

UTS: INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES &
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION COLLABORATING CENTRE FOR NURSING MIDWIFERY
AND HEALTH DEVELOPMENT

REVIEW OF AUSTRALIA'S OVERSEAS DISASTER AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE SECTOR



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World Health
Organization
Western Pacific Region



NCCARF
National
Climate Change Adaptation
Research Facility

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CITATION

Cite this report as:

Fletcher, S., Gero, A., Rumsey, M., Willetts, J., Daly, J., Buchan, J., Kuruppu, N., and Thiessen, J., 2012. Review of Australia's Overseas Disaster and Emergency Response Sector. Report prepared for NCCARF by the WHO Collaborating Centre and the Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology, Sydney.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This project is funded by the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) - an initiative of the Australian Government, established in November 2007 at Griffith University's Gold Coast Campus. The work of the NCCARF complements activities and projects currently underway in other institutions across Australia. NCCARF is distinct from these programs in that it focuses entirely on generating the knowledge required for Australia to adapt to the physical impacts of climate change. NCCARF's National Climate Change Adaptation Research Plans (NARPs) identify priority research questions. This research answers some of the Emergency Management NARP's questions, particularly looking at Australian adaptation issues in the international context.

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NURSING, MIDWIFERY AND HEALTH DEVELOPMENT

30 MARCH 2012

Review of Australia's Overseas Disaster and Emergency Response Sector

Understanding the Pacific's Adaptive Capacity to Emergencies in the Context of Climate Change
Prepared for: National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF)

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Australian Civilian Corps
ACFID	Australian Council For International Development
ADF	Australian Defence Force
ANGO	Australian Non-Government Organisations
AUSAID	Australian Agency For International Development
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
DFAT	Department Of Foreign Affairs And Trade
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
HAP	Humanitarian Action Policy
HPA	Humanitarian Partnership Agreement
ICCAI	The International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative
ICRC	The International Red Cross And Red Crescent Movement
IFRC	International Federation Of Red Cross And Red Crescent Societies
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NCCARF	National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
NGOS	Non-Government Organisations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PIC	Pacific Island Countries
SOPAC	Pacific Applied Geosciences And Technology Division
SPC	Secretariat For The Pacific Community
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office For Coordination Of Humanitarian Affairs
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pacific region is the most disaster prone region in the world. It is highly vulnerable to tsunamis, earthquakes, floods, tropical cyclones, drought, volcanic eruptions and other hazards. This has been evidenced by the fact that over 85% of people killed or affected by disasters in the last decade have been from the Asia Pacific region. Natural disasters are becoming more frequent and more severe, and inability to cope can reverse development gains. In addition, the effects of climate change are expected to change the frequency, severity and unpredictability of weather related events across the region, increasing the intensity of the hazards. Climate change impacts are likely to affect global stability, health, resources and infrastructure. In the Pacific, the impacts of climate change are expected to be severe, particularly the possibility of changed frequency and intensity of extreme events. The small size and population and economic vulnerability to disasters of Pacific Island Countries (PICs), result in their dependence on external assistance for aid in times of disasters. Australia has a vested interest in ensuring enhanced capacities for disaster preparedness, improved risk assessment and scenario planning through partnerships with PICs.

This report is part of a broader research project focused on the adaptive capacity of PICs and Australia's emergency response to disasters in the Pacific in the face of climate change. The purpose of this report is to set the context of Australia's overseas disaster and emergency response sector, and given our research scope, we focus on Australia's response in the Pacific region. We define the Australian disaster and emergency response sector as including the Australian actors and stakeholders active in disaster and emergency response. This report includes a summary of the relevant stakeholders, policies, strategies, guidelines and plans that steer the emergency response sector. This report also describes Australia's response and involvement with regional and international organisations, with emphasis on the actors involved in responding to the immediate humanitarian needs post-disaster, including: health care, food and nutrition, water and sanitation and psychosocial needs.

Australia's response mechanism involves various government and non-government organisations that respond to the immediate humanitarian needs post-disaster, and becomes activated once an official request is made from the affected country. AusAID leads and coordinates Australia's responses to humanitarian and disaster crises. The Humanitarian Partnership Agreement (HPA), established by AusAID, is an example of the Australian government's attempts to better coordinate disaster response via a collaborative partnership with ANGOs. Australia has produced numerous policies, frameworks and agreements, and has signed several bilateral and multilateral agreements with its partners and stakeholders in disaster response. Through the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), and several national and regional partners, Australia is supporting the Pacific to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and be better prepared to respond to the risks from climate change induced disasters. Within this research project, this report will form the basis for further engagement and research within the Australian disaster response towards better understanding how the Australian response interacts with the local disaster response system in four case study countries and the implications of this for the adaptive capacity of PIC disaster response in the face of climate change.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THIS RESEARCH

This report is part of a broader research project focused on the adaptive capacity of Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and Australia's emergency response to disasters in the Pacific in the face of climate change. Climate change impacts are likely to affect global stability, health, resources and infrastructure. In the Pacific, the impacts of climate change are expected to be severe, particularly the possibility of increased frequency and intensity of extreme events.

This research project is conducted via a partnership of two leading institutes from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) – the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) and the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre (WHO CC), and funded by the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF).

