



Pacific  
Humanitarian  
Team



COOK ISLANDS

# COUNTRY PREPAREDNESS PACKAGE





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**COOK ISLANDS COUNTRY  
PREPAREDNESS PACKAGE**

First Published March 2018  
All graphs and data are correct as at  
January 2018

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and PHT

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Appreciation is extended to all that contributed their knowledge and support. Special thanks go to staff of the Office of the Prime Minister (Emergency Management Cook Islands), National Ministries, national and international humanitarian and development partners and the UN Country Officer of the UN Joint Office.

Financial and technical support from the UNDP Disaster Resilience in the Pacific (RESPAC) project is gratefully acknowledged.

**PHT partners:**

- International Organization for Migration
- Food and Agriculture Organization
- 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

# Cook Islands



# WHAT IS THE COUNTRY PREPAREDNESS PACKAGE?

The Country Preparedness Package (CPP) is a joint initiative of the Government of the Cook Islands and the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT). The CPP is intended to strengthen 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 outlines existing national structures and the agreed plans for utilizing international support during a disaster. The document is available online and includes links to national reference documents.

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 or standard operating procedures 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 the Cook Islands 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.

## **About this document**

This document comprises 22 sections covering a range of topics and issues relevant to international support to disaster response in the Cook Islands. The 22 sections reflect sectors and processes through which response may be channelled or targeted following a disaster. This structure is intended to ease the rapid identification of specific information as well as allow information to be easily updated across multiple partners.

The structure used builds upon previous Country Preparedness Packages established for the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands and is intended to retain an element of consistency for familiarity and ease of reading.

For ease of reference, the matrix overleaf demonstrates the relationship between the international humanitarian cluster structure information and the present Cook Islands cluster structure, established in 2017 through its National Disaster Risk Management Plan.

## PREAMBLE

The Cook Islands CPP is a living document. It has been developed in readiness for the 2017-2018 tropical cyclone season but has been developed at a time when the Cook Islands has been restructuring its disaster risk management arrangements. The draft presently reflects the newly developed National Disaster Risk Management Plan which was approved by the National Disaster Risk Management Council in 2017. Nevertheless, the implementation arrangements for much of the plan have still to be nailed down. Accordingly, the Cook Islands CPP will be reviewed in the future to ensure that it remains in-line with new developments around the National Disaster Risk Management Plan's implementation, as well as to ensure that it remains in line the Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Plan 2015-2020.



PHOTO CREDIT: OCHA Pacific.

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# ACRONYMS

<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>BSRP</b>	Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific Project
<b>CICSO</b>	Cook Islands Civil Society Organisation
<b>CIIC</b>	Cook Islands Investment Corporation
<b>DRM</b>	Disaster risk management
<b>EMCI</b>	Emergency Management Cook Islands
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nation
<b>FRANZ</b>	France, Australia and New Zealand
<b>HF</b>	High frequency
<b>IASC</b>	International Agency Standing Committee
<b>IFRC</b>	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies'
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>MFEM</b>	Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
<b>NOA</b>	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
<b>NDRMP</b>	National Disaster Risk Management Plan
<b>NEOC</b>	National Emergency Operations Centre

<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>PCRAFI</b>	Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative project
<b>PDNA</b>	Post disaster needs assessment
<b>PHT</b>	Pacific Humanitarian Team
<b>PITA</b>	Pacific Islands Telecommunication Association
<b>SPC</b>	Pacific Community
<b>SPHERE</b>	Humanitarian charter and minimum standards in humanitarian response.
<b>SPREP</b>	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
<b>UNDAC</b>	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
<b>UNDP</b>	United national Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>VHF</b>	Very high frequency
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme

# 1. DISASTER RISK MECHANISMS



## CURRENT STATUS

The Cook Islands lie within the region's "cyclone belt". As a consequence of El Niño and contrasting La Niña conditions, the country is prone to severe droughts and floods. It is also vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as rising sea level and an increasing frequency and intensity of cyclones.

Key hazards facing the Cook Islands are articulated in the newly approved 2017 National Disaster Risk Management Plan (NDRMP – see Section 2) which documents 21 recognised hazards for the country. In view of its location in the Pacific cyclone belt, the Cook Islands recognise hydro meteorological threats such as flooding, storm surge and drought. Nevertheless, other priorities include threats to food security, pests (e.g. fruit fly), invasive species and epidemics (e.g. dengue). Having said this, the biggest and most frequent disasters are historically droughts and tropical cyclones. Cyclone season normally runs from November to end of April. Cyclones are also known to occur just outside of this period.

For hydrometeorological threats, risk monitoring is conducted principally through the Cook Islands Meteorological Service which has the basic infrastructure to monitor climate and weather and which updates government agencies and the *Pa Enua*<sup>1</sup>. If a development appears to be of concern, the Cook Islands Meteorological Service then notifies Emergency Management Cook Islands (EMCI – see Section 2) and the Police service.

### Risk monitoring

Infrastructure to monitor climate risk are:

- automatic weather systems on the islands of Penrhyn, Manihiki, Pukapuka, Aitutaki, Mauke, Mangaia and Rarotonga; and
- through the availability of satellite facilities, US/NOAA Geostationary Satellite Service (GOES10) and the Japanese HIMAWARI climate monitoring systems to which the Cook Islands has access.

Additionally, the Fiji Meteorological Service is the designated Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre (RSMC), as agreed by consensus at the World Meteorological Organization as part of the World Weather Watch. In this role, the Fiji Meteorological Service is responsible for the distribution of information, advisories and warnings for severe weather, particularly tropical cyclones, providing severe weather warnings for the Cook Islands when criteria are met. Standard operating procedures also kept by the Cook Islands Meteorological Service that are followed in the event of tropical cyclones and other hazards.

Indicators used by the Cook Islands Meteorological Service to monitor risks are:

- for tropical cyclones, wind speed/ cyclone category – say, as a storm is upgraded from a category 1.
- for tsunamis, through threat maps and information received from the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre in Honolulu.
- for drought, through seasonal outlook summaries and water monitoring on all island.

The Cook Islands Meteorological Service operates 24 hours per day to monitor hazards and is the lead agency for early warnings.

The Cook Islands is presently upgrading its warning system to a Climate Early Warning System in which the automatic weather stations on the islands of Penrhyn, Manihiki, Pukapuka, Aitutaki, Mauke, Mangaia and Rarotonga will be upgraded. New stations will be installed on Rakahanga, Palmerston Island, Atiu and Mitiaro. One station on Rarotonga has already been installed and it is intended that installation of upgrades will be completed by the end of 2017.

If there is a risk of disaster on the outer islands, mayors are required through island councils to inform EMCI<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Outer island governments.

<sup>2</sup> *Pa Enua* have their own governance structure.

In the event of an impending disaster, national disaster plan arrangements come into force, with all agencies, *Pa Enuu and Punas*<sup>3</sup> required to activate DRM plans aligned to the NDRM Plan (see 'New DRM Arrangements and section 2). The last time disaster arrangements were activated was in 2010 with the advent of Tropical Cyclone Pat.

In the event that a State of Emergency is declared, the Response Executive Team – led by the Police Commissioner – is activated. At this point, the Police Commissioner assumes the role of the National Controller.

### New DRM arrangements

The Cook Islands government is presently overhauling its disaster management arrangements and is in the process of enacting its 2017 National Disaster Risk Management Plan (NDRMP). Further detail is still required on the precise nature and lead of some sectors and clusters under the NDRMP (see section 2 for more information). In the meanwhile, the NDRMP specifies that risk monitoring by the Cook Islands Meteorological Service is now to be formally supplemented by community groups, through:

- Village punas on Rarotonga who are mandated to liaise with EMCI in the event of a disaster; and
- Pa Enuu (see Section 2). Pa Enuu are mandated to liaise with EMCI in the event of a disaster.

Early warnings to the outer islands are delivered through national radio, emailed bulletins and, if necessary, communicated by mobile and satellite phone. (A mobile network exists across all the outer islands.)

At the national level, a high level national DRM Council meets quarterly to discuss plan, policies, hazards and preparedness. (This meeting increases to daily meetings during an emergency.) Additionally, a national DRM Platform meets quarterly for agencies share updates.

The declaration of a disaster is the responsibility of the Prime Minister<sup>4</sup>, acting upon input from the EMCI, Police and Meteorological Services.

At the declaration of a disaster, the Police Commissioner – as the National Disaster Controller – activates the operation of the national emergency operations centre, based at Blue Sky, the national telecommunications provider. At this point, all stakeholders are notified and first responders (police, EMCI, Ministry of Health, Blue Sky, Red Cross), and other relevant stakeholders and specialists commence response.

### Partnerships

The Cook Islands is a self-governing island country in free association with New Zealand. This partnership recognises New Zealand as the first international post of call in an emergency. New Zealand monitors impending events and, upon request from the Cook Islands, can provide a wide range of assistance to the Cook Islands in the immediate post disaster response phase across all clusters including: assessment, provision and distribution of supplies, coordination and information.

New Zealand also has an existing relationship with EMCI and can provide personnel to bolster Government capacity to coordinate the response.

### SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

- The Cook Islands have received various forms of support from the PHT and the UN since their first formal involvement with Tropical Cyclone Martin in 1997 (UNDAC support). These United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) teams have also been deployed, for instance:
  - 1997 Tropical Cyclone Martin
  - 2005 Tropical Cyclone Percy;
  - 2010 Tropical Cyclone Pat. (Other agencies involved in the 2010 support included FAO, WHO and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- A number of Cook Islands UNDAC members have been trained over the years with two current UNDAC members still active. There is therefore some understanding of UN disaster response processes with EMCI as the Focal point for UNDAC in-country.
- UNDP facilitated the development of Early Recovery Plan for Tropical Cyclone Pat in 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Punas are the 10 villages on Rarotonga defined by constituency boundaries

<sup>4</sup> Sections 19 and 20 the DRM Act.

## NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

**2017 National Disaster Risk Management Plan**  
(available from EMCI).

Cook Islands Meteorological Service:  
[www.met.gov.ck](http://www.met.gov.ck)

Emergency Management Cook Islands:  
<http://www.emci.gov.ck/>

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## REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance and 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>
- UNDAC: [www.undac.org](http://www.undac.org)



PHOTO CREDIT: OCHA Pacific.

## 2. LEGISLATION, PLANS, POLICIES AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES



### CURRENT STATUS

At its broadest scale, risk management in the Cook Islands is reflected in Te Kaveinga Nui Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2020. More specifically, the 'Climate and Disaster Compatible Development Policy 2013-2016' is the leading policy document for climate change and DRM. The policy aims to provide an integrated and coherent policy and planning framework which directs country-led and co-ordinated adaptation and mitigation actions and resources towards climate and disaster compatible development outcomes.

In line with this policy, the Cook Islands Second Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management identifies actions for climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster management.

Disaster risk management including disaster response specifically is legislated under the 2007 Disaster Risk Management Act. The Act provides for Disaster Risk Management activities in risk reduction, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, as well as national structures and key stakeholders. Stakeholders noted in the Act include community agencies as well as national agencies.

Implementation of the 2007 Act is targeted through the newly released 2017 NDRMP which targets comprehensive all hazard and inclusive management of hazards. Major decisions concerning DRM are taken at the Cabinet and Ministerial level. Cabinet is advised by the National DRM Council which comprises:

1. The Prime Minister (or his delegate) chairs the Council
2. Financial Secretary
3. Police Commissioner
4. Director of EMCI
5. Public Service Commissioner
6. Director of outer islands services
7. Secretary of Infrastructure Cook Islands
8. Director of Meteorological Services.

