Pacific Humanitarian Team

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

COUNTRY PREPAREDNESS PACKAGE



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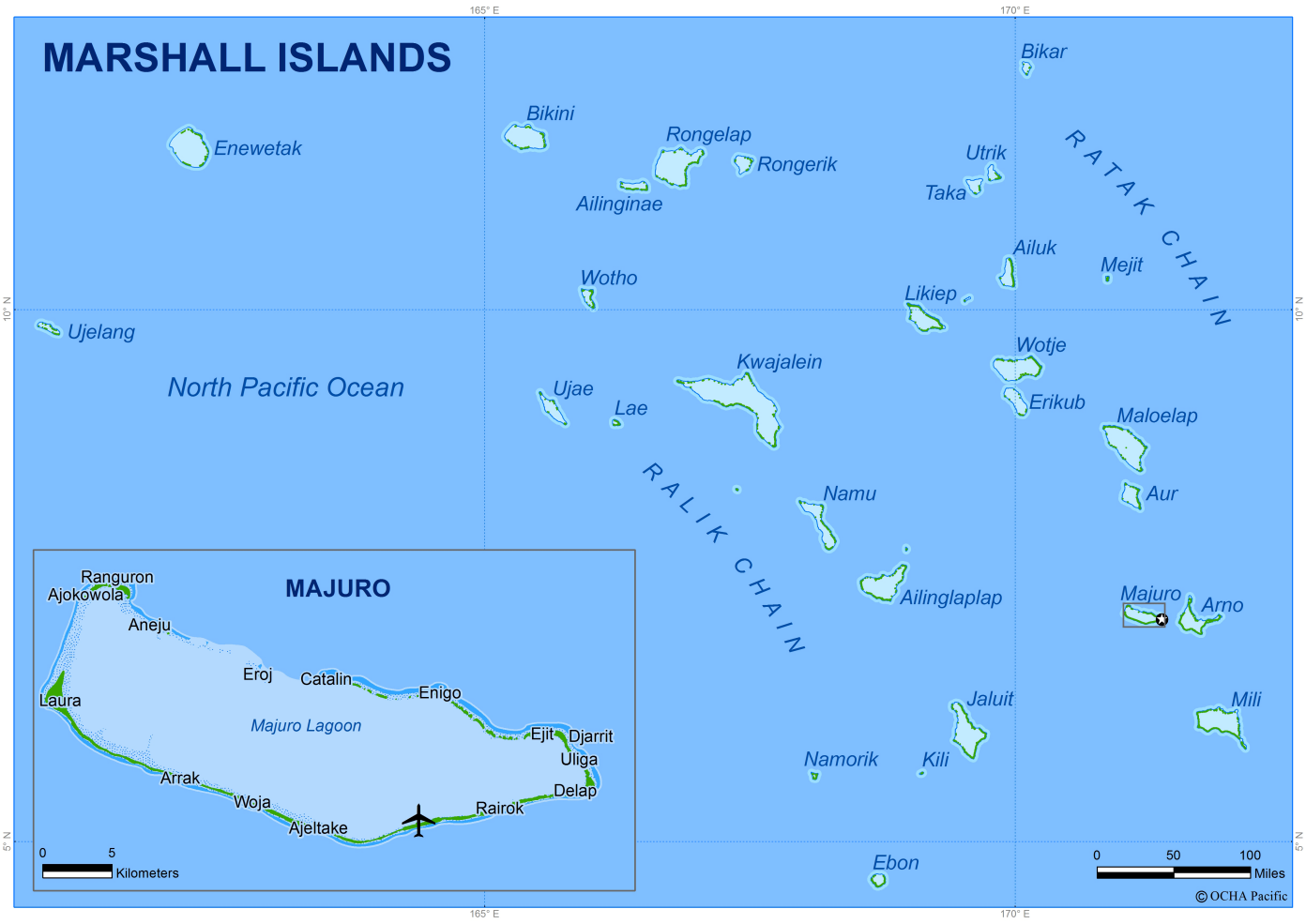
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PHT partners:

- Food and Agriculture Organization
- International Organization for Migration
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- OXFAM
- Save the Children
- The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
- The United Nations Children's Fund
- The United Nations Development Programme
- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- The United Nations Population Fund
- World Food Programme
- World Health Organization

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WHAT IS THE COUNTRY PREPAREDNESS PACKAGE?

The Country Preparedness Package (CPP) is a joint initiative of the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT). The CPP is intended to strengthen the preparedness and collaboration between national and international actors in disaster response.

The CPP is developed and agreed with the national government before a disaster. Through the process, national actors become more aware of international tools and services and how they can be activated. This will enable a more 'demand-driven' response tailored to the specific context.

The CPP also helps the international actors to become more aware of the existing national systems and structures by clearly documenting and making key information available to all. This will help ensure that responses are nationally-led with international actors supporting and working through the existing national structures.

The completed CPP is a set of documents outlining the existing national structures and the agreed plans for utilizing international support in a disaster response. These documents are available online and include links to national reference documents.

About this document

This document comprises 31 sections covering a range of topics and issues relevant to international support to nationally-led disaster responses. The use of thematic sections makes it easy to find specific information quickly. It also allows the updating of information to be straightforwardly divided among multiple partners.



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Each section includes the three following components:

NATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	A brief summary of the current status and arrangements within the country related to that topic, including links to key national reference documents (e.g. Terms of Reference (ToRs) or Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or websites) and the names and contact details of key national structures or focal points.
SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS	An outline of how the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) and international community will provide support to the national authorities in the event of a disaster, in relation to the thematic area. This section is expected to be as specific as possible and agreed with the government and other national actors in advance. This section may also note areas of disaster preparedness and response where RMI seeks development support.
REFERENCE INFORMATION	Reference Information providing links to international guidance relevant documents and two or three basic standards (or minimum requirements) that countries in the Pacific should aim towards.