The research seeks to understand the adaptive capacity of both PICs and Australia's emergency response to a potential increase in disasters driven by climate change in PICs. Traditionally, disaster management has been reactive. The purpose of this research is to assist in the building of long term adaptive capacity by informing policy makers and practitioners on what is needed, and thereby reduce vulnerability to climate driven disasters. The main focus of the research will be:

- To provide recommendations to policy makers and practitioners in the Australian and Pacific disaster and emergency response sectors on current adaptive capacity of PICs to climate related disasters (e.g. tropical cyclones, floods, droughts, storm surge), and what resources are likely to be needed in the coming years to enhance this capacity; focusing on the immediate humanitarian needs post-disaster, including health care; food and nutrition; water and sanitation and psychosocial needs.
- To understand the Australian emergency services and related organisations' capacity and obligations to assist PICs in times of disaster and whether there is adequate capacity to service future needs due to a changing climate, allowing for better planning and thus more effective response in times of disaster.

1.2 THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report, as part of the overall research project, is to set the context of Australia's overseas disaster and emergency response sector, and given our research scope, we focus on the Pacific region. We define the disaster and emergency response sector as including the actors and stakeholders active in disaster and emergency response from the Australian perspective, and also the policies, strategies, guidelines and plans that steer their direction.

Our specific research focus is on the organisations that respond to the immediate humanitarian needs post-disaster and includes 4 themes:

- Health care
- Food and nutrition
- Water and sanitation

- Psychosocial needs.

Hence we also include a section that focuses specifically on the stakeholders that respond to these needs.

After setting the context (Section 1.3), Section 2 outlines the stakeholders involved in the Australian emergency and disaster response sector. Section 3 describes the policies which underpin the disaster response system. Section 4 describes how the system is implemented, while Section 5 provides a regional focus and describes Australia's involvement in emergency and disaster response at the regional level. Section 6 introduces organisations that respond to the immediate humanitarian needs post-disaster that are relevant to this research. A summary and conclusion is provided in Section 7.

1.3 SETTING THE CONTEXT

Australia has positioned itself as a country that is committed to providing appropriate and effective humanitarian action in times of need. Australia's aid program serves its national interests by promoting stability and prosperity both in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond (AusAID, 2011). The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is the lead agency coordinating Australia's response to humanitarian disasters (AusAID 2011c). One of the main objectives of AusAID's programs is to assist developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development, in line with Australia's national interest (AusAID 2011c). In 2010 alone, 11% of Australia's Official Development Assistance (ODA) was allocated to humanitarian action including disaster risk reduction and emergency response (AusAID 2011g). Between July 2011 and March 2012, AusAID has responded to 21 humanitarian emergencies, extending lifesaving assistance to an estimated 15 million people at risk, involving funding of more than AU\$147 million (AusAID 2012b). The Australian Government has committed to allocating at least 0.5% of gross national income to development aid by 2015-2016 (AusAID 2011c).

Pacific Island Countries are some of Australia's most important development partners, reflecting Australia's geographic position, historic relationship and special responsibilities in the region. Australia's interest in the stability and development of PICs is toward greater regional prosperity and reducing the growing threat from various hazards including environmental vulnerability and climate related changes (AusAID 2004, 2011g). The PIC's small size and population and economic vulnerability to disasters results in their dependence on external assistance for aid in times of disasters. Australia is well positioned to respond and act to promote, disaster risk reduction and preparedness, in addition to partnering with affected countries to strengthen their ability to manage and respond to crises (AusAID 2011g).

Australia recognises that the Asia Pacific region is the most disaster prone region in the world, which is highly vulnerable to tsunamis, earthquakes, floods, tropical cyclones, drought, volcanic eruptions and other hazards (AusAID 2010). This has been evidenced by the fact that over 85% of people killed or affected by disasters in the last decade, have been from the Asia Pacific region (UNESCAP 2010). Natural disasters are becoming more frequent and more severe, and can reverse development gains (AusAID 2011c). In addition, the effects of climate change are expected to increase the frequency, severity and unpredictability of weather related events across the region, increasing the intensity of the hazards (AusAID 2011g).

2 AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY AND DISASTER RESPONSE STAKEHOLDERS

Several agencies and mechanisms, mainly under the auspices of AusAID, are involved in responding to disasters in the Pacific. They are described below.

2.1 AUSAID

AusAID is the Australian Government agency responsible for managing Australia's overseas aid program. AusAID is an Executive Agency within the Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio and reports to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. AusAID provides strategic policy advice to the government on issues such as climate change, disaster response, pandemics and food security (AusAID 2011b). AusAID also leads and coordinates Australia's responses to humanitarian and disaster crises and represents Australia in international development forums. AusAID works through partnership and engagement with the Australian community by engaging the skills, experience and energy of the community for responding to disasters or emergency appeals (AusAID 2011c). In building on and intensifying work already undertaken through AusAID's Pacific Enhanced Humanitarian Response Initiative, AusAID in conjunction with the Australian Bureau of Meteorology and Geosciences Australia, is working with Pacific countries and relevant Pacific organisations on the establishment of early warning systems – including the Pacific Tsunami Warning System (AusAID 2012a).

2.2 ACFID

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) is the peak body for Australian non-government organisations (ANGOs) working in the field of international aid and development, supported by the Australian community. ACFID's 77 member organisations operate in over 100 developing countries. ACFID brings a critical perspective on international development issues to the Australian Government, based on years of experience working collaboratively with communities and governments (ACFID 2012). ACFID's institutional structure includes a number of Working Groups, and those relevant to this research include the Climate Change Working Group (chaired by Save the Children), the Pacific Working Group (chaired by the Burnet Institute) and the Human Resources Working Group (chaired by ChildFund Australia) (ACFID 2012a).

Since 2008, the ACFID's Humanitarian Reference Group (HRG) acts as an ACFID Advisory Committee. In this role, the HRG continues to coordinate emergency response systems, work closely with ACFID's Executive Committee on policy and advocacy and further collaborate on operational activities/policy such as disaster risk reduction, protection, civil military coordination and human security issues (ACFID 2012). One of ACFID's main services is the provision of a framework for active collaboration among agencies involved in humanitarian and emergency work (ACFID 2012b). Through ACFID, Australia has committed to supporting the Pacific to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and be better prepared to respond to the risks from climate change induced disasters (ACFID 2012). ACFID administers a rigorous Code of Conduct which represents the active commitment of 120 Australian overseas aid organisations to strive

for best practice, integrity, transparency and accountability in their work. It has an annual compliance process and includes an independent committee for assessing complaints (ACFID 2012).

2.3 THE HUMANITARIAN PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Australia's Humanitarian Partnership Agreement (HPA) was established by AusAID to provide a flexible and predictable mechanism to fund NGOs for immediate disaster response. A HPA was established by the Australian Government in 2011, where six pre-qualified organisations with a proven track record in providing humanitarian assistance internationally receive funding to ensure a faster, more co-ordinated response to rapid onset emergencies (Rudd 2011). Under the current HPA, the six organisations are Care, Caritas, Oxfam, Plan International, Save the Children and World Vision – all of which have bilateral funding agreements with AusAID. The HPA strengthens the partnership between AusAID and Australian Non-Government Organisations, and also strengthens community resilience and preparedness by providing partner NGOs with funds to implement disaster risk reduction activities (AusAID 2011c). The HPA partners are active ACFID and HRG members, and in addition to disaster response, work closely with them on a number of broader issues (Helen Horn, personal communication, April 3, 2012). The individual goals of the six HPA Members are presented in Appendix 1.

2.4 OTHER AUSTRALIAN STAKEHOLDERS

Several other Australian organizations are involved in the direct response to the immediate humanitarian needs post-disaster. Some of these organizations provide direct relief whilst others provide personnel to relief agencies.

The Red Cross, through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and national societies, works on many levels to protect people, providing humanitarian assistance such as food and water to those affected by conflict, and disasters (AusAID 2011e). In December 2010, AusAID and the Australian Red Cross signed a three-year partnership agreement, under which AusAID will provide AU\$20 million to the Australian Red Cross. This will assist the Red Cross to send aid workers overseas to assist people affected by disaster and conflict, and increase community preparation for responding to natural disasters (AusAID 2011c). The partnership is also increasing the capacity of other Red Cross National Societies in the Asia-Pacific to better respond to the needs of vulnerable populations. The partnership extends the long-standing cooperative relationship between AusAID and the Red Cross that has worked well together over many years in some of the worst humanitarian crises (AusAID 2011c). The Australian Red Cross is guided by the 'Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes' (ICRC 1996).

Humanitarian missions are a standard component of Australian Defence Force's (ADF) operations, under the objective of advancing Australia's national interests (Greet 2008). The ADF has a level of reach and the capability to support overseas operations not possessed by other government agencies (ADF 2007). Australia's Department of Defence bears the total cost of deploying and operating the military asset if the sum is relatively small (less than AU\$10 million) (Wiharta et al. 2008). Responding to humanitarian

disasters requires a wide range of expertise in fields including policing, governance, economics, engineering, administration, health and education. The ADF co-operates closely with the Australian Federal Police (AFP), DFAT and AusAID on regional humanitarian missions (ADF 2007). According to an international study, countries including Australia which deployed foreign military assets in the wake of natural disasters were found to have complied with some of the key elements of the Oslo Guidelines (Wiharta et al. 2008), which were developed to guide the use of military and civil defence assets to support humanitarian emergencies (OCHA 2006). Specifically, the study noted that: military assets were deployed only at the request of, or with the consent of, the affected country; they were integrated with and supported the existing disaster-relief responses; and they were provided at no direct financial cost to the affected country (Wiharta et al. 2008).

Emergency Management Australia (EMA) is Australia's principal planning, management and response agency and administered within the Attorney General's Department (Commonwealth of Australia 2011; IFRC 2010b). EMA is responsible for the coordination of the various domestic disaster response agencies via its Commonwealth Government Disaster Response Plan (COMDISPLAN) (see Section 3a), for example the Department of Defence across Australia's states and territories (EMA 2002a; IFRC 2010b). Emergency Management Australia also has responsibilities in coordinating overseas disaster response – see Figure 1 and Section 3.1 for details.

RedR Australia is an Australian NGO and a branch of RedR International, established in 1992 and a member of ACFID, with its main aim being the provision of short term emergency humanitarian assistance post disaster in developing countries (RedR Australia 2012). RedR Australia maintains a Standby Register of personnel who respond to disasters in times of need, at times via UN agencies such as UNOCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP (RedR Australia 2012). Training of personnel prior to listing on the Standby Register is crucial, and RedR upholds high standards in training professionals for deployment to emergency and conflict situations.