Under the NDRMP, risk reduction and management are addressed hazard by hazard, such that the management of specific hazards is the responsibility of the relevant lead sectoral agencies (eg., pandemics are the responsibility of the Ministry of Health). As the recognised experts in their field, all key ministries and service providers within Cook Islands are responsible under the Plan to develop their own DRM plans. While the individual steps within the hazard plans may then vary, the structure (lead agency by sector) remains the same.

For hazards not foreseen – and unless clearly the responsibility of a particular sector – the lead agency for disaster response is Emergency Management Cook Islands (EMCI) (see Figure 1).

As indicated in Section 1, communities are explicitly included in the national arrangements with:

- Village *punas* on Rarotonga required to establish and implement puna disaster risk management plans<sup>5</sup>, as well as to liaise with EMCI following a disaster;
- *Pa Enua* required to operate island disaster risk management committees that establish and implement island DRM plans<sup>6</sup>, as well as to liaise with EMCI following a disaster (see Figure 2).

The lead agency to coordinate the work of all these agencies under the Plan is EMCI. The National Controller is Police Commissioner who liaises closely with EMCI.

Although operational details for the new NDRMP have not yet been nailed down, the plan provides for the establishment of eight formal clusters in the national emergency operations centre (NEOC) (Annex 1):

- Logistics (with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) targeted as leads)

<sup>5</sup> At the time of writing, these are in progress with 3 Puna plans completed, 4 in draft and 3 yet to start.

<sup>6</sup> *Pa Enua* plans are already in place and require review and update every 3 years due to Mayoral elections and Executive Officers appointments.

- International Assistance (with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs targeted as lead)
- Infrastructure (with Infrastructure Cook Islands as lead)
- Welfare (with the Ministry of Internal Affairs as lead)
- Public Services (with the Public Service Commission targeted for lead)
- Recovery (no lead agency yet identified as lead as this depends in part on the nature of the disaster (eg., the Ministry of Health would lead recovery following an epidemic, while, for natural hazards, recovery work has historically been led by Infrastructure Cook Islands)).
- Communications (with Blue Sky telecommunications provider to lead)
- Planning (no lead agency yet identified as lead as this depends in part on the nature of the disaster (eg., the Ministry of Health would lead planning following an epidemic, while, for natural hazard events, planning work has often been led by the Office of the Prime Minister).

Clusters will report to the National Controller (see Annex 2). As the 2017 NDRMP is still new, some sector and cluster focal points and modes of operation within line ministries are yet to be confirmed. According to EMCI, not all key staff may therefore be clear about their role. There is a need for terms of reference and operating procedures to be developed for most agencies and clusters.

EMCI may request assistance from UNDAC and the New Zealand Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management to assist with coordination as required.

The EMCI Geo Portal provides centralised baseline data on islands across the country.

### Simulations

National simulations are not often conducted due to a lack of funds, although EMCI do conduct table top exercises. The Airport Authority conducts annual emergency drills and EMCI participate in this. EMCI intends to run an operational drill next year. Line ministries also conduct their own drills (see, for example, the Ministry of Health in Section 15 – Health and Nutrition.

### Needs during peace time

Representatives of the government of Cook Islands state the need for assistance to develop the new clusters proposed in the 2017 DRM plan, particularly, key clusters such as Welfare and Logistics. the development of individual sector-based DRM plans and operational manuals for each hazard.

### Entry to the Cook Islands by humanitarian staff

At a broad level, EMCI state that humanitarian staff are permitted entry to the Cook Islands in support of disaster response where their role is clear and agreed in advance. To this end:

Entrants to the Cook Islands should be agreed with and invited by national clusters and their leads; National counterparts in the national cluster system liaise with EMCI ahead of time to submit a predetermined list of incoming staff, linked to the various partners. They then liaise with EMCI so that background checks and formalities can be observed. EMCI advises the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Immigration (MFAI) of the expected arrivals.

As the leads for national clusters have yet to be tested on their identified roles, support from outside of the Cook Islands will rely on liaison with EMCI and sector leads.

Those who seek to enter the Cook Islands who arrive without prior agreement with clusters and EMCI will raise concerns.

New Zealanders entering the Cook Islands receive visas on arrival. Diplomatic clearance through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can also speed up the process for military assets and personnel.

Individuals seeking to enter the Cook Islands may require transit visas to pass through New Zealand or Australia. This may take time.

EMCI can advise Customs of materials to be brought into the country. Information on waiver arrangements can be found in the Customs Act and on the MFEM website.

## NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

2017 National Disaster Risk Management Plan: contact Emergency Management Cook Islands for access

Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Plan 2016: <http://bit.ly/2BgfJ8R>

Climate and Disaster Compatible Development Policy 2013: <http://bit.ly/2BiQ53v>

Cook Islands Second Joint National Action Plan for climate change and disaster risk management: contact EMCI for access

2007 Disaster Risk Management Act: <http://bit.ly/2Axql3r>

Climate Change and Resilience Plan: contact EMCI for access

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## SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Letters of offer of international assistance should be channelled through cluster/ group leads, copying in the EMCI, and thence to the National Disaster Management Council for official endorsement.

## REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance and 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



PHOTO CREDIT: EMCI.

## 3. ENGAGEMENT OF MINISTRIES



### CURRENT STATUS

National arrangements for DRM are outlined in the 2017 NDRMP as well as the 2007 DRM Act.

In the event of a disaster, EMCI briefs the Prime Minister on the state of matters.



### NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

NDRMP 2017: contact EMCI for access

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## 4. HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPALS AND GENDER PROTECTION



### CURRENT STATUS

Part 2 of the NDRMP requires all agencies to include gender protection considerations in their DRM plans, including leading agencies.

At a general level, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is the focal point responsible for social services. The mandate for the Ministry of Internal Affairs includes issues for gender and other vulnerable groups such as children, youth, women, the elderly and the disabled. In this respect, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is the leading agency in coordinating support for welfare benefits (child, disability, old age, destitute etc). child support and NGO assistance specifically during the recovery stage of the disaster (through the provision of special services, benefits and child support.)

The Cook Islands has signed the following human rights treaties:

- Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of discrimination Against Women
- Convention of the Rights of the Child
- Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

### Humanitarian Principles

Through the Prime Minister and Cabinet, all government agencies in the Cook Islands are subject to a general code of conduct that applies during a disaster (if not a specific code of conduct). Consultations conducted for this Country Preparedness Package suggest that agencies are aware of the PMC code of conduct, although there is always benefit in raising awareness. At a general humanitarian level, stakeholders considered that humanitarian principles are applied more when conducting preparedness work, but less in the case of response. Respondents observed that staff trained in humanitarian principals including initial damage assessment work often move on so that newcomers have less understanding.

The Cook Islands Red Cross, which is an active participant in disaster response in the Cook Islands, follows its own code of conduct for humanitarian considerations.

### Gender

The Ministry of Internal Affairs implements a national policy and plan of action for gender equality and women's empowerment which seeks to ensure that no gender discrimination occurs in the country. The policy does not explicitly provide for emergency/ disaster situations. Issues arising in this case would need to be channelled through the EMCI.

Mainstreaming of gender work nationally is conducted through the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In this respect, following attendance at a regional gender and mainstreaming in Fiji in 2017, the Ministry of Internal Affairs submitted a report on mainstreaming of gender in the Cook Islands to the Public Services Commissioner. Additionally, a gender task force has been established comprising the private sector and government to discuss a number of issues around gender.

The National Council of Women (an NGO) provides assistance in working with women.

Mainstreaming of gender work across disaster clusters specifically does not necessarily occur. Sectoral DRM plans can include gender considerations if sectors wish.

### Protection

No dedicated national protection strategy and/or policy been developed. However, the newly released Child and Family Support Protection Act provides for domestic violence and child protection issues. The Act will take effect from 1 December 2017.

A national policy and action plan on Disability Inclusive Development (supported by a Disability Council) is in place. The national disability strategy includes reference to humanitarian issues for the disabled community in the event of a disaster.

Supporting the National Disability Policy (and as indicated in Section 5 – Partner Coordination), an assessment of disabilities in the Cook Islands was conducted in 2016 with the EMCI through SPC's Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP)

project. The assessment identified the location of individuals with disabilities, who was responsible for their support and how they might be rescued in the event of a disaster. The database is held with EMCI.

The Punanga Tauturu Inc – an NGO providing free and confidential counselling service for women – is dedicated to the elimination of violence against women in the Cook Islands, including targeting the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence been established, including for disasters.

While no dedicated policy or procedure exists on the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse by disaster responders, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is mandated to delivery child protection (through the Child and Family Support Protection Act). There may be benefits in additional training for staff from the Ministry (and other ministries) in the area of protection.

There are no national guidelines or procedures presently operating in place to guarantee that beneficiaries receive support in a manner that ensures safety, dignity, integrity and equality during emergencies. This was considered a gap in national consultations for the Country Preparedness Package.

### Assessments

Gender disaggregated data from the Cook Islands 2016 census will be available by the end of the year.

### Partners

- Cook Islands Red Cross.
- The Director for Women (Pokura), President of the Cook Islands National Council of Women and NGOs support gender work.
- Supporting arrangements exist with Australia that has funding for gender issues including gender based violence.
- ILO has provided support in the past on protection.

### Needs during peace time

- Training in cluster operation with specific inclusion of gender and protection and the arrangements between agencies (consistent with the NDRMP and preferably in time for the next review of the plan).

- National guidelines and training to guarantee that beneficiaries receive support in a manner that ensures safety, dignity, integrity and equality during emergencies.
- Support to develop a dedicated national protection strategy.



### NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

Cook Islands code of conduct – contact the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet for further information: [opscinfo@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:opscinfo@cookislands.gov.ck)

Cook Islands National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment & Strategic Plan of Action (2011 - 2016): <http://bit.ly/2yjZz8K>

Cook Islands Disability Inclusive Development Policy and Action Plan 2014 – 2019: <http://bit.ly/2C9CkRW>

Child and Family Support Protection Act: contact Ministry of Internal Affairs for access  
Ministry of Internal Affairs: [www.intaff.gov.ck](http://www.intaff.gov.ck)

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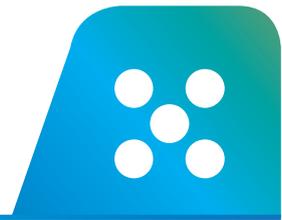
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### REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance and Resource Material

- Humanitarian Principles: insert relevant website <http://bit.ly/1oceeaz>
- 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>

## 5. PARTNER COORDINATION



### CURRENT STATUS

As indicated in Section 2, the NDRMP provides for the establishment of up to eight clusters following a disaster:

1. Logistics
2. International Assistance  
(led by Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
3. Infrastructure (led by Infrastructure Cook Islands)
4. Welfare (led by Ministry of Internal Affairs)
5. Public Services
6. Recovery
7. Communication
8. Planning

International representation in the Cook Islands covers:

- A UN Joint Office hosted by UNDP and operating in Rarotonga will likely sit under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as of 2018. The office will coordinate UN work (such as in-country missions) in the Cook Islands. The coordinating officer is changing in early 2018. Until the post is filled, the United Nations office in Samoa is covering issues for the Cook Islands.
- The New Zealand High Commission. As a self-governing state in free association with New Zealand, there is a strong relationship between the Cook Islands and New Zealand. Upon request, New Zealand would respond within 24 hours to a disaster in the Cook Islands.
- A small Asian Development Bank (ADB) office supporting the Cook Islands with loans, projects and capacity building activities. This includes a contingent loan facility that ADB offers in the event of a natural disaster. (See Section 12 – Emergency Funding).
- An honorary French Consul, concerned principally with visa and visitor support. However, some development activities have been delivered in the past.
- Honorary Spanish Consul.
- Honorary Japanese Consul.
- Honorary German Consul.