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ACRONYMS

AMI	Air Marshall Islands
BSRP	Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific
CCG	Central Control Group
CDC	Centre for Disease Control
CMAC	Coastal Management Advisory Committee
CMI	College of the Marshall Islands
COFA	Compact of Free Association
COSSPac	Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific
CSO	Chief Secretary's Office
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ENSO	El Nino Southern Oscillation Phenomenon
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
EHA	Essentials of Humanitarian Assistance
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
IDA	Initial Damage Assessment
IDRL	International Disaster Response Law
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JPO	UN Joint Presence Office
MALGOV	Majuro Atoll Local Government
MIMA	Marshall Islands Mayors Association
MIRCS	Marshall Islands Red Cross Society
MISC	Marshall Islands Shipping Corporation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MISC	Marshall Islands Shipping Company
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOT&C	Ministry of Transportation & Communication
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoCIA	Ministry of Culture and Internal Affairs
MoNRC	Ministry of Natural Resources and Commerce
MoWIU	Ministry of Works, Infrastructure and Utilities
MWSC	Majuro Water Service Company
NDC	National Disaster Committee
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NTA	National Telecommunication Authority
PDA	Preliminary Damage Assessment
PCRAF	Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PREL	Pacific Resources for Education & Learning
PREP	Pacific Resilience Project
PREPARE	IOM-USAID funded Disaster Preparedness for an Effective Response project
PSS	Public School System
RCS	Red Cross Society
RESPAC	Disaster Resilience for Pacific SIDS Project
RO	Reverse osmosis (desalination)
SPC	Pacific Community
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
TWS	Tsunami Warning Centre
ToRs	Terms of Reference
WSO	Marshall Islands Weather Service Office
WASH	Water and Sanitation
WMO	World Meteorological organization
WUTMI	Women United Together in Marshall Islands
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

1. RISK MONITORING MECHANISM



CURRENT STATUS

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) is extremely vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters. The major natural hazards in RMI are tropical storms, typhoons, storm surge and drought. Additional challenges include marine pollution, ecosystem degradation, coastal erosion and food insecurity. Rising sea level is the biggest threat in RMI as its highest point is just 10 meters above sea level. Climate change is also expected to exacerbate the country's vulnerability to natural hazards.

Risk monitoring is principally delivered through the Marshall Islands Weather Service Office (WSO), which advises the Chief Secretary's Office (CSO). At a technical level the WSO also reports the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s Pacific ENSO Applications Climate Centre (PEAC) on a quarterly basis. WSO is a member of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster.

The WSO:

The WSO is tasked with providing weather forecasts, early warnings on hazardous weather and other weather-related products to the government for the purposes of protection, safety and general information. This is done through the following:

- Delivery of scientific assessment and analytical services;
- Undertaking of manual surface aviation, synoptic and upper-air observations, transmitting data to the Global Telecommunication System/Integrated World Meteorogical Organization (WMO) Information System;
- Receipt of data from outer island focal points (mayors, disaster committees, etc) using standardized drought monitoring forms;
- Receipt and interpretation of daily data from partner scientific agencies (especially NOAA) on hazards to generate adaptive weather forecasts and warnings for local constituents;
- Advice to the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and Chief Secretary on key threats to inform and for consideration of further action (e.g. activation of the National Disaster Committee (NDC) or other actions);
- Communication of alerts and warnings to RMI authorities and communities, including advising precautionary action that could be taken.

In addition to data interpretation and response from scientific agencies, WSO works with the NDMO to:

- Designate focal points (particularly the mayors) to receive information on the state of weather on the outer islands;
- Share warnings and alerts.

Information exchange with outer island focal points is most commonly achieved though High Frequency (HF) radio and the Chatty Beetle.

SYSTEMS

Once the WSO advises a threat to RMI, the CSO may activate the NDC (see Section 3).

PARTNERS

- Under the Compact of Free Association Agreement (COFA), an agreement between RMI and the United States of America (USA) signed in 1986, (see reference) the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) play an important role during disasters and provide, at no cost to RMI, services including air safety, weather forecast, health services and assistance in the event of natural disasters.
- The weather forecast is provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States (NOAA). NOAA provides:
  - Critical daily data on natural (hydrometeorology and seismic) hazards threatening RMI. This includes both the Pacific Region Headquarters in Honolulu, Hawaii as well as the NOAA Guam Office (RMI Meteorological Services use different data according to where the hazards originate). These offices provide technical support to the weather services of all Micronesian Offices in cooperation with the Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and RMI, in accordance with the provision of the COFA between the US and each Micronesian government;

  - Training in meteorological services;
  - As part of monitoring and trend development, WSO also sends rainfall and temperature data to National Weather Service Forecast Office Guam to keep them briefed.
- NOAA's PEAC and the Guam Forecast Office provide long and short term rainfall outlooks and forecast.
- The Richard H. Hagemeyer Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre (PTWC), located on Ford Island (Oahu, Hawaii), serves as the operational centre of the Tsunami Warning System (TWS) in the Pacific. The TWS detects and locates major earthquakes in the Pacific Basin to determine tsunami generation and provide timely and effective tsunami information and warnings to the population of the Pacific.
- The University of Guam, together with NOAA, holds a monthly conference with the WSO to determine national disaster trends and threats. Through their projects and focal points on the outer islands, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) provide rainfall data validation etc. via the WASH cluster. They also provide some capacity building for outer island observers:
- The Marshall Islands Red Cross Society (MIRCS) works with WSO to monitor weather information and tidal schedules to prepare for extreme or potentially damaging events. MIRCS, in cooperation with WSO and the NDMO, conducted a pilot Community Based Early Warning System project in Jenrok (2015- to 2016 FINPAC-IFRC/SPREP) to enable the community to better prepare for and respond in the event of a disaster.

Pacific Community (SPC) in the provision of technical support in particular:

- Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSSPac) sea level and temperature monitoring programme;
- Water and sanitation programme including hydrological assessments;
- Regional Meteorological Council (member);
- SPREP (climate change monitoring; Fin Pac project).

CHALLENGES

The science on droughts is not precise. Localised data on vulnerability is needed to forecast whether a drought will emerge.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Disaster preparedness

The WSO seeks support in the following areas:

- Training for outer islands community representatives in collecting and reporting rainfall and temperature data and writing reports;
- Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) training for the NDMO;
- Community assessment of rainfall gauges and communicating findings;
- IOM's office in Majuro and Pohnpei (as well as regional and global support if required) and IFRC's North Pacific and Suva Offices are ongoing partners in the provision of technical assistance as described above for disaster monitoring.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/WEBSITES

COFA agreement. Agreement between RMI and United States of America (USA) http://bit.ly/2tjxaCa

National Structures/Contacts

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Index for Risk Management (INFORM): http://bit.ly/12kulOx

IFRC Guiding Principles: Community Early Warning Systems http://bit.ly/2tAj2jl

WMO Guidelines on Early Warning Systems: http://bit.ly/2tAyZWx

Pacific Disaster Centre: http://bit.ly/2purAYi

2. LEGISLATION

CURRENT STATUS

The National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) of 1997 and the Standard Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) of 2005 are the key documents guiding the RMI disaster management.

The NDC is the designated lead agency for implementing both the NDMP and the HMP. Being directly accountable to the Cabinet, the NDC is responsible for the provision of technical advice and resource support to facilitate the implementation of disaster management programmes and for ensuring that an adequate and reliable disaster control and coordination mechanism is in place to accommodate effective disaster response and recovery requirements.

The primary agency responsible for disaster management programmes and activities is the NDMO. Local governments are responsible for assisting the NDMO to develop specific programs for each atoll. To facilitate this process, the NDMO provides technical advice and serves as the focal point for the coordination of Government resource support.