The Australian Civilian Corps (ACC) was announced at the East Asia Summit by the Australian Government in 2009, which aims to build a register of skilled and specialised civilian personnel to respond to the needs of developing countries in times of disaster or conflict (Australian Government, 2010). ACCs are paid civilian professionals, deployed to work alongside host partner countries, international military forces and other disaster response stakeholders, with the aim to link humanitarian and emergency response programs (AusAID 2011i).

3 AUSTRALIAN POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Australian government has various policies that guide its involvement and responses to humanitarian aid, emergencies and disasters, associated with climate change. There are three areas of policy focus: emergencies and disaster management, humanitarian aid, and disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

3.1 AUSTRALIA’S EMERGENCY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Australia’s Commonwealth Emergency Management Policy Statement is backed up by its Commonwealth Government Disaster Response Plan (COMDISPLAN) (EMA 2002a) for domestic disasters and the Australian Government Overseas Disaster Assistance Plan for overseas disasters (AUSASSISTPLAN,) (EMA 2002b). The AUSASSISTPLAN is jointly managed by AusAID and EMA, with EMA acting as an agent of AusAID (Stenbion 1999). The AUSASSISTPLAN recognises the right of the affected country to set its own priorities and manage foreign assistance (IFRC 2010b). This is repeated in Australia’s Emergency Management Arrangements, which note that Australia responds to overseas disasters at the request of the affected country (Commonwealth of Australia 2009).

An illustration of Australia’s national disaster arrangements for overseas assistance is provided in Figure 1. It should be noted, however, that this shows an incomplete picture given it pre-dates the Humanitarian Partnership Agreement (2010) and the newly established Australian Civilian Corps (ACC), which are assumed to be incorporated in the fourth step via the middle pathway.

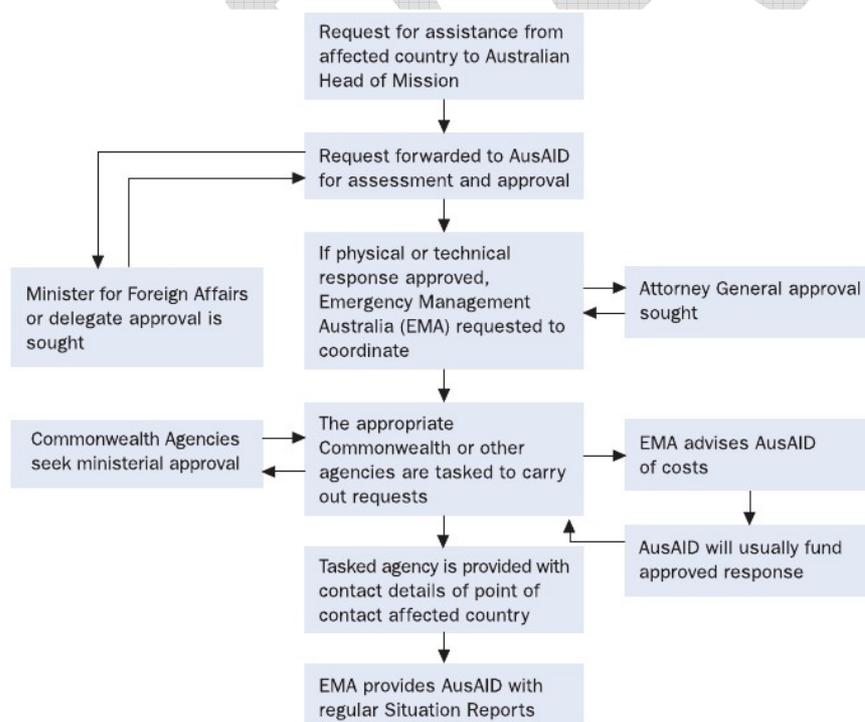


Figure 1: A graphic summary of Australia’s AusAssist plan.
(Source: Wiharta et al. 2008)

3.2 HUMANITARIAN ACTION POLICY

The Australian Government's Humanitarian Action Policy (HAP) identifies saving lives and humanitarian and emergency response as two of the five strategic goals of Australia's aid program (AusAID 2011g). It underscores the fact that humanitarian action saves lives and helps people get back to leading productive lives more quickly (AusAID 2011g). Additionally, appropriate, effective response to humanitarian crises in developing nations is essential to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as assisting partner countries to protect their people and development gains (AusAID 2011g). The MDGs are at the centre of Australia's aid program (AusAID 2011c). This is evidenced by the fact that Australia is the largest ODA donor to the Pacific region with net ODA disbursements of US\$704 million in 2009 (Pacific Island Forum Secretariat 2011). Providing assistance to those affected by natural disasters and conflict is considered to be both a humanitarian imperative and a pragmatic one. In other words, traditional humanitarian assistance such as food, water and shelter is ineffective if the recipients are without safety and security (AusAID 2011e). The Australian Government implements the HAP by delivering appropriate and effective humanitarian action through its agencies and through partners, such as United Nations agencies, the IFRC and non-government organisations (AusAID 2011c).

3.3 DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

AusAID is a leading donor in disaster risk reduction (DRR), due to its strong framework, support and engagement with regional and multilateral institutions, and growing bilateral engagement in DRR. Disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change are integrated into AusAID's operational and business system (AusAID 2009b). Through its '*Investing in a Safer Future: a Disaster Risk Reduction policy for the Australian aid program*,' Australia aims to reduce vulnerability and enhanced resilience of countries and communities to disasters (AusAID 2010).