There are numerous non-government/ civil society organisations in the Cook Islands. Non-government/ civil society in the Cook Islands is most comprehensively represented through the newly reinvigorated Cook Islands Civil Society Organisation (CICSO) – a member of the regional Pacific Islands Alliance of Non-Government Organisations.

CICSO comprises approximately 96-member organisations. Members are formed into clusters by theme such as faith based, youth trade, environment, vulnerable/disabled /aged care, women, agriculture and outer island-organisations. A full description of Cook Islands civil society organisations (CSOs) and registry of CICSO members can be found in the recently completed ADB report *Civil society participation for development effectiveness and civil society organisation strengthening project*. For lead contacts of all CSOs, contact CICSO.

Reflecting the diversity of CSOs operating, work conducted in the Cook Islands is wide ranging and may include training and awareness in disaster issues for vulnerable groups, charity works, award schemes etc.

CSOs are not explicitly recognised in the 2017 NDRMP although the plan refers to all agencies of the Crown, government and non-government agencies who are working in DRM. Specifically, the Plan states that all agencies acting as partners, NGO's and civil society must work within the framework of the Plan by identifying a relevant cluster to work under and adhering to the operating procedures of that cluster.

Additionally:

- Rarotonga has 10 *punas*:
  - All *punas* which are all registered with the EMCI.
  - Most of the *punas* are officially registered as members of CICSO or are also members of other NGOs that are members of CICSO.
  - *Punas* are required to operate disaster management committees through which community representatives are required to provide support during the disaster



PHOTO CREDIT: Matariki Wilson, Cook Islands Red Cross.

preparation phase as well as during response (eg., during a disaster, punas come together to assist people in shelters and to assist the vulnerable).

- Most islands plans recognize various CSOs or uniform organizations as part of their response plan.
- Some informal CSOs provide assistance post disaster through the punas.
- Punas are encouraged by CICSO to formalise themselves and CSOs so that CICSO can better target funding for grants (eg., from Japan). In the event of a disaster, CICSO connects to EMCI to provide updates.

CICSO would like to establish formalised links with the government DRM structure.

No capacity mapping of CSOs has been conducted in Cook Islands, although some punas have identified responsibilities. An assessment of disabilities in the Cook Islands was conducted in 2016 with the EMCI through SPC's BSRP project. The assessment identified the location of individuals with disabilities, who was responsible for their support and how they might be rescued in the event of a disaster. The database is held with EMCI. *Punas* are aware of disabled individuals in their community.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs developed a civil society engagement strategy in 2012. However, CICSO was only reinvigorated in 2012 so was not involved in this activity. As a result, The Ministry of Internal Affairs advises that the Strategy needs to be realigned to clarify the links with CICSO. Links between CICSO and the civil society engagement strategy are therefore unclear.

Uniform CSOs (such as the Girl Guides and Scouts) have their own structures and responsibilities.

Contact between CSOs and in-country donors and technical focal points in the Cook Islands is variable. As CICSO was only reinvigorated in 2012, links with development partners are still relatively new. Nevertheless, New Zealand and the ABD (who recently worked on institutional strengthening of CSOs) are in contact with CICSO.

Connections with national agencies may be ad hoc with CICSO reporting that they are sometimes included in dialogue concerning DRM and sometimes not.

Communications via CICSO are ad hoc as the work is voluntary. Communications activities include email contacts, Facebook posts and blog posts of activities. There is a need for a dedicated communications officer.

## Disaster preparedness

CSOs in the Cook Islands are deeply involved in disaster preparedness, assistance and recovery work. However, they can benefit from capacity building to coordinate more with the government and local groups.

- CSO needs are documented in the ADB report concerning institutional strengthening of CSOs (mentioned earlier). These needs include, a need for civil society organisations to be nationally and regionally 'savvy' in order to attract government or development partner funding (to enable better preparedness training and planning), that relationships with government agencies (for response planning and resourcing) need to be formalised and that strategic planning is needed for CICOSO. There is also a need to clarify and formalise the links between civil society/ CICOSO and the government (in terms of responsibilities CSOs have pre- and post-disaster) and to develop a cohesive communications strategy for CSOs (a person to develop a strategy, develop a regular newsletter or update etc.)
- CICOSO reports a need for a minimum strategy for the CSO community through items such as a Strategic Plan for CICOSO, financial accountability structure to enable a stronger relationship with development partners, terms of reference for key roles.

## NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

Civil society participation for development effectiveness and civil society organisation strengthening project

### National Key Contacts

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## SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Cluster surge support is likely to be requested for response and recovery work in medium- and large-scale events.

## REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance and Resource Material

IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at  
Country Level: <http://bit.ly/2utMdsX>  
UNDAC: <http://bit.ly/2x1nFln>

## 6. CIVIL-MILITARY (POLICE) COORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS



### CURRENT STATUS

There are no military forces in the Cook Islands. Rather, the defence of the country is provided by New Zealand. As such, New Zealand can respond to requests from the Cook Islands for defence assistance.

Local police in the Cook Islands have staff to assist during response to disaster. Some police personnel have been trained in response issues, for example, through the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands. Nevertheless, the Police also have ongoing law and order responsibilities and may be stretched to provide in post disaster support.

The Commissioner of Police is the National Controller during a National Emergency. The Response Executive, in consultation with the National Controller, have the responsibility of determining priority actions, roles and responsibilities of agencies, allocating resources, controlling movement into and out of affected areas and overseeing any other activity required in order to respond effectively to the event.

All agencies with a role in response are expected to deploy resources during a disaster to carry those roles forward. Upon approval by the Police Commissioner, Police have assets may be used for disaster response deployment. However, in practice these assets are often needed elsewhere so that, internally, government relies on various other ministries such as Infrastructure Cook Islands for equipment and machinery.

The Cook Islands have drawn on military assets for disaster support in the past, from both France (via its close proximity to Tahiti in French Polynesia) and New Zealand (with whom the Cook Islands has a constitutional relationship). The Cook Islands can formally request military assets such as aircraft for deployment following a disaster from these two countries. Past support from their respective military include the mobilisation of machines and debris clearing.

New Zealand coordinates regularly with France and Australia under the FRANZ arrangement. The Arrangement between France, Australia and New Zealand, covers the coordination of disaster reconnaissance and relief assistance in the Pacific. This includes the use of military assets etc.

Additionally, there are existing relationships between the Cook Islands Police and the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) under the Mutual Assistance Program. There are two NZDF personnel in the Cook Islands who support the operations of the Australian funded Pacific Patrol Boat.

### Needs during peace time

Some stakeholders consulted expressed the view that there is a need for improved civil-military coordination. The need for improved coordination will depend upon the leading agency and the scale and nature of the event.



### NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

The FRANZ Agreement: <http://bit.ly/2AxIUop>

The Cook Islands and Free Association: Understanding the nature & practice of the special relationship with New Zealand: <http://bit.ly/2ykm4dR>

Joint centenary declaration of the principles of the relationship between the Cook Islands and New Zealand: <http://bit.ly/2ASbduz>

### National Key Contacts

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Cook Islands Police

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Students populating EMCI Geoportal in the islands of Mitiaro. PHOTO CREDIT: EMCI.

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Chief Fire Officer  
Airport Rescue Fire Service  
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## SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Under the FRANZ arrangement, assistance is available on request from Australia, France and or New Zealand.

OCHA delivers annual Civil Military Training to police personnel from the region to enhance understanding of civil military coordination during emergencies from a humanitarian perspective.



## REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance and 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>

## 7. PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT



### CURRENT STATUS

The private sector in the Cook Islands is represented by the Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce. Around 100 businesses in the Cook Islands (principally from Rarotonga), plus 182 associate members, form the Chamber of Commerce.

Information about evacuation centres and cyclone response procedures are published annually by Blue Sky in the national telephone directory.

There is currently no formalised arrangement to connect the government and or humanitarian organisations to the private sector. The Chamber of Commerce is not included in government warning messages concerning hazards. They are invited to national Platform meetings on DRM, but otherwise connections with government in DRM are limited. As a result, the Chamber of Commerce is unclear who to liaise with in government in the event of a disaster for planning and response (eg., capacity of local materials) and coordination can be ad hoc.

On the other hand, under the new NDRMP, the lead agency for disaster in its area has the responsibility to make arrangements and connections with relevant private sector agency (subject to the hazard). In this respect, procurement of relief items from the private sector in the Cook Islands is presently managed separately by different agencies.

The Ministry of Agriculture (as lead of the Food Security Cluster) and representatives of the Logistics groups expressed interest in including the private sector formally in their groupings as a means to ensure that materials are sourced locally, not externally.

Likewise, the Chamber of Commerce is keen to formalise links with the government for DRM purposes. As noted in Section 13 - Logistics Capacity, Planning and Infrastructure different lists of service providers and possible retail prices are held by separate government agencies for post disaster procurement purposes. For instance, Infrastructure Cook Islands, MFEM the Cook Islands Red Cross are understood to have some pre-arrangements with suppliers and contractors prior to any disaster. However, no centralised database (or procurement unit) exists.



PHOTO CREDITS: Benoit Carpentier/IFRC.

The Chamber of Commerce has expressed interest in progressing procurement relationships, recommending the formalisation of DRM arrangements with government (and humanitarian agencies as relevant) through:

- The identification by government of priority materials that may be needed early on in the response phase
- Development of an inventory of island supplies
- Agreed retail prices for rapid procurement
- Resilience building in local businesses through the development of BCPs, safety plans and protection of assets.

The private sector is keen to work on these issues but a dedicated expert would be needed for this.

#### Needs during peace time

- Formalisation of private sector links with the government post-disaster are needed (priority materials, inventory of stocks, pricing etc.).
- There is a need for safety training for business, for the safety of staff and the public; as well as for business continuity planning.
- Need for improved information dissemination so that word of threats can be passed to the private sector.
- Connecting Business initiative is of interest to EMCI. In particular, training to develop DRM plans, contingency and continuity plans.

## NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

### National Key Contacts

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Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce  
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## REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance and Resource Material

- Guiding Principles on Public-Private Collaboration for Humanitarian Action: <http://bit.ly/2uUCZ90>
- Connecting Business Initiative Report – Humanitarian Crises, Emergency Preparedness and Response: The role of business and the private sector: <http://bit.ly/2uCNwpR>

## 8. ASSESSMENT PROTOCOLS/ MECHANISMS



### CURRENT STATUS

Assessments are conducted over up to three phases:

- Immediate (rapid) situation overview: timeframe of: 8-12 hours
- Initial damage assessment: timeframe of: 24-48 hours
- Detailed damage assessment: timeframe of: 48 hours and over.

EMCI is responsible for coordinating the assessments to produce a report to the Response Executives so that decision making can proceed.

Each ministry, *Puna* and *Pa Enuu* is expected to submit a Situation Report of their sectors to EMCI. However, selected specialist assessors such as engineers, health officers, etc. may be appointed by EMCI to support the carrying out of assessments. EMCI state that there is a need for ongoing training/ awareness raising for all sectors in assessment to ensure that duplication of data collection is avoided and to speed up response.

Assessment methodologies for disasters in the Cook Islands vary. Agencies have different data needs and consequently different views on assessment, with some targeting initial damage assessments and others seeking rapid or sectoral assessments.

Initial disaster assessment employed by EMCI following a disaster takes the form first of an overview (fly over or a drive through the area to estimate the scale of damage and access to affected sites). For this purpose, EMCI has developed a rapid needs assessment format to be used following a disaster, but this has yet to be agreed. The format contains basic information (eg., fatalities, whether the airport and roads are operational), but does not disaggregate data by sex. Data disaggregated impact data are collected in detailed sector assessments. Assessment protocols with the Pacific Humanitarian Team do not appear to be used. The Red Cross uses its own survey (e.g. for food security see Section 18 – Food Security & Livelihoods).



PHOTO CREDIT: EMCI.

Depending on connectivity, staff in the Cook Islands can link mobile phones to the national database for the purpose of monitoring response. In some cases (eg., agriculture), staff may also take their own server to the outer islands to ensure the upload of data on impact and response.

The Cook Islands has access to considerable spatial data<sup>7</sup> for Rarotonga through the SPC hosted Pacific Risk Information System (PacRIS), which contains demographic and housing in the Cook Islands. The data can be used following a disaster to project the type of damage that might be expected from an event.

EMCI have created the EMCI Geo Portal to host DRM related information in the portal. EMCI is now developing a baseline data for all islands. An application is now being developed to collect the current data and the application to be used during an initial damage assessment and compare that to the baseline data.



## NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

Pacific Risk Information System: <http://pcrafi.spc.int/>

### National Key Contacts

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## SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

In the event of a large-scale disaster, OCHA Pacific can provide support to coordinate assessments through technologies such as the Kobo Toolbox.



## REFERENCE INFORMATION INTERNATIONAL GUIDANCE AND RESOURCE MATERIAL

- IASC Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) Guidance: <http://bit.ly/2tVfubu>
- Needs Assessment: Guidance & Templates: <http://bit.ly/2vwngkl>
- Assessment Capacities Project Assessment Resources: <http://bit.ly/2tl6JMx>

<sup>7</sup> PCRAFI data for Rarotonga; GeoPortal national data for the outer islands

## 9. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT



### CURRENT STATUS

As indicated in section 2 (Legislation, Plans, Policies and Standard Operating Procedures), each ministry, Puna and Pa Enea in the Cook Islands is expected to submit a Situation Report of their sectors to EMCI. EMCI is then responsible for compiling the information into a report for submission to the Response Executives for decision making.

EMCI have a template for its resulting SitReps, although EMCI state that there is a need for ongoing awareness raising and training for agencies to understand what data is needed for the SitReps so that duplication of data collection and reporting can be avoided.

As indicated in Section 8 – Assessment Protocols/ Mechanisms – the Cook Islands has access to two spatial databases of assets (PacRIS and the GeoPortal) that can be used following a disaster to project and monitor disaster impacts by island. The GeoPortal provides centralised baseline data on islands across the country and is in principle served by a dedicated Geo Portal Officer operating in EMCI. At the time of preparation, no human resource had been secured for this work.

Common preparedness datasets and fundamental operational datasets, including sex age and disability disaggregated data and gender-responsive information, have apparently been developed. With an intent to eventually plot all the data spatially for local planning purposes.

There is limited awareness of IASC guidelines although Cook Islands may be opening to learning more about these.



### NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

NDMO Website: <http://bit.ly/2tvUau1>

Pacific Risk Information System: <http://pcrafi.spc.int>

### National Key Contacts

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**SPC**

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### SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

In the event of a large-scale disaster, OCHA Pacific can provide support with situation analysis, data collection and mapping at the request of the government.



### REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

#### Reference Standards

Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Guidelines:

<http://bit.ly/2gY3wwO>

#### International Guidance and Resource Material

- Humanitarian Data Exchange: <http://bit.ly/23WPiV4>
- Pacific Disaster Net: <http://bit.ly/2uRLUZf>
- Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative: <http://bit.ly/2v1epnz>

## 10. RESPONSE MONITORING MECHANISMS



### CURRENT STATUS

Depending on connectivity, staff in the Cook Islands can link mobile phones to the national database for the purpose of monitoring response. In some cases (eg., agriculture), staff may also take their own server to the outer islands to ensure the upload of data on impact and response.

EMCI use a small portable server that can be taken to the Pa Enua due to limited internet connection at times and upload data to the Geo Portal when connection is available.

In terms of response monitoring, agencies are expected to know how much of what materials or support has been sent to each village. Agencies meet each evening at the NEOC to share updates on what has been provided and what is needed.

### National Key Contacts

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### REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

- IASC Humanitarian Response Monitoring Guidance: <http://bit.ly/2tl1YIZ>
- Response Monitoring on Humanitarian Response: <http://bit.ly/2vwjj8f>
- Humanitarian Indicators Registry: <http://bit.ly/1s1KMc8>



PHOTO CREDIT: EMCI.

# 11. PUBLIC INFORMATION/ COMMUNICATING WITH COMMUNITIES



## CURRENT STATUS

Under the new NDRMP, the coordination of communications for disasters is handled through the newly established Communications Cluster. The lead agency for the communications cluster had not been determined at the time of writing although EMCI advise that the work will operate at the NEOC and occur at the advice of the National Controller.

The Cook Islands have two sets of media: national (public) services and private services. National services are provided by the Pitt Media Group (former public broadcasters) which provide:

- one national television service (Cook Islands TV covering Rarotonga. Outer islands have only limited reach to the television broadcasts);
- one national radio station (Radio Cook Islands) that reaches all the islands and can be accessed by internet as well as radio wave;
- the Cook Islands Herald newspaper;
- Cook Islands Newspaper.

80 percent of Pitt Media Group communications are conducted in Cook Islands Maori.

Private services are:

- Vaka Television and Seventh Day Adventist Channel Church television; and
- four small independent radio stations: Radio Enea Manu (community), Matariki FM, 88FM and Kia Orana Radio.

During a disaster, all public media go in response mode with the national radio operating 24 hours a day, broadcasting official information and alerts. At this point, media groups are stationed at the national emergency operations centre, hosted at Blue Sky. Media issues at the country level are then controlled jointly by EMCI and the Police Commissioner through the national emergency operations centre. EMCI and the Police Commissioner are the government spokes agencies.

Radio Cook Islands has a draft disaster response plan (internal document only – this is not publicly available). Blue Sky has a disaster response plan in place and works with EMCI to ensure that the plan is in line with the national disaster plan (that directories and contact lists are up to date). Blue Sky operate a back-up services plan in place and are on full stand-by in the event of a disaster.

EMCI have expressed the hope that the GeoPortal will become used for the dissemination of public information. In the meanwhile, social media is increasingly used as a means to share information between government and the community (alerts, warnings), as well as to share information on what is happening (eg., damage information) or needed. Community feedback on disaster response is principally handled by the Police Department. While there is no formal beneficiary complaints and feedback mechanism, social media also provides an opportunity to receive feedback on public views of response.

In terms of communicating with communities, as indicated in Section 1, Village *punas* and *Pa Enea* DRM councils are mandated to liaise with EMCI in the event of a disaster.

## Needs during a disaster

- Restoration of communications especially in the outer islands.
- Transportation of materials after disaster.



## NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

Telecommunications Act 1987: Contact Blue Sky for access

## National Key Contacts

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Chief Operating Officer  
Blue Sky Cook Islands  
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## REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

- Practice Brief: Communicating with Communities During the First Six Weeks of an Emergency Response: <http://bit.ly/2tI3LHK>
- Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities- Tools & Resources: <http://bit.ly/2nEYuXA>



PHOTO CREDIT: OCHA Pacific.

## 12. EMERGENCY FUNDING



### CURRENT STATUS

National financing arrangements/ procedures following a disaster were documented in 2015 in the Cook Islands' Post-disaster budget execution guidelines, produced under the World Bank- SPC-delivered PCRAFI project. This has recently been updated in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM)'s Disaster Recovery Plan, which outlines funds access. In brief:

- NZD1.5 million is held by government in a Disaster Emergency Trust Fund for use in a disaster response only. This fund can only be accessed at the declaration of a State of Emergency or a State of Disaster by the Prime Minister.
- A government contingency fund exists to respond to unplanned events. The balance commences as NZD100 000 per year but will vary depending on the time of year and may be used towards the end of the financial year.
- Under the World Bank/ SPC/Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat PCRAFI/ PREP project, Cook Islands is part of a catastrophe insurance scheme against tropical cyclones and earthquakes (plus related disasters).
- Cook Islands government signed a loan in December 2016 confirming a contingent loan facility in the event of a natural disaster of up to USD10million.
- The Cook Islands has access to the Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund. This is a special fund designed to provide incremental grant resources to developing member countries impacted by a major natural disaster.
- MFEM can develop supplementary budgets to enable the re-phasing of cashflows if critical. Additionally, the Constitution allows for emergency budget spending to a limit of 1.5% over the budget total appropriation, if needed.

Once the Prime Minister declares a state of emergency, the Cook Islands Government Public Account signatories list is invoked. At this point, the Director of the EMCI is added to the list. This enables the EMCI to verify and approve certain disaster related goods and service carried out before payment is released.

### Needs during peace time

There appears to be limited awareness in MFEM of UN funding mechanisms (e.g. Flash appeal and the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)). EMCI request awareness raising/ training on accessing these funds.



### NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

- Post-disaster budget execution guidelines: <http://bit.ly/2C8NCpQ>
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Management's Disaster Recovery Plan: contact MFEM for access <https://cerf.un.org/>

### National Key Contacts

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### REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

- HumanitarianResponse.info – Response Mobilization: <http://bit.ly/2vc4F6T>
- Central Emergency Response Fund guidelines: <http://www.unocha.org/cerf>

## 13. LOGISTICS



### CURRENT STATUS

The organisation and delivery of logistics following a disaster in the Cook Islands are coordinated under a newly established Logistics Cluster, led by MFEM. At the time of writing, the lead agency for this cluster was targeted as MFEM. While formal membership of the Cluster is yet to be determined, some agencies are currently involved in logistics work post-disaster including:

- Red Cross, which provides training in distribution and resourcing of evacuation shelters etc. in the outer islands. It may also deliver a logistics training in the future.
- Infrastructure Cook Islands which provides shelter kits and preposition relief items for the outer islands.

No formal assessment of logistics capacity has been conducted to date although much is known already. The Cook Islands have 11 seaports, an international designed airport (on Rarotonga – this also serves domestic flights to Aitutaki), a domestic airport in Aitutaki and a number of coral airstrips on inhabited outer islands. Transport to these outer islands is coordinated by the island governments.

Rarotonga airport is the only airport meeting international standards. Other airports and strips are used only for domestic flights. Nevertheless, a Hercules aircraft can land on most of the islands.

The Ports Authority looks after shipping arrangements for Rarotonga and Aitutaki only.

At present, no formal prepositioning strategy exists for the Government and partner agencies. The Red Cross has limited prepositioned goods in the outer islands (e.g. in Manihiki).

### Procurement

There is no centralised procurement function within the Cook Islands government. The procedures are centralised, but the responsibility for procurement is delegated to the individual ministries. All government Ministries follow the MFEM procurement policy.

