 7/3/17).

^{vii}2016, Safety and Protection Cluster, Inter-Organisational Protection Assessment, Fiji: Tropical Cyclone Winston.

^{viii}2016, Mereseini Vuniwaqa, Cooperation Fundamental for Humanitarian Efforts, <http://fijisun.com.fj/2016/11/22/co-operation-fundamental-for-humanitarian-efforts/> (retrieved 7/3/17).

^{ix}2013, UNFPA, Violence Against Women in the Pacific, http://countryoffice.unfpa.org/pacific/2013/07/31/7502/violence_against_women_vaw_in_the_pacific/ (retrieved 7/3/17).

^x2016, Government of Fiji, Fiji Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, Fiji Post-disaster Needs Assessment (accessed 7/3/17).

^{xi}2012, UNESCAP, Disability at a Glance 2012: Strengthening the Evidence Base in Asia and the Pacific, http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/SDD_PUB_Disability-Glance-2012.pdf (retrieved 7/3/17).

^{xii}2016, Pacific Development Forum, TC Winston Response for Persons with Disabilities Assessment.

^{xiii}2011, FAO, The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011: Women in Agriculture, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf> (accessed 7/3/17).

TARGETING THESE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs):



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The UN Women Multi-Country Office headquartered in Fiji covers Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu