**PACWASTEPLUS REGIONAL DISASTER WASTE PROJECT INFORMATION NOTE**

**Background**

The Pacific region is prone to disaster and climate risks, such as cyclones, landslides, flooding, drought, earthquakes and even tsunamis. Disasters have a long-lasting effect on the livelihoods of communities vulnerable to natural hazards. Disasters heavily impact the natural environment, social services, infrastructure, and the economies of Pacific Island countries. With climate change predicted to increase the frequency and severity natural disasters, the situation demands collaboration and partnership between government bodies and partners in terms of preparing and responding to these events (ILO, 2020).

Natural disasters generate significant amounts of waste, creating challenges to rescue, response, and recovery efforts. Disaster Waste Management (DWM) , is a crucial, but often overlooked element of national disaster management planning. Clearance of roads and access points from debris, safe demolition of damaged buildings, sorting and collection of waste, reuse of materials, cautious handling of hazardous waste, and re-establishment of waste value chains are all examples of DWM (OCHA, 2020). It is a full process of sorting, collection, handling, transportation, and treatment of disaster waste (UNEP/OCHA, 2011). The absence of appropriate DWM strategies and action plans ultimately places health and safety risks on individuals.

**PacWastePlus Regional Disaster Waste Project**

PacWastePlus is implementing a Regional Disaster Waste Management Project to assist Pacific Island Countries and Timor-Leste to mainstream waste management into National Disaster Management Activities, through the adoption of the Regional Disaster Waste Management Guideline, launched by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) with support from the J-PRISM II project. The PacWastePlus Regional Disaster Waste Management Project is delivered in two parts:

1. Establishment of Practitioner Guideline for officials of national, state, regional and local governments, and related stakeholders, involved in DWM in Pacific countries.
2. Trial of guidelines in one of the PacWastePlus participating country before finalisation and publication.

PacWastePlus engaged the University of Newcastle to establish Practitioner Guidelines on Disaster Waste Management. At the completion of this engagement, the following guidelines were established:

1. **Template for National and Community Disaster Waste Management Plans (DWMP) with Drafting/Guiding Instructions** provides countries with a DWMP template which provides consistency across the region when addressing DWM and an opportunity to either include the DWMP within National Disaster Management Plans or to develop as a stand-alone plan. The document is intended for frontline staff and policymakers in the Pacific who have been tasked with developing a DWMP for their respective country.
2. **Methodology for Estimating and Recording of Disaster Waste and Environmental Damage in Pacific Countries** – this document provides guidance to countries to assess and record the volume and type of waste generated following a natural disaster. This guide provides instructions on calculating immediate environmental impacts from disasters as well as impacts that take some time to manifest. This will adequately address the assessment, calculation, safe handling, recording, and safe storage of all types of disaster waste.
3. **Operational Guide on the Establishment of an Environment Sector Working Group (ESWG)** The operational guide provides a “step-by-step” process to guide Pacific countries for establishing an ESWG, outlines the roles of key stakeholders and provides a briefing note to be used by Pacific countries to secure political support in the establishment of an ESWG. The guide has five sections: (a) Values of establishing ESWGs in Pacific countries; (b) Steps required for establishing an ESWG; (c) Procedures for operating ESWGs; (d) Roles and responsibilities of the members of the ESWG representing key stakeholders involved in DWM; and (e) Structure and contents of a briefing note and guidelines for writing and editing the briefing note.

The above guidelines will be implemented in one PacWastePlus participating country as a pilot prior to finalisation and publication. PacWastePlus will assist with the delivery of the following outputs for the pilot country:

1. **Development of a National Disaster Waste Management Plan** **with key stakeholders**: A National Disaster Waste Management Plan will be drafted for the pilot country including delivery of national consultation.
2. **Establishment of a Disaster Waste Taskforce (DWT) with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) with technical members formalised**: PacWastePlus will work with NDMO to establish a national DWT that will be responsible for overseeing the effective and timely management of disaster waste. The taskforce will include technical officers from relevant government ministries and national organisations. This taskforce is essential for the effective implementation of national DWMP, and provision of technical advice on implementation of key activities in each stage of the Disaster Management cycle.
3. **Establishment of a National training manual:** the programme will establish a national training manual to be used by NDMO and relevant government ministries to facilitate refresher trainings on the implementation of the National Disaster Waste Management Plan.
4. **Facilitation of Training for relevant stakeholders:** the training will focus on the scope of activities identified in the National DWMP, and the implementation of the Guideline on Estimating and Recording of Disaster Waste and Environmental Damage in Pacific Countries.

Selection Criteria for Pilot Project

| **Criteria** | **Description** | **Assessment Note** |
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| Country’s vulnerability to natural Disaster (30%) | Refers to the ranking of the country in the Word Risk Index. The World Risk Index systematically considers a country’s vulnerability and its exposure to natural hazards to determine a ranking of countries around the world based on their natural disaster risk. | Countries with high chance of disasters will score highly |
| Geographical setting of country (10%) | Details of both the Natural geographical features (landforms and ecosystems-physical factors of the environment are natural geographical features, archipelagic state) and artificial geographical features (human settlements or other engineered forms). | Countries with remote communities in outer islands subject to natural disasters that are not easily accessed following a disaster will score highly |
| Linkages to national priorities (25%) | Details on how the project contributes to country national development/strategic goals | Countries with national development goals on disaster resilient and climate change adaptation that supports political buy in for plans and programmes of the project will score highly |
| State of readiness (35%) | Details on effective partnership with the National Disaster Management Office | Countries with established partnerships with the National Disaster Management Office and other national stakeholders will score highly. |