Lists of service providers and possible retail prices are held by different agencies for their own purposes (eg., MFEM, Infrastructure, Red Cross) but no centralised database exists.

Waivers exist for materials being brought in following a disaster provided that all the correct paper work is submitted to Customs for clearance.

### Needs during peace time

- The biggest challenge facing the Cook Islands in the disaster response phase is access to the outer islands.
- Additionally, there can be challenges with the generation of timely information. Cook Islands representatives noted that duplicate assessments were being conducted during TC Pat in 2010, and that there was a lack of access to information. However, the establishment of the GeoPortal should rectify some of this problem.
- Logistic training for key sectors involved in early response.

Ultimately there is a need to formalise the Logistics Cluster and establish terms of reference and procedures. Specific recommendations include the need for a logistics plan:

- a complete list of suppliers and prices for basic non-food items during an emergency (tents, blankets etc) at both the national and regional level. This includes prices items, including identification of suppliers who have been screened and pre-approved for procurement to speed aid distribution.
- Awareness raising for stakeholders on customs procedures including entry points, transportation considerations etc.
- International Disaster Response Laws

Respondents at the Country Preparedness Package workshop consider drones necessary for assessment and planning purposes. Drones are now being used for collecting data and planning purposes. The drones will also be very useful to carry out an overview or a rapid assessment.

## National Key Contacts

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During response times, the PHT Logistics Cluster Support Team (led by WFP) can:

- Provide Logistics coordination support.
- Provide logistics services such as transport capacities (in a first instance WFP would most likely liaise with the military or relevant forces on the ground).
- Provide logistics Information Management support.
- WFP provides a monthly mapping of the national and regional stockpiles prepositioned. Some Cook Islands agencies provide their updates (see the Logistics Cluster Pacific page website).



## REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

- IASC Emergency Response Preparedness Guidelines: <http://bit.ly/2tab299>
- WFP Pacific Stockpile Mapping: <http://bit.ly/2talwFz>
- Logistics Cluster Pacific page website: <http://www.logcluster.org/preparedness/pacific-0>

## SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The New Zealand government are a key partner for the Cook Islands and tend to be the first target for assistance (see Section 1). New Zealand can support with supplies and logistics, including the deployment of military assets on request.



PHOTO CREDIT: OCHA Pacific.

## 14. INFRASTRUCTURE



### CURRENT STATUS

According to the NDRMP 2017, infrastructure issues following a disaster are to be coordinated under the newly established Infrastructure Cluster. At the time of writing, the lead for this cluster was targeted as Infrastructure Cook Islands. Terms of reference for the cluster are yet to be established.

The role of Infrastructure Cook Islands in response is to ensure the timely repair of damaged public infrastructures (such as public roads, seaports, airports) and the quick restoration of public services (such as schools, health-care services, transport), thereby ensuring lives are returned to normality at the best possible time.

The response structure of Infrastructure Cook Islands is in line with the national response plan (NDRMP). Cook Islands Investment Corporation/ Infrastructure Cook Islands have basic guidelines for initial disaster response, but no formal operating procedures per se. ICI states that it has developed a draft disaster response plan outlining specific roles and responsibilities of the organization for which it is awaiting approval.

Together with Infrastructure Cook Islands, several agencies are presently active in infrastructure post-disaster works. These include:

- the Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC) – a statutory Corporation of the Cook Islands Government, established to manage Crown assets including land and properties (eg., infrastructure, renewable energy, water and sanitation and public buildings) on Rarotonga and the outer islands, and subsidiaries;
- MFEM
- the Ministry of Transport (covering the Airports Authority and Ports Authority)
- Island Councils (PUNAs) for the outer islands.
- the Red Cross and
- the private sector.

In terms of mandated responsibilities, CIIC has the legal responsibility to manage Crown assets, as designated by Cabinet through the Business and

Corporation Act (2008). Implementation of the Act is then conducted through Infrastructure Cook Islands which is responsible for the maintenance of road, ports etc. Nevertheless, while government properties in the Cook Islands are managed by the Cook Islands Investment Corporation, physical management of other amenities is executed by the respective agencies, e.g. Ports Authority.

According to Infrastructure Cook Islands, sectoral capacity to respond to infrastructure issues in the Cook Islands post-disaster is presently sufficient and manageable. This is because of their relatively small size of the country as well as the number of agencies supporting infrastructure work post-disasters (see list above).

### Disaster Assessment

Infrastructure Cook Islands states that it has no formal template for assessment in place. Technical assessments on infrastructure damages are usually conducted using pictorial and physical assessment techniques. Civil engineers and building inspectors are usually deployed in the early response phase to estimate damage, allowing for rapid mobilization of resources to conduct repair works. ICI has in place GIS system (through the support of ADB) that records all the infrastructure and assets in country on a database and this tool is also used in response to map infrastructural and asset damages.

CIIC uses assessment forms for planning. It specifically uses Asset Finder Application to take stock of all the government assets. Additionally, the national GeoPortal and the PCRAFI asset databases can be used to indicate how many people live where and this assists the group to project likely needs. Nevertheless, beyond basic infrastructure and buildings, ICI states that knowledge of small government assets (vehicles, ICT) is lacking. Addressing this, ICI, the Office of the Prime Minister, MFEM and the Government of New Zealand are expecting to commence a project in the near future to establish a spatial government asset register (wharfs etc.). This will assist in future disaster assessment.

Following a disaster, ICI along with a team of assessors carries out an initial damage assessment to inform EMCI and decision makers of a response and early recovery plan. Further detailed damaged assessment is then carried out for recovery and re-construction

Relations with international community on infrastructure issues are very limited. Infrastructure Cook Islands suggest that technical capacity for post disaster response is likely adequate. If needed, ICI note that assistance from New Zealand and France is usually available. In an emergency, any external support is channelled through the NDRM Response Executives.

### Partners

- Assistance from New Zealand and France is usually available.
- New Zealand and Australia are members of the South Pacific Engineers Association which can provide technical assistance.



### NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

ICI Strategic Plan: <http://bit.ly/2AP0lvK>

National Roads and Road Drainage Policy: <http://bit.ly/2yk91cu>

National Solid Waste Policy: <http://bit.ly/2BhMXEU>

National Solid Waste Strategy: <http://bit.ly/2C9GM3s>

Solid Waste (Incinerator) Feasibility Study: <http://bit.ly/2BdCLxh>

Draft updated Building Code: <http://bit.ly/2AxV4h4>

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# 15. EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS



## CURRENT STATUS

Emergency telecommunications fall under the Public Services Cluster, with Blue Sky acting as cluster lead.

Blue Sky is the only licensed telecommunication entity in Cook Islands. Government owns 40 per cent and shareholders own 60 per cent. Blue Sky holds an exclusive license which requires them to provide universal telecommunications services (internet and telecommunications) to all populated islands (11 islands) in the country. Blue Sky has a physical presence in all the eleven populated islands of the Cook Islands. All its services are provided via satellite interconnectivity. Its operation is Legislated under the Telecommunication Act (1987).

### Technical Telecommunications Capacity

The mobile phone network is reliable. Mayors of each island is contactable by phone and mobile phone. Each island also has a Blue-Sky satellite phone for emergency, the Red Cross also provides a satellite phone for each island.

Blue Sky has explicit terms of reference for general service provision as well as during a disaster. Presently, approximately 7,800 mobiles are in use throughout the Cook Islands, with about 7,200 landline users.

Satellite O3b<sup>8</sup> access was officially established by Blue Sky in 2013. The network utilises eight satellites in mid orbit which provide up to a maximum of 1.2Gbps (gigabytes per second) and average 300Mbps (megabytes per second).

Using KA-band wavelength, the satellite network has the ability to cover a 700-km radius. According to 2012 figures, Telecom has 3,562 hosts with approximately 6,000 users.

Blue Sky maintains a 24 hour per day Maritime Service for local fishing boats and trading ships on high frequency (HF) and very high frequency (VHF) radio waves.

<sup>8</sup> Satellite constellation designed for telecommunications and data backhaul from remote locations. See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/O3b\\_\(satellite\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/O3b_(satellite)).

Suvarrow is yet to be integrated to the Telecoms Domestic Satellite Network. Telecom Cook Islands currently maintains High Frequency Simplex Radio communications to this island. A VHF repeater station is located on Tekou, Rarotonga. This station provides full-island coverage for the VHF land mobile service and the VHF Maritime Service.

### Disaster Response Capacity

During a disaster, Blue Sky is required to ensure the provision of satellite phones and short-wave radio frequencies for the outer islands. HF/VHS radio also exists on Rarotonga. Blue Sky also hosts the national emergency operations centre, responsible to monitor the progress of disaster event, disseminate regular weather updates to the general public and coordinates national response.

Blue Sky has a Disaster Response Plan which outlines response procedures for the company. (This is an international document and not publicly available.) Blue Sky conducts an annual response plan check each October (before cyclone season) to ensure that emergency kits for staff involved in initial standby and response efforts are in stock in case of a cyclone. The kits cover items such as survival supplies, additional safety wear and equipment etc.

Blue Sky considers that it has adequate technical expertise in the country for mobilisation as part of first response to fix damage telecommunications assets. It does not use any tools for sectoral assessment.

All staff are expected to be available in the case of an emergency. Building on past experience with disasters, all infrastructure for emergency telecommunications cables are located underground.

### Partners

- Cook Islands Red Cross supports telecommunications sector through the provisions of satellite phones.
- Military services from NZ and France provide transportation assistance to outer islands, and also support the country's telecommunications sector by providing their own communications systems.

- The Pacific Islands Telecommunication Association (PITA) which is a non-profit regional organisation of telecommunications providers represent the interests of small island nations in the Pacific Region in the field of telecommunications. PITA have developed a community of practice and among partners they work to support with supplies during emergencies.
- Provisions of emergency telecommunications are conventionally provided by New Zealand in the event of an emergency through the New Zealand High Commission office. These may come in on commercial flights or via the New Zealand Air force depending on flight availability. Commercial flight priorities are set by the Airlines pending on clearance by the Airport Authorities to resume flight schedule and operations.
- In the case of the Outer Islands, an Airport engineer may be required to travel by boat to assess and verify whether is suitable to commence operation.

### Needs during peace time

- The main challenge encountered during response is centred around the logistics of restoring communication services, especially on the availability of spare parts and transportation of equipment to outer islands.
- There is a need for an emergency telecommunications plan following a disaster. The burnt down sub-station that supplies the

mobile phone network in Rutaki caused a huge disruption to the local business for nearly 2 weeks before the network can be fully restored. Blue Sky need a contingency plan in place.



### NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

Telecommunications Act (not online; contact Blue Sky Pacific for details.)

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### REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

ETC Preparedness in the Pacific: <http://bit.ly/2uCSli>



PHOTO CREDIT: OCHA Pacific.

## 16. HEALTH & NUTRITION



### CURRENT STATUS

According to the NDRMP 2017, health issues are to form of sub-group within the Public Services cluster. While the lead for the Public Services Cluster is yet to be determined, the Ministry of Health will lead the coordination of the health sub-group. Other members of the health sub-group are yet to be determined. However, agencies presently providing health support post-disaster presently are: Ministry of Health, Infrastructure Cook Islands (representing water quality issues), the Ministry of Agriculture (depending on the event) and the Red Cross (who historically coordinated health issues across this group). Standard operating procedures for this group of health agencies have existed in the past, although these may be revised once the operational details of the NDRMP and the new cluster structure are rolled out.