The DRR principles and approaches underpinning the policy have become more prominent in AusAID recovery and reconstruction efforts following recent emergency responses. Examples of this have been seen in building technical capacity in PNG, community-based disaster risk management activities in various PICs, and increased engagement with key regional organisations such as the Applied Geosciences and Technology Division (SOPAC) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) (AusAID 2009b).

Australia's response is also guided by the Regional Framework for action to protect human health from effects of climate change in the Asia and Pacific Region (WHO/SEARO 2007). This regional framework was intended to guide regional and national action towards reducing the potential burden of diseases linked to the effects of global warming and climate change in the region (WHO/SEARO 2007).

AusAID's bilateral and regional programming is guided by various principles that include the integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. The "*Integration in practice: Integrating disaster risk reduction, climate change and environmental considerations in AusAID programs*" policy provides practical guidance on when and how

disaster risk reduction, climate change and environmental considerations can be effectively integrated into programs (AusAID 2010). Pacific Partnerships for Development have been formalised between Australia and 14 Pacific Island countries. One of the priority development outcomes targets climate change adaptation in countries including PNG, Samoa, Kiribati, and other PICS. Over the 2010–11, AusAID collaborated with the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency to implement Australia’s International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative (ICCAI). This initiative assists vulnerable countries, particularly small island states, adapt to the impacts of climate change (AusAID 2011c, 2011h).

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4 IMPLEMENTATION OF AUSTRALIA'S RESPONSE

Australia's response to overseas emergencies is guided by the Australian Emergency Management Arrangements which outline the principles, structures and procedures that support the coordination of emergency management in Australia and its territories, and, at their request, for assisting foreign governments affected by emergencies (Commonwealth of Australia 2009; EMA 2002b). In addition, the Humanitarian Action Policy's implementation plan outlines actions to be undertaken to achieve the policy's goal and priorities (AusAID 2011g). The AUSASSISTPLAN details the coordination arrangements for the provision of emergency assistance, with Australian physical and technical resources, following a disaster or emergency in another country.

The Australian Head of Missions (HOM) in the affected country receives and forwards the requests for Australian assistance, and assist with the coordination of Australia's response on arrival in the country' (EMA 2002b; IFRC 2010b). The relevant Australian diplomatic mission and AusAID has the primary responsibility for liaising with the disaster management agencies of the affected country in order to avoid duplication between Australian responders (EMA 2002b; IFRC 2010b). AusAID may also request EMA to prepare contingency plans and coordinate the operational aspects of Australia's response to an overseas disaster employing Australian resources (Commonwealth of Australia 2011). EMA's coordination includes sourcing of suitable materials, tasking appropriate agencies (e.g. ADF), and the provision of technical advice to AusAID (Stenbion 1999).

Australia is committed to respond within 48 hours of a developing country's request for assistance; respond effectively to simultaneous disasters provide life-saving assistance to people in crisis situations, through effective disaster risk reduction, mine action, conflict prevention and humanitarian action (AusAID 2011g). While AusAID is active from the moment it becomes aware of a disaster, an official request for assistance must be made by the affected country before Australia can take direct action in an emergency (Commonwealth of Australia 2009). Once a request has been made, AusAID immediately begins situational analysis and the approach taken will depend on the circumstances of the emergency, the type of help asked for and the specific response offered by Australia (AusAID 2011d).

AusAID's response in the Pacific is executed in consultation with a range of Australian Government agencies including the Australian High Commission or Embassy in the affected country, the United Nations, and EMA, as well as representatives from France and New Zealand via the FRANZ Agreement (AusAID 2011d). AusAID ensures approval is sought from the Minister for Foreign Affairs and other relevant Ministers of other Australian Government departments for the approval of their involvement, as well as for funds if the situation warrants help from other departments such as the Australian Defence Force (AusAID 2011d). Depending on the situation, AusAID may activate its Periodic Funding Agreements for Disaster Risk Management through AusAID's HPA as discussed in Section 2.

All organisations deployed from Australia (government and ANGOs) are briefed by EMA on coordination arrangements before deployment (EMA 1998- p8). On arrival in the affected country, the HOM delegates Australian relief personnel to tasks identified by the nominated national authority (EMA 2002b). Generally speaking, while the AUSASSISTPLAN provides details of how the Commonwealth will respond to overseas requests for humanitarian assistance, it does not cover all aspects of the issues identified as problematic in the delivery of international aid including: legal relationships between the Commonwealth, State and NGOs deployed as part of the Australian response; liability for malpractice, negligence and care of aid workers injured while on deployment (IFRC 2010b).