VISA OR ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Non-residents arriving from overseas via Honolulu or any other US state will require relevant ESTA documentation (https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov) clearance. It is recommended to carry a hard copy of the ESTA clearance for check-in purposes. Emergency staff arriving from other countries will require Immigration Clearance. Assuming that partners operate through formal channels (principally the CSO), the CSO will liaise with the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Immigration to ensure any necessary exemptions/ entry requirements for essential staff are observed to facilitate rapid entry.

PARTNERS

- MIRCS was established under the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society (Incorporation and Recognition) Act in 2013 as the Red Cross of the RMI and auxiliary to the government in humanitarian and disaster relief services.
- IFRC provides technical assistance to governments on International Disaster Response Law (IDRL). (See reference document "Regional Guidelines for International Disaster Assistance and Cooperation in the Pacific," which draws from the outcomes of 2015 Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Foreign Ministers meeting and was presented at PIF 2016.)

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

While the CSO will facilitate the necessary exemptions/entry requirements for essential staff from the humanitarian community during disaster, there is no existing legislation presently that explicitly establishes or clarifies the relationship between the government of RMI and the international community in a disaster event.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

1987 Disaster Assistance Act: http://bit.ly/2ukesaC

Hazard Mitigation Plan: http://bit.ly/2sl1jwy

National Structures/Contacts

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

IFRC International Disaster Relief Law Guidelines:
http://bit.ly/2tlgoCF

Regional Guidelines for International Disaster Assistance and Cooperation in the Pacific
Strengthening Legal Frameworks for Disasters in the Pacific: Workshop Report

3. DISASTER STRUCTURES, PLANS, POLICIES AND SOPs

CURRENT STATUS

Policies and plans

RMI development strategies are included in the National Strategic Plan (NSP), which has a timeframe of three years (2015 to 2017). The NSP is designed as a framework to coordinate the articulated medium-term development goals and objectives of the RMI government at the national level. The NSP is used by government leaders as a roadmap for development and progress in the medium-term (2015 to 2017) and will be continually updated for use in meeting long-term objectives as the RMI moves towards the scheduled completion of the COFA as amended funding in 2023.

The NSP contains five sectors, with each sector broken down into several strategic areas and is intended to coordinate with national policies and ongoing and/or planned strategic plans in the RMI government ministries, agencies and State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). The five sectors are (1) Social Development (2) Environment, Climate Change and Resiliency (3) Infrastructure Development (4) Sustainable Economic Development and (5) Good Governance. Each sector is then broken down into related strategic areas. Vulnerability Assessment and Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management and Response are specific strategic areas under Sector 2.

Specific and formalised Disaster Management commenced in RMI in 1987 with the passing of the NDMP.

In 1994, the Disaster Assistance Act was passed, providing for the establishment of the NDMC and the NDMO located in the Office of the Chief Secretary. The Act clarifies the role of the Cabinet and local governments in disaster prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery between agencies, and for matters thereby connected.

1994 also saw the passing of:

- A Hazard Mitigation Plan, a systematic program to identify hazards, monitor changes in vulnerability, develop and implement measures to reduce or eliminate these vulnerabilities. The plan focuses on vulnerabilities to tropical storms and typhoons as these reflect the most catastrophic threat to the islands;
- A National Disaster Manual;
- An Airport Disaster Plan.

A Drought Disaster Plan was passed in 1996, followed by the drafting of a revised NDMP in 1997. The most recent legislative activity on the Disaster Risk Management front was the development of a Standard Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2005.

The Marshall Islands Emergency Response Plan 2010 describes response functions, lead and support agencies and their roles for Health and Medical, Fire and Rescue, Evacuation, Community Welfare, Logistics Supply, Information Management and Impact Assessment. The Plan is still not endorsed and therefore is not yet operational (and not publicly available).

The Immediate and Near-Term Response Plan for the Republic of the Marshall Islands Drought was developed in 2013 to detail the work to be undertaken in support of the 2013 drought within the Food, WASH, Health and Infrastructure and Logistics clusters.

At a strategic level, the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management (DRMNAP) 2008 to 2018 outlines priority actions for risk reduction. The Joint National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change (JNAP) was subsequently established in 2010 to 2011 and aligns with actions identified under the DRMNAP, as well as the subsequently developed 2011 National Climate Change Policy Framework (NC-CPF). Together, these policies provide a comprehensive guide for the implementation of risk reduction measures relating to disaster and climate change.

On humanitarian response, the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT), clusters and international support are not legislated in RMI. The exception is RMI and the United States, which have agreed to the provision of supplemental US disaster assistance for large disasters through the Amended Compact Agreement.

In terms of support from other international partners, the Disaster Assistance Act will be updated in 2017 and the role of the humanitarian community and clusters etc. may be formally considered.

STRUCTURES

The Chief Secretary is the Disaster Controller, or the key disaster management official with overall disaster management responsibility. The President is responsible for the Chief Secretary's Office (CSO). The Chief Secretary oversees the NDC and the NDMO:

- Under the Disaster Assistance Act, the NDMO is the primary government agency responsible for matters pertaining to the coordination of Disaster Risk Management in RMI. The NDMO falls within the CSO, and the NDMO Director reports to the Chief Secretary through the Deputy Chief Secretary (Annex 1). The NDMO is responsible for day-to-day management of disaster management programs and activities, with the NDMC responsible for providing technical advice and support for disaster management programs and activities, including operational response and recovery. The main responsibilities of the NDMO are to assist the Chief Secretary in the exercise of functions under the Disaster Assistance Act 1987. The NDMO coordinates all matters pertaining to capacity building and institutional strengthening in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) at the national and municipal/island level across the country.
- The NDC is responsible for mitigating the effects of any disaster and for conducting counter-disaster operations. It provides technical advice and support to the Chief Secretary in the performance of duties. The Chief Secretary may appoint a number of members for the NDC to serve on a Central Control Group (CCG) during the response period and to assist in the execution of special operational tasks when necessary.

National disaster arrangements were reviewed in October and November 2016 under the SPC executed, EU funded Building Safety Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) project. While the findings of the review are not yet public, they essentially propose a revision of the Disaster Assistance Act and related arrangements.

SYSTEMS

In the case of natural hazard related disasters, the RMI National Weather Service Office advises on threats, early warning messages, drought statements to the NDMO. Then, the NDMO alerts the clusters on the threat and initiates analysis of the situation. Based on the information provided, the NDMO advises the Chief Secretary, the chair of the NDC, of the threat. The Chief Secretary will convene a meeting with the NDC to discuss response measures, including the declaration of a disaster/state of emergency and the activation of an EOC. Once a consensus is achieved within the NDC, recommendations are made to the Cabinet. The Cabinet decides on proclamations, amends or rescinds them and the NDC advises their members and clusters accordingly.