The Ministry of Health applies a sectoral Ministry Emergency/Disaster Management Plan in the time of a disaster. (Additional documentation that supports the MOH Emergency /Disaster plan is the Ministry of Health Pandemic Influenza Outbreak Plan (2009)). The Ministry Emergency/ Disaster Management Plan contains names, contacts and arrangements in response to a variety of disasters including, cyclone/ storm, tsunani, plane crash, fire, epidemic/ disease and terrorist activities (bomb threat, hijacking, hostage etc.). Depending on the hazard at hand, operating procedures for Health can vary, although the broad protocols for coordination and responsibility remain the same. The plan also provides an inventory of staff and medical supplies in the event of a disaster.

In the case of an event, health teams addressing the four key areas of food safety, sanitation, water and nutrition are established.

A nutrition unit operates at the national hospital but no cases of malnutrition have been reported to date.

Capacity for health around the country varies. The national hospital and most medics are based on Rarotonga, together with two ambulances. Aitutaki is the only southern island with two doctors. Nursing

practitioners are based in the northern Islands. With the exception of Manihiki, the shortage of regular flights can pose challenges for medical assistance in the Northern Group.

Environmental health promoters use a template to assess health impacts from a disaster.

### Preparedness activities

- The Ministry of Health looks at safety of food for human consumption and targets operating procedures for different type of food sales licences (eg., food from road side).
- The Ministry tests water quality around the island – as well as water stations – to ensure safe water for consumption.
- It Ministry of Health operated community health services, promoting health, food safety and nutrition, and conducts awareness activities to warn other sectors of diseases coming to the country and how to deal with them (eg., dengue).
- The Ministry of Health runs up to two annual drills (for incidents such as plane crashes).
- The MoH procures all routine immunization schedule vaccines, immunization devices and cold chain equipment through the Vaccine Independence Initiative (VII). The VII mechanism enables the ministry to plan for and ensure uninterrupted vaccine and immunization devices supplies in regular times and in emergencies
- The Emergency Disease Surveillance & Response department of the Ministry of Health (monitoring data that could indicate the potential disease outbreak) connects with WHO/ SPC on a weekly basis to update them on developments.

### Assets

The national hospital has two ambulances.

### Partners

If the Ministry of Health has any needs that will impact the nation, EMCI is the first agency it targets for assistance. Pending on the expected severity of the event, EMCI may consider the possibility of activating a State of Emergency for an all agency response.

With strong connections to New Zealand, the Ministry of Health can approach the New Zealand High Commission for assistance if there is a disaster or outbreak.

Ministry of Health disseminates information to various stakeholders.

### Needs during disaster

- Availability of mobile emergency medical equipment and resources
- Cold chain capacities will need strengthening for effective vaccine utilization
- Activation of Rarotonga health team to support the *Pa Enuā*
- Psychological first aid
- Telecommunications reception can be limited- need a GPS satellite phone or PISAT to reach *Pa Enuā*
- Needs during peace time

Supplies will be the gap in an event of an emergency but they cannot predict

### NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

Ministry of Health Act 2013:  
<http://www.health.gov.ck/>

Public Health Act 2004: <http://www.health.gov.ck/>

Food Act 1992/93: <http://www.health.gov.ck/>

Food Regulations 2014: <http://www.health.gov.ck/>

Public Health (IHR) Regulations 2013:  
<http://www.health.gov.ck/>

Ministry of Health Emergency Disaster Management Plan (contact Ministry of Health)

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### SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The New Zealand government is a key partner for the Cook Islands and tend to be the first respondent to requests for assistance (see Section 1).

In the event of a large emergency, such as a measles outbreak, UNICEF could support with vaccines from buffer stocks.

### REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

- International Health Regulation 2005: link missing
- WHO List of Guidelines for Emergency Response: <http://bit.ly/2u3pEsr>
- Global Nutrition Cluster Handbook: <http://bit.ly/2uDh9Hs>
- Sphere Minimum Standards in Health Action: <http://bit.ly/2uxp5JF>
- Health Cluster Guide: <http://bit.ly/2uxkJ5k>
- Western Pacific Regional Framework for Action for Disaster Risk Management for Health: <http://bit.ly/2t9TA4J>
- Inter-Agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings: <http://bit.ly/1DPPqvC>

# 17. EDUCATION



## CURRENT STATUS

Education issues post-disaster are coordinated through the newly established Public Services Cluster, with the Ministry of Education leading for education. Conventionally, this work has been actively supported by the Ministry of Health and the Red Cross.

Terms of reference and operating procedures for this group are with the Ministry of Education administration office. The Education group are presently reviewing preparedness for disasters by undertaking a review of materials prepositioning as well as safety and response measures. In this respect, the Ministry of Education is looking to Infrastructure Cook Islands to provide standards for schools to ensure that the buildings are cyclone proof in the future, so that classes are continued after an event.

There are 30 public and private schools in the Cook Islands.

Gender issues are provided for in the education sector through both strategic ministry and school level policy. The According to the Ministry, it operates on the principle of inclusivity, rather than identification of specific groups. As a result, policies refer to inclusion regardless of gender, rather than having gender specific statements. Fitness of Purpose would be considered for issues such as water and sanitation to ensure everyone can be included in the learning environment. The Cook Islands education sector has balanced Gender Parity Index.

In the first instance First Aid, Safety and Protection is the responsibility of teachers. The Ministry has a critical incidence policy that would takes effect for any critical event with a higher level of coordination and response. Schools provide counsellors to support staff and students following a disaster.

In the past, the Cook Islands used school buildings for evacuation shelters. Because of the impact that continuity of classes after disasters, the government is moving away from the use of schools wherever possible.

The Ministry of Education itself does not own any buildings. Instead, building maintenance and disaster proofing are the responsibility of the Cook Islands Investment Corporation.

Supplies of stationery are considered to be reasonable in the event of a disaster.

### Assessment tools

The Ministry of Education has dedicated assessment templates that teachers and schools are required to use to conduct rapid assessments. Each school is required to submit an assessment report to the main office as soon as possible.

The Ministry has a maintenance team which can be involved. They need to coordinate with the Cook Islands Investment Corporation on this (as the Investment Corporation is responsible for assets).

### Preparedness activities

- Each school has their own evacuation plan. The group follows policies and procedures in the Ministry of Education to conduct drills (e.g. tsunami, fire and cyclone, human disasters), with each school community conducting drills at least twice a year.
- Before the commencement of the cyclone season, the Ministry of Education ensures that all schools have prepared space (e.g. for computer and materials storage) should a disaster occur. This is done to mitigate the impact of damage to building and our resources.
- A Teachers Resource Kit for disaster risk management was developed by EMCI and launched with the Ministry of Education in 2014.

### Partners

The New Zealand government has often assisted with education needs post disaster. New Zealand also provides core support to the education sector.

### Needs during peace time

- The Ministry of Education advises that there is a need for a large-scale review of procedures for disaster preparedness and response.

### Needs during disaster

- The most urgent support likely needed in the future would be School in a Box materials.
- Emotional wellbeing is important, so Counsellors would be needed to target traumatic conditions that children would go through following disasters situation.
- The Ministry of Education wants to ensure that all support is received in a coordinated manner.



### NATIONAL KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES

Website: [www.education.gov.ck](http://www.education.gov.ck)

Education Master Plan: <http://bit.ly/2nTg0sP>

Statement of Intent: <http://bit.ly/2AgytkS>

Education Statistics Reports: <http://bit.ly/2z5dYcP>

### National Key Contacts

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### SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

- UNICEF has supported post disaster with supplies during emergencies with the provision of School in a Box supplies. The UNICEF entry point to the country was then through the EMCI).
- In an event of a major disaster, the Ministry of Education would probably require technical assistance (expertise) in counselling and wellbeing for students.



### REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

- Global Education Cluster Toolkit: <http://bit.ly/2u3LYlq>
- Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies Toolkit: <http://bit.ly/2utWISz>

## 18. WASH



### CURRENT STATUS

Under the NDRMP 2017, water and sanitation issues will form a sub-group under the new Welfare Cluster. The water and sanitation sub-group are to be led by Infrastructure Cook Islands.

Water and sanitation issues are coordinated separately. The coordination of water issues is managed by Infrastructure Cook Islands, the Office of the Prime Minister and the project management unit for the *Te Mato Vai* Project – an MFEM-delivered project upgrading the water network on Rarotonga.

Infrastructure Cook Islands currently leads the coordination of the operation and maintenance of the Rarotonga water supply network. This arrangement will be transferred to a new water and wastewater authority once the *Te Mato Vai* water network upgrade project is completed and the new authority is established.

The coordination of sanitation issues is managed by the Ministry of Health and, more recently, the new project management unit for the *Mei Te Vai, Ki Te Vai* wastewater project (which sits alongside the *Te Mato Vai* project management unit). In the outer islands, the Island Governments coordinate most water arrangements with technical assistance and project implementation by the Ministry of Infrastructure.

Water supplies throughout the Cook Islands are piped but is extensively supplemented by private and community water tanks in the Pa Enea. Water wells are used in the Pa Enea as a last resort to supply water for the community.

Water supply services is managed by Infrastructure Cook Islands with the Island Councils playing an important role in the outer islands. The Ministry of Health is responsible for water quality for both drinking water and surrounding water that may be contaminated due to poor sanitation practises.

In event of disaster, ICI usually take the lead role in the WASH sector. Key partners in the delivery of water and sanitation following a disaster include the

Cook Islands Red Cross Society, village punas (for Rarotonga), *Pa Enea* (councils for outer islands), and the Government of New Zealand through its Military Services. The sector responsibility for water and sanitation is known nationally. Nevertheless, no standard operating procedures are in place, although a draft plan for disaster response sits with ICI. A drought response plan for the outer islands is held with the *Pa Enea* Division within the Office of the Prime Minister.

### Fresh water supplies for consumption

The carting of water is led by Infrastructure Cook Islands, with the support of the private sector. Upon request, New Zealand can assist, including with the potential deployment of military assets. In instances where water becomes scarce and heavily contaminated, CI Red Cross provides Desalination Units.

Presently, no standards appear to be used for water supplies during an emergency. The WASH team consulted for the purpose of this Country Preparedness Package were not aware of the SPHERE standards for humanitarian response. Nevertheless, water used from water wells are normally tested by the Ministry of Health to check whether it is fit for human consumption.

### Sanitation

All residents and commercial spaces have onsite wastewater treatment systems except for one community plant in one village in Rarotonga. Revised sewage and wastewater regulations now require Primary and Secondary treatment systems. Soil type determines the treatment level.

Infrastructure Cook Islands through its Project Management Unit is currently working to develop a sewerage reticulation system for Rarotonga.

### Assessment of impacts

Infrastructure Cook Islands have a GIS database in place to describe assets. Disaster assessment drawing on this is visual.

As indicated in Section 8 – Assessment Protocols/ Mechanisms and Section 9 – Information Management, Infrastructure Cook Islands should have access to databases on assets in the form of the PacRIS and the national GeoPortal.

### Partners

The New Zealand government are a key partner for the Cook Islands and tend to be the first target for assistance (see Section 1).

### Needs during a disaster

- Supply of drinking water if existing systems fail
- Design of cyclone shelters that factor in sanitation needs.



Infrastructure Cook Islands: [www.ici.gov.ck](http://www.ici.gov.ck)

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## SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The Cook Islands is being supported in drought management by SPC under the atoll water security programme with MFAT. Under a contingency partnership arrangement between OXFAM New Zealand and UNICEF immediate support for supplies and technical assistance can be provided upon activation during emergencies.