An example of how the Australian disaster response system is implemented with emphasis on the four humanitarian needs is provided in the case of Samoa and Tonga Tsunami in September 2009 (Box 1).and Tropical Cyclone Tomas, Fiji, 2010 (Box 2)

Box 1: Samoa and Tonga Tsunami, 2009

On 29 September 2009, Samoa and Tonga were hit by an 8.3 magnitude earthquake and tsunami resulting in severe devastation. It killed 144 people, and ruined numerous lives, homes, businesses, communities and pristine beaches. In Samoa, more than 3000 people subsequently were living in temporary tents and under tarpaulins. In Tonga, on the island of Niuatoputapu, the tsunami killed nine people and destroyed most of the infrastructure. Australia responded and provided assistance under the FRANZ Arrangement (AusAID 2009a; DFAT 2012). A total of AU\$13 million was provided to assist with immediate relief efforts, recovery and rebuilding. Various Australian Government agencies worked together under the guidance of the Governments of Samoa and Tonga to respond to immediate humanitarian needs. Overall Australia provided 114 medical and public health personnel, search and rescue teams, and logisticians who treated the injured, searched for survivors and identified the deceased. Australian teams performed 101 surgical operations, 171 field medical treatments, 1060 emergency department presentations, 33 public health village assessments and 22 aero medical evacuations. The Australian naval ship HMAS Tobruk helped AusAID deliver 218 tons of disaster and emergency relief supplies to the Samoa and Tonga. This included tarpaulins for shelter, blankets, water purification tablets and containers. Caritas Samoa, through funding from AusAID, provided special counselling and training for children, youth and church leaders from 16 villages to help their communities deal with the trauma of the tsunami. Australia's efforts were also geared post-disaster in assisting each country to implement risk reduction measures and improving disaster monitoring and warning systems and training for local volunteer emergency response team (AusAID 2009a).

Box 2: Tropical Cyclone Tomas, Fiji, 2010

Tropical Cyclone (TC) Tomas, a Category Four tropical cyclone, hit the Fiji Islands on Monday, 15 March 2010 (IFRC 2010a). On 16 March the Fiji Interim Government declared a state of natural disaster in the Northern and Eastern Divisions of Fiji as a result of the damage caused by TC Tomas. In response to an official request for assistance from the Fiji Interim Government, Australia provided up to AU\$1 million in initial humanitarian assistance (Smith 2010). Eight tonnes of emergency relief supplies, dispatched on an Australian Defence Force C130-Hercules aircraft, arrived in Fiji on 17 March and additional relief supplies arrived on 25 March via a commercial flight. These supplies, including tarpaulins, water purification tablets, water containers, blankets and tents were distributed to northern and eastern parts of Fiji, including the Lau Group of islands. As part of Australia's assistance, funding was provided to Fiji's National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) to enable it to charter helicopters and boats to deliver relief supplies to remote communities, and to the Fiji Red Cross to help distribute emergency supplies already in storage in Fiji, and enable the local purchase of other essential supplies (Smith, 2010). The Australian officials in Fiji worked closely with Fiji NDMO and other relevant local authorities in their relief and recovery efforts (Smith 2010). The Australian and New Zealand governments provided aircraft assistance to help with aerial surveys of the affected areas. The Australian Red Cross worked with the Fiji Red Cross to provide support for the provision of stocks; and to support surge capacity (IFRC 2010a). After the cyclone, AusAID funded typhoid vaccinations for almost 65 000 people in Fiji, in response to the declaration of a public health emergency due to a typhoid outbreak after the cyclone in 2010, (AusAID 2011c).

5 AUSTRALIA'S REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN DISASTER RESPONSE

In recognition of the need for a comprehensive disaster management approach, AusAID cooperates with international, regional and national organisations to improve preparedness to respond to disasters (AusAID 2011c). Some of the regional projects and initiatives are described in this section.

A trilateral disaster relief arrangement in the Pacific (FRANZ) is an agreement between the governments of France, Australia and New Zealand to exchange information to ensure the best use of their assets and other resources for relief operations after cyclones and other natural disasters (DFAT 2012). Termed the 'Joint Statement on Disaster Relief Cooperation in the South Pacific,' it was originally signed in December 1992 and reviewed by the member states in 2007 with a view to strengthening the coordination mechanisms (IFRC 2010b).

The main vehicle for cooperation on disaster risk reduction and disaster management in the Pacific is SOPAC. AusAID is actively involved with SOPAC, the Applied Geoscience and Technology Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) (AusAID 2009b). SOPAC is an autonomous intergovernmental organisation involving 19 PICs, Australia and New Zealand (UNESCAP 2010). SOPAC's focus includes supporting Pacific national governments in the provision of marine mapping, geosciences hazard assessment and disaster risk management (UNESCAP 2010). SOPAC coordinates and oversees the implementation of the region's ten year plan for disaster risk management – the Regional Disaster Risk Management Framework for Action (SOPAC 2010). SOPAC established the Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network to support PICs in their implementation and development of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) National Action Plans (NAPs), in keeping with the Regional Disaster Risk Management Framework for Action 2005-2015 (SOPAC 2009, 2010). SOPAC also plays a role in facilitating strategic partnerships between Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) and organisations in the Pacific such as Pacific Islands Fire Services Association (PIFSA) and National Disaster Management Offices. Such arrangements, termed "twinning arrangements," aim to build capacity of PIC organisations and allow AFAC to better understand national contexts for more effective disaster response (AFAC, 2010).

As a member of the Pacific Islands Forum, Australia plays an active role in the governance of the region through the development of policies and procedures that guide the leadership of the region. However, a Forum report indicated that Australia was not asked to contribute to the Forum's Regional natural disaster relief fund, as they were already assisting members in many other ways (Pacific Forum 2009). Australia is also a member of the Asia-Pacific Humanitarian Partnership (APHP) which provides technical support to UN humanitarian operations (IHP 2012).