According to the Disaster Assistance Act 1987, the NDC comprises of the Chief Secretary (Chair), Chief of Police, Secretary of Public Works, Secretary of Resources and Development, Secretary of Internal and Outer Island Affairs, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Secretary of Finance, Secretary of Transportation & Communication, Secretary of Health & Environment, Secretary of Internal Affairs, Secretary of Social Services and Secretary of Education.

Other members may be called as needed, such as the Director NDMO, the Commissioner of Public Safety Manager, Manager of the National Weather Service, Manager of the Majuro Energy Company, Manager of the AMI, Director of the Water and Sewer Company and Tobolar (in relation to shipping; see Section 13. Private Sector Engagement & Coordination).

ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE

The CSO and the EOC lead disaster response. Although there are currently no ToRs for the membership or operation of the EOC, the NDMO is presently working on their development and the ToRs are expected to be developed in 2017.

RMI operates a five-cluster system for disaster coordination:

- WASH
- Health
- Logistics
- Food Security and Agriculture
- Infrastructure (including a sub-cluster on Shelter)

ToRs for the clusters, the EOC or other DRM structures are currently incomplete, but some are being drafted.

Inter-cluster coordination is managed via the NDC and the NDMO. An inter-cluster group for RMI does not formally exist, although an inter-cluster group convened in the EOCs during the 2015 to 2016 drought.

Rapid needs assessments and deployment of emergency supplies to meet the immediate lifesaving needs are coordinated by the NDMO through clusters, if relevant.

Joint Needs Assessments are generated through government sectors; however, these assessments may be supported by USAID Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

Decision making and leadership is achieved through the Cabinet and is assisted by Ministerial and community-level work:

- The NDMO utilizes the EOC and clusters to provide recommendations to the NDC for decision-making and further recommendations to the Cabinet.
- The Ministry of Culture and Internal Affairs (MoCIA) is the administrative coordinator for local councils, which are established in each of the inhabited islands and are headed by a mayor. Local council activities include local police services, solid waste collection and maintenance of local roads. MoCIA is a key partner for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)/DRM issues between the national and local levels, such as through the annual mayors conferences, the Local Government Division, the Marshall Islands Mayor Association (MIMA) and mobile teams.
- Outer Island Disaster Committees (DisComs) and disaster focal points exist for several islands. Together, the focal points and DisComs are responsible for relaying early warnings, assisting the community to prepare for disasters and reporting through standardized reporting forms. Many communities do not yet have DisComs and/or need to strengthen focal points.
- A community based area management framework called the Reimaanlok Conservation Strategy provides relevant agencies with a collection of tools for community engagement to leverage cultural heritage for development, including DRM, thereby enhancing resilience. The strategy takes an ecosystem approach in addressing community based DRR issues through conservation efforts implemented by the Coastal Management Advisory Committee (CMAC).

The local government has the responsibility for assisting the NDMO in the development of specific programs for each atoll (e.g. dissemination of public education material and conduct of awareness activities, development of local plans and operational procedures and identification and documentation of safe evacuation shelters). To facilitate this process, the NDMO provides technical advice and serves as the focal point for the coordination of government resource support.

PARTNERS

- The US government supports disaster preparedness and risk reduction programming through USAID/OFDA and USAID/Pacific based in Manila. If a disaster is beyond the capacity of the Government of RMI, it may request disaster assistance from USAID/OFDA. For large-scale disasters, the Government of RMI may request supplemental US disaster assistance through a US Presidential Disaster Declaration, which enables funding support from the US FEMA through USAID. US Supplemental disaster assistance is managed by USAID/OFDA for emergency disaster relief and by USAID/Pacific for disaster reconstruction. Supplemental US disaster assistance may include reconstruction in the event of large scale damage to housing and public infrastructure.

- If the Government of RMI determines that a US Presidential Disaster Declaration is required after a large disaster, it will take the following steps: a) declare a national state of disaster; b) utilize the Disaster Assistance Emergency Fund (DAEF); c) appeal for international assistance through the United Nations (United Nations); d) request a Joint Damage Assessment (JDA) with the US Federal Emergency Agency, USAID/OFDA and USAID/Pacific; and e) officially request a US Presidential Disaster Declaration. Results of the JDA will inform whether the disaster meets the criteria for disaster assistance. The final JDA results will be presented to the Government of RMI and other stakeholders.
- IOM provided support in DRM to RMI with USAID funding. IOM is coordinating with the NDMO to provide technical assistance to update the Standard Operating Procedures under the National Emergency Management Plan (2010) for each of the ministries that make up the NDC, in alignment with the NMDO Workplan and long term strategies.
- IFRC is currently supporting MIRCS in organizational strengthening and program development through a small North Pacific sub-office in Majuro, which also provides support to the Palau Red Cross and Micronesia Red Cross in FSM. Additional technical support is provided on an as needed basis from the IFRC Country Cluster Team (CCST) Office in Suva and the IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office in Kuala Lumpur.

CHALLENGES AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS NEEDS

At a general level, the delivery of DRM is nationally challenged by small administrations (e.g. cluster leads already have work to do). Therefore, there is a need to support the clusters to coordinate internally (i.e. dedicated staff, increasing the frequency of cluster meetings).

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Calls for international assistance

In the event of a disaster declaration, RMI will first utilize national resources for the response. If resources for response are insufficient, requests for international assistance will be considered. A request for international assistance will only be submitted when it has become clear that the situation is beyond the capabilities of the State and local resources.

Under the 1997 Disaster Plan, the requirement for international assistance is determined by the CCG, which submits a request for international assistance through formally established channels. The CCG is responsible for liaising directly with international aid agencies and donors, after the submission of a formal request for assistance by the Government, to determine the type, quantity and distribution of the assistance required. The CCG is accountable to the aid agencies/donors for ensuring that all relief assistance is distributed in accordance with the guidelines governing the provision of such assistance, and for the preparation of a report on expenditure/distribution of assistance provided by each agency/donor/diplomatic mission. In practice, the status of the CCG and its relationship with the CSO and the present NDC is unclear. As the present Disaster Assistance Act is scheduled for review in 2017 along with revisions to operating arrangements, the nature and continuation of the CCG should then be clarified.

In practice, it is possible that any letter of request for assistance would go at the same time to multiple partners (such as the US, the PHT). The Government of RMI is responsible for coordinating the assistance provided by different humanitarian partners.

In response to a request for support, the PHT or other agencies may send a letter or an email of offering for support. Such a letter should be addressed to the Chief Secretary with a copy to the Director of the NDMO and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

For smaller scale events (e.g. a disaster affecting only one island or a small geographic area), assistance has been channelled directly to the Ministries in the past. Nevertheless, the Government of RMI stresses the need for offers of support to the Ministries to be channelled through the CSO and the NDMO in order to ensure government coordination and tracking.