Additional support in preparedness and response can be provided through the Pacific WASH Cluster facilitated by UNICEF including: WASH cluster coordination training, information management, contingency planning, response standards, initial rapid assessments, surge capacity for cluster coordination, needs and gap analysis, awareness raising and development of WASH IEC materials, provision of emergency supplies and supply monitoring.

Upon request, New Zealand can assist water distribution, including with the potential deployment of military assets.



- Global WASH Cluster Coordination Deployment Kit: <http://bit.ly/2u3lrF7>
- Global WASH Cluster Technical Guidance: <http://bit.ly/2vwlszQ>
- Sphere Minimum Standards in Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion: <http://bit.ly/2uD5Pvg>

## 19. FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS



### CURRENT STATUS

Under the NDRMP, the coordination of matters concerning food security will fall to a Food Security sub-group within the newly established Welfare Cluster. While the lead for the Welfare Cluster has not yet been confirmed, the Food Security sub-group will be led by Ministry of Agriculture.

The membership of the Food-Security sub-group has yet to be confirmed. However, in the meanwhile, a Food Security group already exists which is likely to form the basis of the new sub-group. The existing Food Security group comprises: Ministry of Agriculture (lead), Island governments, Ministry of Health, Cook Islands Red Cross, Infrastructure Cook Islands, Ministry of Marine Resources and a Non-Government Humanitarian Group (representing the Cook Islands Women's Association, and Cook House). The group links regularly with the FAO who guide them technically which provide a link to the PHT.

The Ministry of Agriculture has expressed interest in involving the private sector in the Food Security group because of the desire to source items locally, rather than externally. Presently, the Food Security group is unclear on what is available locally. (See Section 7– Private Sector Engagement and Section 19– Logistics).

Terms of reference and standard operating procedures for work (including surveys) apply. All agencies that participate in the group are required to sign an agreement which stipulates guiding principles including that of gender equality.

All members have signed a written agreement describing the role and principles of the group, including gender as a priority (see below).

The efficacy of the group established in 2015 has not yet been tested, as no disasters have struck since 2010. Nevertheless, table top exercises have been run.

The group meets annually around five times a year. Most members are interested in resources and livelihoods, although the Red Cross has a specific interest in household dry food distribution. The Food Security group also meet with EMCI around twice a year, in preparation for cyclone season. At this point, the group check on resource availability etc. The Cook Islands government has never applied cash for work during emergencies. The feasibility of using cash and voucher programmes during the emergency response phase has been considered in the past (eg., the Aitutaki disaster), but this changed to employing the youth to clear new skills such as construction work, midwife duties and caring for the elderly.

While gender is a priority for the group, no gender and protection analysis been conducted on food security and livelihoods, and arrangements to mainstream gender and protection to affected populations have not been tested. Nevertheless, the group considers the special needs of pregnant women, lactating mothers, elderly, children, disable people in distribution.

Response capacity within the group is presently perceived to be adequate due to a sharing arrangement between members. The group advises that where one island is hit cluster members are obliged under their agreement to share the resources to support the island. On the other hand, if multiple islands are affected by a disaster, the capacity of the cluster to provide assistance would be inadequate.

Food security planning is buffered by the pre-positioning of food items. Additionally, all outer Islands have station farms with crops.

Seedlings and fertilizers are provided as part of recovery.

## Tools for assessment

The group presently uses an initial damage assessment cross-sectoral survey form developed by the Red Cross. The Ministry of Agriculture designed the cross sectoral database behind this. When data is entered, it goes to a central database from which the Food Security group are able to extract their own data. The form is not the same as the EMCI initial damage assessment form.

The team use the internationally recognised SPHERE standards as a gauge for planning response

## Needs during peace time

- There is a need to raise awareness of the agricultural disaster plan to the community, getting them involved in the response actions (eg., educating about harvesting regimes for cyclones and how to store produce).
- The group seek clarification on any support presently available from the FAO or WFP.
- The group stated the need to connect better at the regional level and also to learn how to access available assistance at regional level.

## Needs during disasters

- Need draft terms of reference for a food security advisor during a disaster
- Assistance during disasters may include shipping for response actions. Facilities to plant materials exist, but there is a need to ensure that plant materials go through proper biosecurity (even island to island).

## Partners

- FAO (for technical guidance and PHT link)
- UNDP's Ridge to Reef project
- UNDP's Strengthening Resilience in Climate Change Adaptation project
- The New Zealand government are a key partner for the Cook Islands and tend to be the first target for assistance (see Section 1).
- World Food Programme

## National Key Contacts

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## SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The PHT Food Security Cluster Support Team has supported the Food Security Cluster in developing the standard operating procedures for Emergency Food Distributions, which is currently under review by the cluster for eventual endorsement.



## REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance and Resource Material

- IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level: <http://bit.ly/2utMdsX>
- Global Food Security Cluster Emergency Preparedness Planning Guidelines: <http://bit.ly/2u3tEj>

## 20. PROTECTION



### CURRENT STATUS

Protection issues fall under the Welfare Cluster for the Cook Islands, led by the Ministry of Interior Affairs. Following a disaster, a Protection sub-group within the Welfare Cluster is activated in the Cook Islands. The protection sub-group is led by the Police and comprises: Police (as lead), Ministry of Internal Affairs, ICI, Fire Rescue, Ministry of Health (for access to ambulances; also, the Mental & Community Health Unit), community first responders, NGO representatives for men's groups/ Punanga Taututu, and Blue sky (for communications). Terms of reference to participate in the group should be found in each member organisation. Terms of reference for the Protection Group should also be held under the EMCI. Operating procedures for the group exist.

To date, there is no law that specifically addresses the issue of protection in the Cook Islands, although support for the vulnerable (children etc.) is provided through the Welfare Act. Disasters are not articulated in the Act which was written some time ago.

Protection is also not identified as a discrete cluster in the disaster management structure. Rather, protection issues are addressed as a welfare which is the mandate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In this respect, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is mandated with the responsibility for child welfare and disabilities. Having said this, the Police, not the Ministry of Internal Affairs, officially leads work for Protection.

Through the Ministry of Internal Affairs, referral pathways for protection cases, including gender-based violence and child protection exist.

Gender and protection analyses are conducted following disasters. The work is conducted by *punas*, working alongside the Red Cross, CIIC, Health and the police. Assessments are conducted using Red Cross, CIIC and Health forms while the police do their own assessments.

The feasibility of using cash and voucher programmes during the emergency response phase does not appear to have been evaluated to date.

### Preparedness activities

The group conducts annual emergency exercises for tsunamis and tropical cyclones at the airport.

### Partners

The New Zealand government are a key partner for the Cook Islands and tend to be the first target for assistance (see Section 1).



### NATIONAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS/ WEBSITES

Welfare Act: [intaff.whupi.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Welfare-Act-1989.rtf](http://intaff.whupi.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Welfare-Act-1989.rtf)

Child and Family Support Protection Act: contact Ministry of Internal Affairs for access

### National Key Contacts

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Cook Islands Police Commissioner

#### Maara Tetava

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## SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The PHT Gender and Protection Cluster Support Team can establish working groups as needed (e.g. the working group on Internally Displaced People met during the main period of displacement during TC Pam).

In the event of a medium to large scale disaster, the PHT Protection Cluster Support Team (led by UN Women) can support:

- the establishment of a Gender and Protection Cluster or similar coordination committee/sector for protection response, which would include support for child protection and gender-based violence (GBV), and mainstreaming of gender and protection across the other clusters/sectors;
- an in-country training on gender and protection in humanitarian action, for relevant government staff, humanitarian and local organisations;
- support on establishment of gender & protection assessment tools;
- guidance notes on gender and protection mainstreaming and targeted action; and
- in the event of a major disaster, in-country support and technical assistance to government leads in cluster coordination and response.



## REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

- IASC Operational Guidelines for the Protection of Persons in Situations of Natural Disasters: <http://bit.ly/2tAG8X6>
- Sphere Standards for Protection: <http://bit.ly/2vcut2J>
- IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action (2013): <http://bit.ly/2vwR09Y>
- Child Protection in Emergencies Coordination Handbook: <http://bit.ly/2vcn7wc>
- IASC Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action: <http://bit.ly/2tl2iRO>



PHOTO CREDIT: OCHA Pacific.

## 21. SHELTER



### CURRENT STATUS

Under the new NDRMP arrangement, shelter issues are to be coordinated through the Welfare Cluster, with Infrastructure Cook Islands officially acting as cluster lead. Nevertheless, the work is in practice shared between Infrastructure Cook Islands and the Red Cross, with the Red Cross taking the lead in an event of the disaster, and Infrastructure Cook Islands taking the lead in time of recovery. Other partners that may need to participate in the cluster include the Cook Islands Investment Corporation businesses, punas and island governments supporting.

In the past, disaster/ emergency shelters in the Cook Islands involved the use of public or key buildings such as schools. Today, the government is moving away from that use of schools and there has been a push to establish dedicated emergency shelters across the islands.

Formally, no shelter group presently operates following a disaster, although some agencies are active in providing support:

The Red Cross has taken the lead role in providing shelter response during emergencies. The Red Cross has also conventionally prepositioned shelter kits, conducted awareness and training sessions on use of temporary shelters and distributed relief items after emergencies. Red Cross activities are aligned to the International Federation for the Red Cross (IFRC) Gender and Protection policies. The agency works independently of government aiming to complement country capacity

EMCI identifies the need for cyclone shelters; Infrastructure Cook Islands has been trying to future proof building/ assets (e.g. resourcing shelters, providing shuttering and proofing buildings to withstand cyclones of a certain strength). Ministry of Health also assist with the staffing of designated Safety Shelters once activated

The Cook Islands Investment Corporation has been in conversations with EMCI to find crown land for temporary shelters.

Individually, the agencies conduct their own activities. The Red Cross has expressed interest in manuals on the use of temporary shelters for the outer islands.

According to stakeholders, provisions of materials for shelter in the Cook Islands is limited. A boom in the construction industry means that both supplies and labour from local suppliers are presently stretched. However, stakeholders report that perhaps the biggest issue from a shelter perspective is coordination and communication across the agencies (getting the message out and making it continuous). For this reason, discussions were held with Cook Islands stakeholders in preparation for the Country Preparedness Package where they expressed an interest in establishing a dedicated Shelter Cluster to coordinate activities.

### Assessment tools

If people are displaced and need shelter, the Red Cross has a form that it developed with EMCI and other stakeholders (assessment form for walk-through). CIIC has its own existing assessment procedures.

### Partners

As well as providing prepositioning of items and training, the Red Cross reports relief items to the IFRC and PHT Logistics mapping group.

The New Zealand government are a key partner for the Cook Islands and tend to be the first target for assistance (see Section 1).

### Needs during peace time

In the consultations conducted for this Country Preparedness Package, there was a desire expressed to formally establish a Shelter Cluster, with relevant terms of reference and guidance on how everyone is to interlink.



PHOTO CREDITS: ©OFCJustPlay/2015/Cook Islands, UNICEF Pacific.

### National Key Contacts

National Response Structure: Welfare Cluster

Lead agency: Red Cross / ICI

Cook Islands Red Cross

Secretary General

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Secretary/Head of Infrastructure Cook Islands

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### SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The Cook Islands has no established support arrangement with the PHT in terms of shelter.