AusAID cooperates on disaster preparedness with organisations including the East Asia Summit, ASEAN, and the United Nations Organisation for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. UNOCHA ensures that humanitarian actors work together to provide a coherent response to

emergencies, by providing a framework within which each actor contributes to the overall emergency response (SOPAC 2009). OCHA also facilitates the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT), which was formed in 2008, and overseen by the UN Resident Coordinator in Fiji. The PHT covers 15 PICs¹ and operates on the principles of predictability in decision making and coordination through the use of cluster groups / leads and accountability, as the UN Resident Coordinator is accountable to the UN Secretary General.

In 2010–11, AusAID supported the ASEAN Secretariat to implement disaster preparedness and management initiatives under the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AusAID 2011c). AusAID also provided financial support for the World Food Programme which is a key partner in the delivery of more than 95 per cent of Australia's food assistance globally, to conduct disaster response exercises with governments and disaster management organisations (AusAID 2011f).

An additional mechanism in which Australian organisations provide support in disaster response is via faith based organisations with links to the Pacific region, given the strong Christian culture that exists across many PICs (Douglas, 2002). The approach to the delivery of disaster relief of these faith based organisations is either via existing projects or via links to local church groups. An example of the former is Australia's National Council of Churches "Pacific Community focussed Integrated Disaster Risk Reduction" Project (PCIDRR), which operates in several PICs and links to both government and local churches (NCCA, 2007). An example of the latter approach is through the Catholic Aid Agency, Caritas, who has local partners in many PICs, and forms an effective way in which to deliver appropriate disaster relief. Other relevant Australian faith based organisations which are active in the Pacific (and disaster and climate change work) include Uniting World, Anglicare and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).

Australia's involvement in other regional projects and initiatives are tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1: Australia's involvement in selected regional projects and initiatives.

Initiatives and Programmes	Funding Source	Focus	Contribution Amount (AU\$)
Pacific Enhanced Humanitarian Response 2008 to 2011	AusAID	Pre-positioning emergency supplies (UNICEF, Australian Red Cross); National Action Plan Development and implementation (SOPAC, SPC); community-based DRM (Act for Peace; Caritas, CARE, ActionAID).	\$12 million
FRANZ Agreement (1992) (AusAID 2009a; DFAT 2012)	France, Australia and New Zealand	Information exchange on the use of assets and other resources for relief operations after cyclones.	Unknown
The International Climate Change	AusAID , Department of	Climate adaptation	\$328.2 million

¹ PHT countries include Cook Islands,, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu (see <http://www.phtpacific.org/Country>).

Initiatives and Programmes	Funding Source	Focus	Contribution Amount (AU\$)
Adaptation Initiative (to June 2013) (AusAID 2011h; McClean 2011)	Climate Change and Energy Efficiency		
Pacific Adaptation Strategy Assistance Program (AusAID 2011h; McClean 2011)	AusAID	Vulnerability assessment, adaptation planning and mainstreaming	\$12 million
The Pacific Climate Change Science Program (AusAID 2011h).	AusAID	Understanding how the climate has changed and how it may change in the future as a result of climate change in PICs.	\$20 million
Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (AusAID 2011h)	Multi-donor global/ Australia	Pacific regional pilot- country-specific components in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa and Tonga.	\$40 million
Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) (AusAID 2011h; McClean 2011).	AusAID	Undertake adaptation work	\$6 million
Asia-Pacific Humanitarian Partnership (IHP 2012).	AusAID	Technical support to UN humanitarian operations	Not funded
Various initiatives funded or operated by faith based organisations e.g. PCIDRR	Faith based organisations	Disaster response through local partners	Unknown

6 ORGANISATIONS AND MECHANISMS RELEVANT TO THIS RESEARCH

This research project will be focused on four immediate humanitarian needs associated with responding to a disaster: health and medical care, food and nutrition, water and sanitation, and psychosocial needs. This section highlights some of the main organisations involved in the response to these four needs in disaster settings.

- a. **Health and medical care:** Disasters impact on population health in various ways, resulting in a need for different activities to be implemented at the different disaster phases, including vaccination, epidemic Mitigation Plans, health education/promotion and awareness programmes, emergency medical treatment, medical relief supplies, and disease outbreak prevention strategies (Tangi). Several Australian organisations are involved in health/medical responses during emergencies and under the AUSASSIST plan, the ADF is the responsible authority for health services (ADF 2007, pp. 9, 28, 51; EMA 2002b, p. 21). Other organisations providing health and medical services include The Australian Red Cross (AusAID 2011c), Australian Civilian Corps (AusAID 2011c, 2011i), CARE (CARE 2009b, 2011), and Oxfam (Oxfam 2011), RedR (RedR Australia 2011). AusAID is the key funding agency for health and medical supplies and personnel.
- b. **Food and nutrition:** The Red Cross (Red Cross Australia 2012), AusAID (EMA 2002b, p. 21), Oxfam (Oxfam 2011) CARE and Caritas (CARE 2009b, 2011) are key players in the provision of food and nutritional support including nutritional specialists to affected areas. Although Australia works with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to pre-position humanitarian supplies- mainly food and shelter, near disaster-prone areas around the world, the WFP does not have an active presence in the PIC.
- c. **Water and sanitation.** Water monitoring, treatment and distribution programmes are essential services post disasters. Various agencies provide clean water, technical professional and supplies to assist the local environmental, sectors in country in disaster settings. These include The Australian Red Cross (Red Cross Australia 2012). The Australian Civilian Corps (AusAID 2011i), SOPAC (SOPAC 2010), Oxfam (Oxfam 2011) and RedR (RedR Australia 2011, 2012).
- d. **Psychosocial needs:** There is limited information about organisations that caters to psychosocial health post disaster. However Caritas Australia has a strong counselling portfolio including the provision of special trauma counselling and training community and church leaders to assist them in coping with the effects of the disaster. (AusAID 2009a; Caritas Australia 2011).