Assistance

- As a long-term, locally-based support partner to RMI, the US provides considerable assistance to RMI in times of a disaster. This includes the provision of relief though the existing structures and organizations such as IOM. In the interest of supporting the existing coordination, the US Embassy welcomes direct advice from the PHT or other agencies of support so that the activities can be efficient and complemented.

- In the field, IOM will continue to seek out funding opportunities to assist in the implementation of the government of the RMI's response plan.
- IFRC will continue to support MIRCS in organizational strengthening and program development, including risk and vulnerability mapping, contingency planning, emergency relief stocks, understanding of Principles and Rules for RCRC Humanitarian Assistance and strengthening MIRCS' capacity for emergency response.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

National Development Plan: http://bit.ly/2tjetOV

National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management (DRMNAP) 2008-2018: http://bit.ly/2urQ7Ck

2011 National Climate Change Policy Framework: http://bit.ly/2u1zU5S

Immediate and Near-Term Response Plan for the Republic of the Marshall Islands Drought: http://bit.ly/2tjAA8g

RMI Proclamation Declaring a state of disaster (outlines roles in declaring and responding to a disaster) – this document is not public.

2nd Annual Outer Island Focal Point 1 pager (available upon request from IOM).

National Disaster Management Plan 1997 http://bit.ly/2vE6R6o

National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2008-2018: http://bit.ly/2urQ7Ck

RMI Emergency Response Plan.

The Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and DRM

National Energy Policy and Energy Action Plan 2009 http://bit.ly/2t8qClF

RMI Hazard Mitigation Plan, available online at: http://bit.ly/2urUKwv

RMI Airport Disaster Plan

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Regional Guidelines for International Disaster Assistance and Cooperation in the Pacific

4. ENGAGEMENT OF PRIME MINISTER / SENIOR POLITICAL FIGURES

CURRENT STATUS

In the case of natural disasters, the WSO advises on threats, early warning messages and drought statements to the NDMO. The NDMO alerts clusters of the threat and initiates discussion on the situation. Based on the information provided, the NDMO advises the Chief Secretary, the chair of the NDC, of the threat. The Chief Secretary will convene a meeting with the NDC and discuss response measures, such as whether a state of disaster should be declared. When a consensus on the way forward is achieved, recommendations will be made to the Cabinet on moving forward (e.g. whether or not to declare a state of disaster).

The official steps for the declaration of a state of disaster are documented in two documents:

- Proclamation declaring a state of emergency (for natural disasters); and
- Declaring a state of health emergency (for health outbreaks).

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The US is an important donor to RMI in times of a disaster. USAID and the US Embassy welcome involve ment from the PHT, cluster leads, NGOs and donors.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

Proclamation declaring a state of emergency (internal document; not public)

Proclamation declaring a state of health emergency (internal document; not public)

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PHOTO CREDIT: IOM Micronesia

5. ENGAGEMENT OF MINISTRIES (INC PLANNING AND FINANCE)

CURRENT STATUS

Following the assessment of an event by the NDC (see Section 3), the Cabinet considers whether to declare a disaster and advises members and clusters on the actions accordingly.

Ministers on the Cabinet are Minister in Assistance to the President, MoFA, Minister of Finance, Minister of Transportation & Communication, Minister of Justice, Minister of Resources & Development, Minister of Public Works, Minister of Internal Affairs, Minister of Health and Minister of Education.

Engagement of the Ministries is conducted through the CSO, copying the NDMO and MoFA.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The CSO advises that it is not convention to contact the Ministries or the President directly in the event of a disaster. The CSO recommends that offers of technical and financial support be channelled through the CSO (copying the NDMO and MoFA).

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PHOTO CREDIT: OCHA Pacific/2017/A.Valdes

6. AWARENESS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN SYSTEMS & PRINCIPLES

CURRENT STATUS

Training on the Essentials of Humanitarian Assistance (EHA) and their principles has been provided to public servants by IOM (see below). Efforts are made to follow the principles during disasters.

PARTNERS

- IOM has multiple projects with the Office of the Chief Secretary, the NDMO, the NDC, NGOs, civil society and educational institutions to raise awareness and train individuals through a Marshallese-tailored EHA Essentials of Humanitarian Assistance Training. IOM works closely with participating groups to develop a training agenda that meets the needs of the participants. Additionally, IOM provides ongoing technical assistance to partners on as needed basis and at the request of the partners to assist with activities in this thematic area.
- IFRC and the MIRCS operate under the "Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, unity, universality and voluntary service). They are also guided by the Principles responsibilities in international humanitarian assistance. IFRC Asia Pacific Region also has Standard Operating Procedures for disaster response and early recovery regarding operational management and the facilitation and coordination of international assistance in support of National Societies. MIRCS works to address the needs of the people in the Marshall Islands and prioritizes the needs of the most vulnerable.
- MIRCS is established under the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society (Incorporation and Recognition) Act, 2013, which recognizes the MIRCS as auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, recognized and authorized on the basis of the Geneva Conventions to provide humanitarian and disaster relief services. It also states that the public authorities shall, at all times, respect the adherence of the Society to the Fundamental Principles and independent and voluntary nature of the Society.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

IOM will continue to support the EAH training in both English and Marshallese, where applicable.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

Stock take of the gender mainstreaming capacity of Pacific Island governments Republic of the Marshall Islands http://bit.ly/2tj64LC

Gender Profile: Republic of Marshall Islands http://bit.ly/2urKOTr

PREPARE program brief, available upon request from IOM

EHA 1 pager, available upon request from IOM

CADRE Plus program brief, available upon request from IOM

Marshall Islands Red Cross Society (Incorporation and Recognition) Act, 2013

National Structures/Contacts

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Humanitarian Principles: http://bit.ly/1oceeqz

Protection from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation: http://bit.ly/2tkGV3a

Disaster Response in Asia and the Pacific: Guide to International Tools and Services: http://bit.ly/29yPlq3

Humanitarian Programme Cycle Tools & Guidance: http://bit.ly/2vc4F6T

7. GENDER AND PROTECTION MAINSTREAMING

CURRENT STATUS

Gender mainstreaming and management in RMI falls under the MoCIA. MoCIA implements the 2014 Gender Policy and aims to strengthen the national capacity to deliver gender responsibilities. The Ministry is responsible for the design and implementation of policies for all vulnerable groups, not just gender, but also children and youth.

The NDMO and each of the five clusters are responsible for mainstreaming gender and protection in their preparedness and response activities, but there are presently no gender or protection focal points in any of the government lead ministries.

RMI does not have a Protection Cluster and the focal point for gender and vulnerability in the MoCIA, and does not necessarily conduct mainstreaming activities to support the NDMO and the five clusters.