The PHT Shelter Cluster Support Team currently has dedicated resources in place to support the establishment of a Shelter Cluster in the Cook Islands, and to assist with preparedness and response activities of the sector. In the event of a medium-to-large scale disaster, and at the request of the Government of the Cook Islands, Pacific Shelter Cluster will endeavour to deploy appropriate, trained regional coordination support team members (coordination, information management, technical coordination, and others as required), to enhance in-country coordination capacity during the humanitarian phase of the response.



### REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

- Sphere Minimum Standards in Shelter, Settlement and Non-Food Items: <http://bit.ly/2uDfmCz>

## 22. EARLY RECOVERY



### CURRENT STATUS

Under the new disaster arrangements, the coordination of recovery following a disaster in the Cook Islands is to be coordinated through a newly established Recovery Cluster. As indicated in Section 2, no lead agency has yet been targeted for this cluster. This is due in part to the fact that the cluster lead would depend on the nature of the disaster at hand. (For example, early recovery following an epidemic would be led by the Ministry of Health while recovery following a natural hazard-led disaster might be led by Infrastructure Cook Islands).

Members of the cluster are yet to be confirmed. In the past, no lead agency was officially designated to coordinate recovery in the Cook Islands although MFEM did coordinate recovery work, partly due to their responsibility for national finances. Additionally, the Cook Islands Investment Corporation has carried out considerable role in recovery work due to their role along with the Office of the Prime Minister. It is therefore probable that MFEM, the Cook Islands Investment Corporation and the Office of the Prime Minister will be involved in this cluster.

The need for an agreed agency to lead recovery/early recovery coordination has been noted by the Cook Islands Investment Corporation. The CIIC also noted collaboration with MFEM and the Office of the Prime Minister in supporting early recovery.

Apart from buildings, the Cook Islands Investment Corporation does not have an asset register of small assets (vehicles, information communications technology etc.).

These small assets are normally highlighted in each agencies DRM Plans.

### Partners

UNDP facilitated the development of Early Recovery Plan for Tropical Cyclone Pat in 2010.

### National Key Contacts

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### SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Support from regional partners to improve the country's understanding of these mechanisms and to integrate into strategic planning is required.

UNDP can provide assistance in conducting PDNA for medium- to large-scale events and to inform international funding requests. UNDP provided training in post disaster needs assessment to the Cook Islands in 2017. The training covered the nature and technical aspects of post disaster needs assessment as well as its link to recovery planning.



### REFERENCE INFORMATION International Guidance/Resource Material

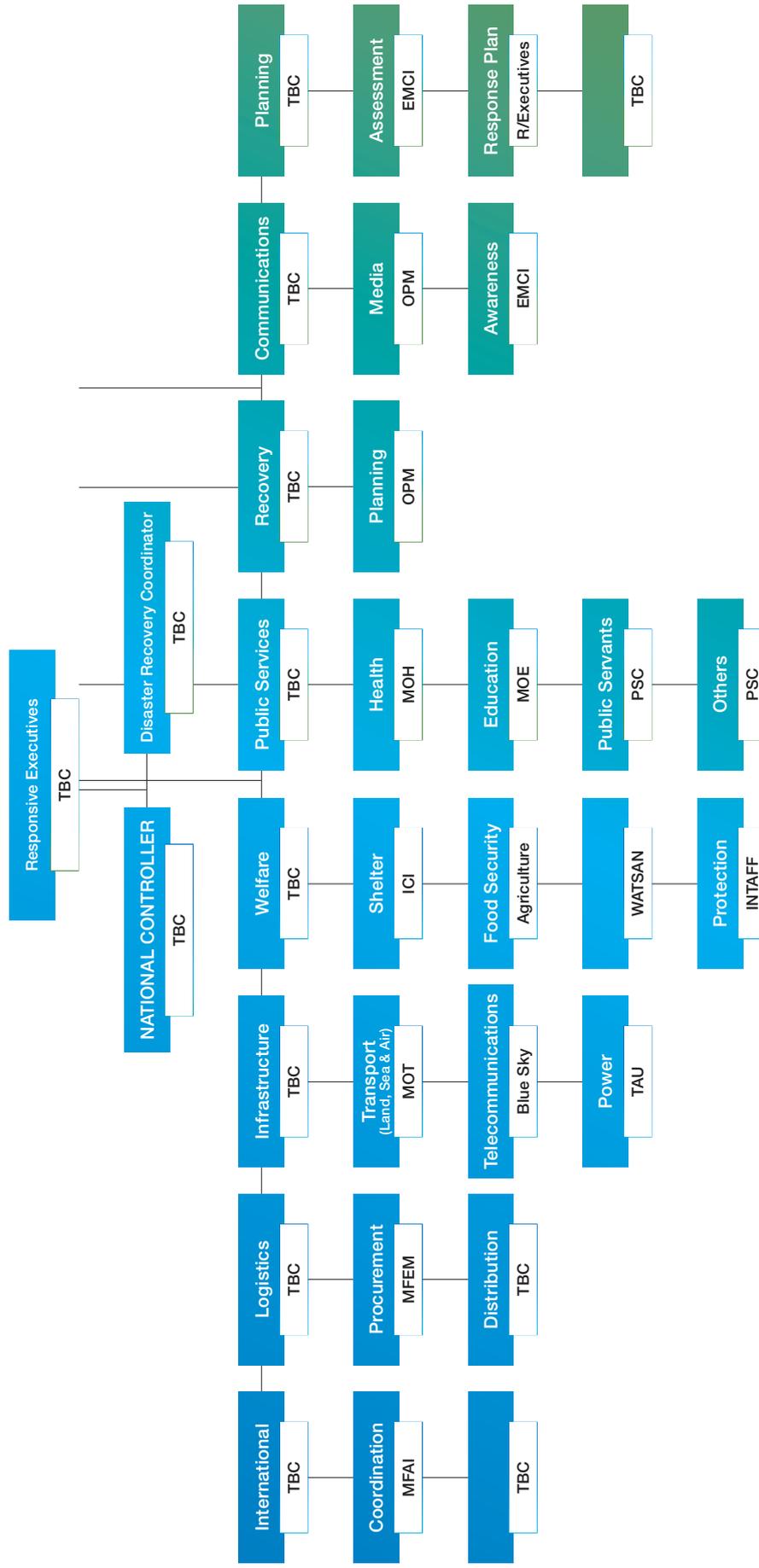
- Disaster Needs Assessment and Recovery Framework Guidance: <http://bit.ly/2uxje7d>

# ANNEX 1 | Cook Islands clusters and relationships with PHT Cluster Support Teams

COOK ISLANDS CLUSTER AND LEAD AGENCY											
	Logistics (MFEM)	International Assistance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs /EMCI*)	Infrastructure (Infrastructure Cook Islands)	Welfare (Ministry of Internal Affairs)				Public Service (Public Service Commission)	Recovery	Communication (Blue Sky tele-communications)	Planning
				WASH sub-group (Infrastructure Cook Islands)	Water (Infrastructure Cook Islands)	Sanitation (Ministry of Health)	Shelter Group (Red Cross)				
Education											
Logistics											
Water, sanitation and hygiene											
Shelter											
Emergency tele-communications											
Early recovery network											
Food security											
Health and nutrition											
Protection											

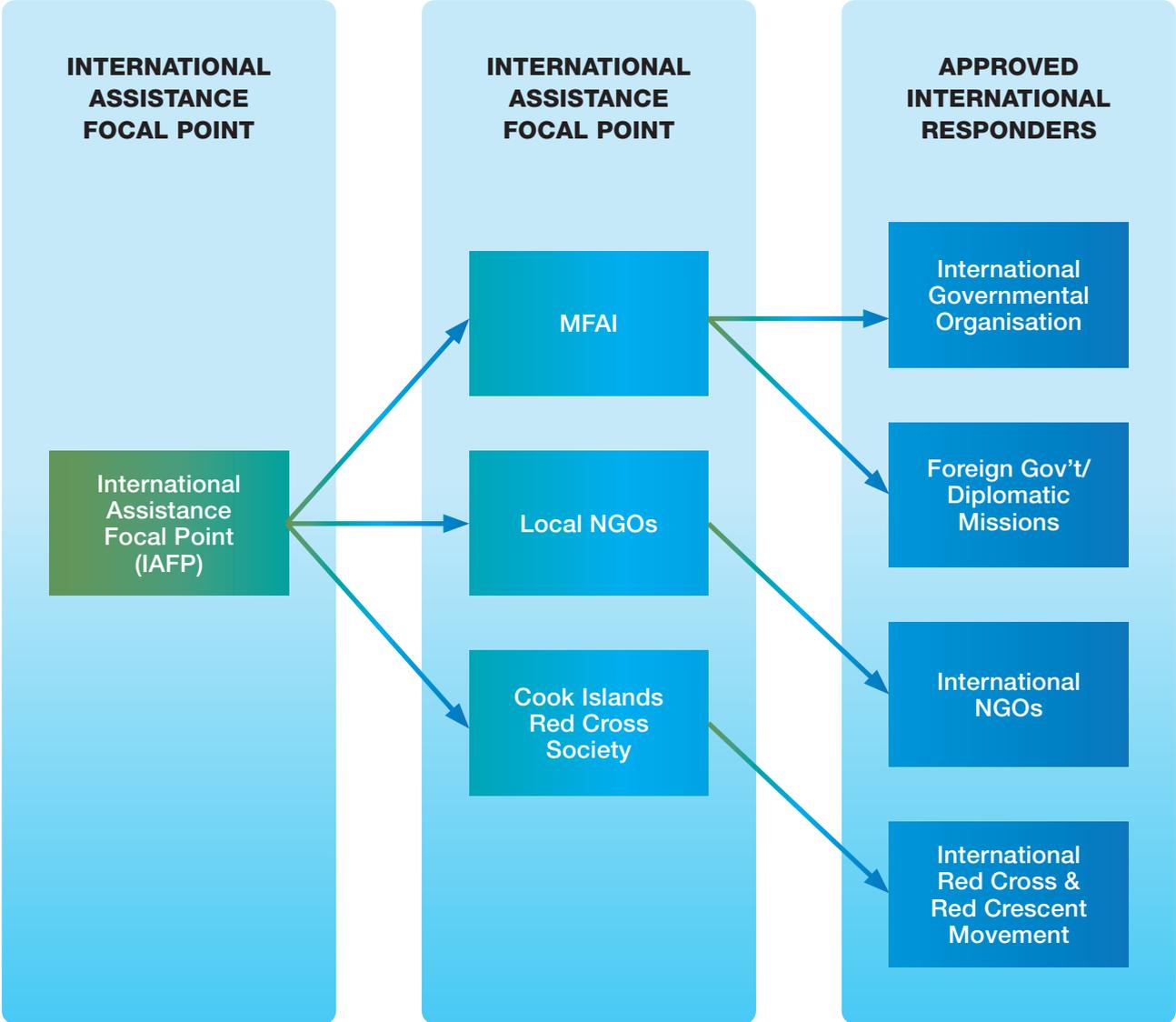
PHT CLUSTER SUPPORT TEAM

# ANNEX 2 | NATIONAL RESPONSE STRUCTURE FOR THE COOK ISLANDS



Source: Government of Cook Islands 2017, Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Plan 2017.

# ANNEX 3 | HOW OFFERS OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE ARE RECEIVED



Source: Government of Cook Islands 2017, Cook Islands National Disaster Risk Management Plan 2017.









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