Table 2 summarises some of the organisations and indicates their contribution to the four humanitarian needs of interest to this review. Given the desk-based nature of this research, it must be understood that this information is not complete, and it is expected that the roles and responsibilities of these organizations will be expanded and clarified through interviews and other stakeholder interactions

Table 2: Australian funded organisations and their contribution to the four humanitarian needs. (AusAID is a key funding agency for these initiatives).

Organisations	Health and Medical Care	Food and Nutrition	Water and sanitation	Psychosocial needs
Australian Civilian Corps (AusAID 2011i)	Yes		Yes	
Australian Department of Defence (ADF 2007, pp 9, 28, 51) (EMA 2002b, p. 21)	Yes		Yes	
Australian Department of Health & Family Services (EMA 2002b, p. 21)	Yes			Yes
Australian Red Cross (AusAID 2011c; Red Cross Australia 2012)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Civilian medical teams (AusAID 2011c)	Yes		Yes	
CARE (CARE 2009b, 2011)	Yes	Yes		
Caritas Australia (AusAID 2009a; Caritas Australia 2011)		Yes	Yes	Yes
Department of Primary Industries and Energy (EMA 2002b, p. 21)	Yes			
EMA (EMA 2002b, p. 21)			Yes	
Oxfam (Oxfam 2011)	Yes	Yes	Yes	
RedR (RedR Australia 2011)	Yes	Yes	Yes	
SOPAC (UNESCAP 2010)			Yes	
World Vision Australia (World Vision Australia 2012)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other faith based organisations (for e.g. ADRA, NCCA) (Douglas 2002, Gero et al, 2010, NCCA, 2007)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Australia is committed to providing appropriate and effective humanitarian action in times of need, which is demonstrated through the systems and arrangements in place as well as past examples of responding to disasters and emergencies. AusAID is the government's lead agency that coordinates Australia's response to humanitarian disasters in PICs, and is guided by various domestic and international policies. Australia's response mechanism involves government and non-government organisations that respond to the immediate humanitarian needs post-disaster, and becomes activated once an official request is made from the affected country. The Humanitarian Partnership Agreement (HPA) is an example of the Australian government's efforts to better coordinate disaster response via a collaborative partnership with ANGOs.

Australia has produced numerous policies, frameworks and agreements to guide effective disaster response, and has signed several bilateral and multilateral agreements with its partners and stakeholders in disaster response. Several Australian based organisations work with local, regional and international actors in their response to disasters and emergencies. Some agencies have multiple roles in providing health care, water and sanitation and food and nutrition support after disasters. There is limited information on which organisations tend to the immediate and long term psychosocial needs of the affected community. Whilst there are several policies outlining Australia's response mechanism, the stakeholders involved and the specific objectives; the roles of some organisations and the details of the actual response in affected countries remain unclear. Later stages of this research project will further investigate the workings of the Australian response sector and how Australia works with the local disaster response system in the affected countries and the implications of this for the adaptive capacity of PICs to changed disaster frequency and intensity in the face of climate change.

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9 APPENDIX 1: THE HPA GROUP MEMBERS' GOALS

- **CARE** is an international humanitarian aid organisation fighting global poverty, with a special focus on working with women and girls to bring about lasting change to their communities. Care works together with communities to provide emergency relief and address the underlying causes of poverty. Immediately after an emergency has occurred, CARE's initial emergency response includes the provision of food security and nutritional support, clean water, sanitation facilities, medical care, shelter, tools and seeds to those most in need (CARE 2009a, 2009b).
- **Caritas Australia** is a Catholic Agency for International Aid and Development. Caritas works through the principles and practice of community development, supporting people to help themselves out of poverty, hunger and injustice. Caritas believe it is both important to react quickly and provide assistance in an emergency, as well as to take steps to identify, assess and reduce the risks the poor face from future disasters (Caritas Australia 2012).
- **Oxfam's** purpose is to help create lasting solutions to the injustice of poverty. One of the ways in which this is achieved is through humanitarian assistance in disasters and conflicts. Assistance is provided in the form of – clean water, sanitation facilities, food, health and nutrition advice and shelter (Oxfam 2011).
- **Plan International Australia** works at the grassroots in 50 developing countries to strengthen the resilience of children and youth to cope with emergencies. In this regard, they work with government, agencies and civil society to ensure appropriate responses that address all aspects of child protection in emergencies (Plan International Australia 2010).
- **Save the Children's** vision is for a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation. Their commitment is to reducing children's vulnerability to emergencies, ensuring their right to survival and development after an emergency and providing the support they and their families need to quickly recover and re-establish their lives, dignity and livelihoods (Save the Children 2012).
- **World Vision** works internationally to transform the lives of disadvantaged and at-risk children and communities. In disasters and emergencies, World Vision is poised to provide on-the-spot assistance to those affected by delivering lasting solutions (World Vision Australia 2012).



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