While this is the case:

- In the WASH Cluster, WUTMI, an umbrella organisation of women's civil society organisations, provides gender mainstreaming support.; however, there is no general protection mainstreaming activities.
- In the Infrastructure Cluster, the MoCIA provides mainstreaming support to the Shelter-Sub Cluster of the Infrastructure Cluster. No mainstreaming activities are present in the overall cluster.
- In the Health Cluster, IOM supported women's health needs during the 2016 drought in a gender sensitive manner, using Cookhouse Confidential.

There does not appear to be any support for gender and protection mainstreaming in the Logistics Cluster.

At the national level, partner agencies supporting gender in RMI do not meet formally or on a regular basis. There is, however, work underway through the MoCIA to strengthen gender work and to better align work for reporting against the National Strategic Plan and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

A gender stock take was undertaken by SPC in 2016, which provides ongoing assistance for gender mainstreaming, gender statistics etc.

MIRCS prioritizes the most vulnerable people in emergency response action and recognizes that women and children are particularly vulnerable in disasters. MIRCS applies gender equality principles to programming and follows an inclusive approach to gender and diversity. Staff are members of the National Taskforce on Human Trafficking and Cookhouse Confidential group.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

As a member of the IFRC Asia Pacific Gender and Diversity network, IFRC will continue to provide support to MIRCS in the area of gender mainstreaming in programming and service provision and disaster preparedness and response.

The government has identified that areas in need of focus for mainstreaming include:

- Women's voice, their participation and leadership in disaster committees;
- Inclusion of women in distribution of supplies, such as seedlings;
- Child protection and disabilities;
- Legislative strengthening;
- Disaster preparedness;

In times of disaster preparedness, the following institutional strengthening challenges may need to be addressed:

- Awareness session/training on the purpose, nature and value of a Protection Cluster and how it might work for RMI;
- Incorporation of gender considerations to all sectors;
- Ensuring that programmes to make products available to outer islands (e.g. sanitary pads);
- Ensuring improved capacity for gender mainstreaming in disaster response. WUTMI is not well versed in gender and hazards as it is still a new area for the organization.
- Ensuring that women's views are heard, as culturally women do not speak up when men are around. Although disaster committees exist on the islands, the representation of women is still very low;
- Expert assistance in the lead up to a disaster to help prepare for the gender activities (ensure gender and protection issues are addressed in an emergency);
- Strengthening child protection and disability (need a child protection policy; currently there is only a bill);
- Legislative strengthening for gender (e.g. work enforcement policy and gender mainstreaming).

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

Stock take of the gender mainstreaming capacity of Pacific Island governments - Republic of the Marshall Islands
http://bit.ly/2tj64LC

Gender Profile: Republic of Marshall Islands
http://bit.ly/2urKOTr

2014 National Gender Policy
http://bit.ly/2vavKqO

Child Protection Bill
http://bit.ly/2vuwUgs

Cookhouse Confidential Pilot Report (provided to and available upon request from Terry Keju, UNFPA, RMI)

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Minimum Inter-Agency Standards for Protection Mainstreaming
http://bit.ly/2tUVFBj

Global Protection Cluster – Protection Mainstreaming Principles: http://bit.ly/2tlclBa

IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action:
http://bit.ly/2iWPWu9

8. PLAN / MECHANISMS FOR SLOW ONSET DISASTERS

CURRENT STATUS

Drought is the most likely slow onset of disaster, which threatens RMI. Assessments for drought are conducted in the first instance through the WSO, which delivers scientific assessment and analytical services (see Section 1). In addition, the WSO receives technical assistance (advice, alerts) through the COFA from NOAA's PEAC and the Guam Forecast Office.

WSO advises the NDMO in the event of a drought threats. The NDMO coordinates input and advises the CSO as needed.

The 2016 Immediate Drought Response Plan for the Republic of the Marshall Islands is the present action plan. An internal After Action Review was conducted in 2016 of RMI's response to the 2015/2016 drought. This internal (i.e. not publicly released) document made a number of recommendations for managing slow onset events in the future. Linked to this and absorbing the outstanding actions from the 2016 plan, the NDMO is now developing a Drought Contingency Plan which will represent the ongoing drought strategy for RMI. Critical response issues for droughts centre around the deployment and/or activation of reverse Osmosis Desalination (RO) units.

PARTNERS

Long and short-term rainfall outlooks and predictions may also be provided by NOAA's PEAC and the Guam Forecast Office.

IOM, through funding provided by USAID, has prepositioned emergency response solar powered Reverse Osmosis (RO) Units capable of producing up to 360 gallons of potable water a day. These are deployed when the WASH Cluster deems necessary to the outer islands to mitigate possible drought and respond to water shortages.

MIRCS prepares for and responds to slow onset disasters in the same way – as auxiliary to and in cooperation with the government.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

IOM prepositioned emergency response solar powered RO units and other WASH items.

IFRC will continue to support MIRCS with technical inputs, access to emergency funding and procurement of emergency relief stocks, in line with their needs.

REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Drought Response Plan: http://bit.ly/2vas7RU

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9. NATIONAL LEVEL PARTNER COORDINATION MECHANISM (CLUSTERS)

CURRENT STATUS

In the event of a disaster, the CSO activates the NDC, which operates at the EOC. This system (NDC, EOC) coordinates national agencies.

Coordination of partners is managed in part through a cluster system, coordinated by the NDMO on behalf of the CSO. RMI operates up to five clusters, depending on the nature of the disaster (see below).

In addition to the work of the NDMO:

- The MoCIA is the administrative coordinator for the local councils, which are established in each of the habited islands and are headed by a mayor. Local council activities include local police services, solid waste collection and maintenance of local roads. MoCIA is a key partner for DRR/DRM issues between the national and local levels, such as through the Annual Mayors Conferences, the Local Government Division, MIMA and Mobile Teams.
- A community-based area management framework called the Reimaanlok Conservation Strategy provides relevant agencies with a collection of tools for community engagement to leverage cultural heritage for development, including disaster risk management, thereby enhancing resilience. The Strategy takes an ecosystem approach in addressing community-based DRR issues through conservation efforts implemented by the CMAC.

CLUSTER SYSTEM

Five clusters are active in RMI:

- Water and Sanitation (WASH) (Lead: Halstan de Brum, Majuro Water Service Company (MWSC): MWSC, Salvation Army, EPA (Environmental Protection Agency, WSO, IOM, Ministry of Works, Infrastructure and Utilities (MoWIU) , Humanity First, Public School System (PSS), MALGOV (Majuro Atoll Local Government), MoCIA, PREL (Pacific Resources for Education & Learning), MIRCS, WUTMI and JICA.
- Health (Lead: Mailynn Lang, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Health, or MoH): (i) For a health outbreak related disaster: MoH, CSO and EOC/EpiNet Outbreak Control Team (ii) For a natural disaster: MoH, CSO and IOM
- Logistics: (Lead: Waylon Muller, Ministry of Transportation and Communication, MOT&C): MOT&C, Air Marshall Islands (AMI), National Telecommunications Authority, Ministry of Finance (MOF), Marshall Islands Shipping Corporation (MISC) and IOM.
- Food Security and Agriculture: (Lead: Henry Capelle, Ministry of Natural Resources and Commerce (MoNRC): MoNRC, MoH, WUTMI, College of the Marshall Islands (CMI), JICA, MOC&TIM, MIMA, MoCIA and IOM.
- Infrastructure (Lead: Melvin Aliven, MoWIU): MoWIU, AMI, MISC, National Telecommunications Authority, MOF and IOM.
- Under the auspices of the Infrastructure Cluster, a Shelter Sub-Cluster exists comprising of: MoCIA (ad), MoWIU, PS, MWSC and IOM.

PARTNERS

The Food Security & Agriculture Cluster was activated in early 2015 for El Nino response and Regional Pacific Food Security Cluster (FSC) provided standby partner support for coordination for three months.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The role of the PHT and other external partners in the clusters is not presently legislated, but may be clarified during the forthcoming review of DRM arrangements and legislation.

Cluster leads have stated that delivery of DRM at the national level can be challenging in general as the cluster leads are engaged in their regular programs. It has been suggested that there is a need to support the clusters to coordinate internally during an event (dedicated staff). Examples of clusters noting the value of additional support are Health and WASH. In times of disaster preparedness, ToRs and SOPs

exist for some clusters, but need to be finalised. During the February 2017 consultations, the Government requested support in the revision of the ToRs and cluster system.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

Information on terms of reference (where they exist) for the Clusters can be found in Sections 20-28.

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level: http://bit.ly/2utMdsX



PHOTO CREDIT: UNDP

10. SUBNATIONAL LEVEL PARTNER COORDINATION MECHANISMS

CURRENT STATUS

A community-based area management framework called the Reimaanlok Conservation Strategy provides relevant agencies with a collection of tools for community engagement to leverage cultural heritage for development, including disaster risk management, thereby enhancing resilience. The Strategy takes an ecosystem approach in addressing the community-based DRR issues through conservation efforts implemented by the CMAC.

PARTNERS

- MIMA supports disaster risk management by supplying local level information on the state of matters on the outer islands as part of monitoring and disaster management.
- IOM works with the NDMO and the clusters to support the establishment and functioning of Outer Island Focal Points (e.g. conducting initial assessments following an event and supporting relief efforts in their community).
- MIRCS has a plan for representation throughout the inhabited atolls and islands of RMI. Depending on the needs in the different locations, this may evolve into groups of trained Red Cross volunteers with capacity to work and respond locally. This representative network is not yet in place but there are plans to start in 2017. IFRC will support MIRCS in this process.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

IOM will continue to support the EHA training in both English and Marshallese, where applicable.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

2nd Annual Outer Island Focal Point Workshop 1 pager, available upon request from IOM

National Structures/Contacts

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11. NGO COORDINATION / ENGAGEMENT MECHANISM

CURRENT STATUS

There are only a limited number of NGOs operating in DRM in RMI. These include World Teach, WUTMI, Youth to Youth, Red Cross, Salvation Army and faith based organisations including Humanity First, Chuch of Latter Day Saints and Islamic organisation. In practice, there is no formal NGO forum to disaster response.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

No mapping of NGO capacity appears to formally exist.

In times of disaster preparedness, there is a need to prepare enhanced coordination among the NGOs.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

NGO Coordination Resource Centre:
http://bit.ly/2tawESS

Principles of Partnership:
http://bit.ly/2u2YsKh



PHOTO CREDIT: UNICEF Pacific/2016/Sokhin

12. CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS



CURRENT STATUS

RMI has no military forces. As a sovereign nation, RMI is free to conduct its own foreign relations within the terms of the COFA with the US. Under this, the US has full authority and responsibility for the security and defense of RMI. There is an army garrison on Kwajalein Atoll, although the US Embassy has stated that this facility is not envisaged as suitable for civil military support in humanitarian response. The engagement of US military for humanitarian response remains the same for RMI as it does for the rest of the world.

RMI maintains a number of small public and private police services, including the Marshall Islands Police Department. The Police Commissioner sits on the NDC. As a general rule, the police have had limited involvement in disaster response, although they have vessels (two boats on Majuro and one on Kwajalein) and vehicles that could be used for response and for relief distribution.

As a result of the limited police involvement in disasters, civil police coordination arrangements are presently negligible.

Australia has provided RMI with patrol boats to assist in policing their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

OCHA regionally delivers annual Civil Military Training to police representatives to enhance the understanding on the Civil Military Coordination from the humanitarian perspective during emergencies.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

COFA agreement: Agreement between RMI and USA: http://bit.ly/2tjxaCa

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines for The Use of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response Operations:
http://bit.ly/Rhh6tw

Oslo Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief:
http://bit.ly/1jOhpCc

UN Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination Field Handbook
http://bit.ly/2tgH43s

13. PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT & COORDINATION

CURRENT STATUS

There is no formal structure for private sector involvement in disaster response. Nevertheless, both Tobolar and the MISC are partially owned government enterprises, in receipt of government funding. Falling under the mandate of the MOT&C, the Government of RMI may directly request assistance in the use of the Marshall Islands Shipping Company (MISC)/Tobolar vessels to assist in the distribution of relief supplies. In this respect:

- MISC has four cargo vessels with a carrying capacity of 30 tons;
- Tobolar has two vessels – a large ship for work in the outer island and a small vessel for work around Majuro and nearby islets.

No formalised structure exists for securing food support from the private sector. The Chamber of Commerce on Majuro is active and has informal links that can be used to contact businesses if needed.

National Structures/Contacts

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James McClean
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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Connecting Business Initiative Report – Humanitarian Crises, Emergency Preparedness and Response: The role of business and the private sector: http://bit.ly/2uCNwpR



PHOTO CREDIT: UNICEF Pacific/2016/Sokhin

14. PARTNER PRESENCE AND CAPACITY MAPPING

CURRENT STATUS

The NDMO has not conducted a partner mapping exercise nor does it presently have plans to do so (although it is possible that this may be done as part of other institutional strengthening activities delivered in RMI through projects). The number of international partners present in RMI is low. These include:

- The UN Joint Presence Office (JPO), was established in 2008 in response to a request from the RMI government to have more presence of the UN system's in the country. The office hosts four UN agencies (UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women).
- The US Embassy in Majuro provides consular services.
- USAID/OFDA has a Regional Advisor based in Majuro, covering the Pacific Islands with additional staff throughout the Asia Pacific region. USAID/ OFDA and USAID/Pacific (based in Manila) support RMI through disaster preparedness, risk reduction and emergency response projects. Funding and in kind resources are provided to the UN and non governmental implementing partners. Capacity building has focused on strengthening the NDMO's operating procedures, drought monitoring, drought response and pre positioning of relief items. Other disaster activities include creating disaster committees in outer islands, conducting DRR in schools, developing a DRR curriculum for schools and strengthening radio networks.
- IOM established a presence in Pohnpei, FSM in March 2008. IOM has since expanded after having opened a sub-office in Majuro in 2009 as well as in Palau, Chuuk, Yap and Kosrae. The office in Majuro works with the Chief of Mission for IOM Micronesia, in a variety of programs such as but not limited to the 2016 RMI Drought Response, Typhoon Maysak reconstruction, disaster preparedness technical assistance, counter human trafficking programs, migrant assistance, climate change adaptation and DRM. As the UN Migration Agency, IOM Micronesia is able to utilize global resources and expertise in all its programs. IOM Majuro also runs a prepositioned warehouse on behalf of USAID/ OFDA, including RO units, hygiene kits, jerry cans, plastic sheeting etc.
- MIRCS, was established under the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society (Incorporation and Recognition) Act, 2013, serves as the Red Cross of RMI and auxiliary to the government in humanitarian and disaster relief services. MIRCS is actively involved in the areas of disaster management disaster preparedness and response and DRM community resilience building, first aid training for the government, private sector, groups with special needs and for outer island communities and operates a service providing support to armed forces personnel and their families in times of personal or family crisis. MIRCS's staff and volunteers are involved in various community activities and events. Around 20 national groups are in Majuro to deploy and assist in the event of a disaster and is trained in first aid, assessment, distribution of relief stocks and reporting.
- The Government of Japan maintains a JICA office in Majuro. JICA provides support through projects and repositioned supplies in case of emergencies.
- A Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Correspondent is based at the MoNRC.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

IFRC Country Cluster Support Team in Suva and IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office provide technical and surge support to IFRC's North Pacific Office as needed.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

For further information contact UNFPA to access:

- New Zealand 1 pager
- DFAT Australia 1 pager
- DFAT RO handover 1 pager
- Jerry Can 1 pager
- Turn the Tide on Trash 1 pager
- IOM El Nino Drought Response SitRep 1, 5 and 10

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Guidance Documents: 3W – Who does What, Where?:
http://bit.ly/2ta9M5V

OCHA 3W Purpose, Target Audience, Scope and Products:
http://bit.ly/2vbZvrj

Contact Management Guidance:
http://bit.ly/2uxgdDV



PHOTO CREDIT: UNICEF Pacific/2016/Sokhin

15. ASSESSMENT PROTOCOLS / MECHANISMS

CURRENT STATUS

Assessment protocols in RMI are not legislated. Assessments can be initiated by the NDMO via the clusters. Standard data forms exist for Initial Damage Assessment (IDA) ('initial situational overview form' and 'drought situation overview form'), which are executed by the clusters and channelled through outer island mayors if needed. Training is provided by the Government on the use of these forms. While the standard forms exist in some IDA sector cases, other forms vary and there are no SOPs for assessment across the board. No standard Situation Report (SitRep) format is used at present. Procedures and formats are yet to be standardised.

A permanent Information Management Officer was hired under the NSMO in December 2016. The Officer is intended to act as a focal point for information analysis and dissemination (to emergency response partners, general public and the media) during emergencies/disasters. The Information Management Officer reports directly to the Chief Secretary in close coordination with the Director of the NDMO on all matters involving any communications request or needs related to emergency situations that have local or national significance to the population at large. The officer supports the NDMO to strengthen and improve communication, information networks and systems to support coordination, collaboration, planning and dissemination of DRR and DRM information to relevant stakeholders.

PARTNERS

MIRCS has a group of around 20 volunteers in Majuro who are trained in conducting assessments, distribution of relief supplies and reporting. They are available to assist in times of a disaster.

There is ongoing work by FAO to assess food security through post El Nino Food Security Monitoring assessments.

Some capacity on food security monitoring, Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) and the use of the Kobo Toolbox has been developed in the MoNRC under the World Food Programme (WFP).

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

OCHA is planning to work on reinforcing the capacity of the information management focal point.

The US can support disaster assessments (See Section 3). Disaster assessments are generally conducted in partnership with the national agencies.

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Needs Assessment: Guidance & Templates: http://bit.ly/2vwnqkl

Assessment Capacities Project
Assessment Resources: http://bit.ly/2tl6JMx

16. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (INC DATA PREPAREDNESS)

CURRENT STATUS

Structures

According to the 2016 RMI drought PDNA, there is a need to upgrade information and communications platform to better facilitate information flows prior to, during and after a disaster. This was proposed to formally incorporate social media as a tool to enhance the understanding the impact of disasters as well as basic internet over HF radio for outer Islands. The PDNA also observed that topographic data and Geographic Information System (GIS) layers were unavailable for response purposes, and that data was not updated or consolidated. A government based centralized data system has been proposed.

There is currently no national database for disaster response or established mechanisms for accessing DRR information. The Environmental Protection authority intends to establish a comprehensive website containing disaster information. However, technical capacity and lack of funds remains a challenge.

A database development consultant is also being hired at the time of this research. The consultant will be on board for a three month period to collect all information and database available from different clusters.

An Information Management Officer for the NDMO has just been recruited. Further details on the scope of work for this individual can be found on Section 15.

Progress has also been achieved in capacity building in mapping. Two EPA staff undertook a GIS course through the University of the South Pacific (USP). Digital mapping provides relevant data on disaster vulnerability and information sharing allows various ministries and NGOs access to the data collected.

MoFA sits in cluster meeting and compiles the data on the state of the disaster to a SitRep which will then be disseminated. No standard SitRep template for the NDMO exists at this point.

PARTNERS

- CMI assists the Marshall Islands Conservation Society (MICS) with mapping tasks.
- CROP organizations such as SOPAC and SPREP have provided assistance in GIS capabilities over the past few years.
- IOM is supporting the government in compiling/ creating a Community Site Profile for all of the outer islands in RMI. The purpose of the community level site profile is to provide the disaster management staff with a snapshot of each community to inform disaster management planning and early response in the event of a disaster.
- MIRCS maintains its own information system, including data from the past and present responses and projects.
- There is ongoing work by FAO to assess food security through post El Nino Food Security Monitoring assessments.
- Some capacity on food security monitoring, PDNA assessment (agriculture sector) and the use of the Kobo Toolbox has been developed in the MoNRC under WFP.

SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

OCHA is planning to work on reinforcing the capacity of the information management focal point.

NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

IOM Community Site Profile One document

National Structures/Contacts

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REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

Humanitarian Data Exchange: http://bit.ly/23WPlV4

Pacific Disaster Net http://bit.ly/2uRLUZf

Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative http://pcrafi.spc.int/