GUIDANCE NOTE ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS ENTRY POINTS FOR GENCAP AND OTHER GENDER ADVISERS

Overview

Most natural disasters are concentrated in zones where droughts, cyclones or hurricanes, floods, volcanic eruptions or tsunamis recur with intermittent frequency. In these areas, preparation for disasters is not new. Living with the constant threat of disaster hones men and women’s distinct skills and knowledge of how to prepare for and recover from disaster. This local knowledge is the anchor of any disaster preparedness work. Yet increasingly, generations of disaster experience does not give enough protection. Natural disasters are becoming more intense, and in some areas, more frequent. Climate change, population stress and degraded environments increase vulnerability. Too many lives are often lost. Too many incomes are destroyed.

Disaster preparedness relies on the actions of individuals. Women, girls, boys and men are aware and go where they will be safest when disaster strikes and families act to reduce the risk of damage to their crops and property. The best chance of this happening is when communities have inclusive disaster management plans that they implement in responsive two-way communication with other tiers of government. Success is enhanced when community preparedness feeds into, and is supported by, a National Disaster Management Plan.

There is increasing evidence that more women than men are killed in natural disasters\(^1\) and more men than women in armed conflict\(^2\). In natural disasters, the deficit in women’s participation in both preparedness and response often signals the marginalization of others, including the elderly.

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2 The Unequal Burden of War: The Effect of Armed Conflict on the Gender Gap in Life Expectancy T Plumper/E Neumayer (2006, The IO Foundation)
people with disabilities and minority groups. Women and men are often equally active in local preparedness and efforts to build disaster resilient communities; both have crucial roles at the household and community level. However, women’s roles in mitigating and preparing for disasters and in managing emergencies frequently go unrecognized in formal disaster management circles, and they tend to be excluded from planning relief distribution. The presence of women and attention to gender differences evaporates at progressively senior levels, until it is virtually non-existent in national and regional level discussions.

There are strategic openings for GenCap and other Gender Advisers to contribute to gender-inclusive disaster preparedness. These include:

- Coordination structures
- Gender analysis to inform preparedness
- Vulnerability assessment
- Information gathering and management
- Planning
- Capacity building
- Resource mobilization

**Coordination Structures**

The key country-level players in disaster preparedness and response are the national government’s disaster management office (NDMO) and relevant line ministries. The NDMO leads national coordination. In parallel and in support of the NDMO, are the coordination efforts of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the clusters. UN agencies, most specifically ISDR, UNDP and OCHA, have leadership roles in preparedness as do the national Red Cross/Red Crescent societies and in-country IOs/NGOs active in disaster management. The key coordination structures within the UN are the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the inter-cluster coordination forum. Often governments prepare for disasters without involving the networks that provide gender and protection services. GenCap and other Gender Advisers can strengthen coordination by advocating and mobilising their inclusion.

**GenCap/Gender Advisers’ Role:** GenCap Advisers must consult with the HC/RC to identify preparedness priorities and to strategically assist to bring gender dimensions into the heart of the HCT’s preparedness work. GenCap and other Gender Advisers should participate actively in the HCT and the inter-cluster coordination meetings to advice on how gender and social dimensions can be integrated into preparedness.

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3 GenCap fieldwork and observations with humanitarian responders in Vanuatu, Samoa and Fiji (2011)
4 Revealing Risk, Redefining Development - Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (United Nations 2011) and Improving the Quality of National and Regional Disaster Risk Management in the Pacific – Proposal for Capacity Building (Pacific Humanitarian Team - 2011)
GenCap and other Gender Advisers should also encourage, and respond to, requests to participate in disaster preparedness meetings and workshops with the NDMO, the Red Cross/Red Crescent and other key humanitarian actors. This creates an opening to advocate with NDMOs and other responders to ensure there is inclusive participation in their preparedness and response processes.

Strategic relationships should be built with UNDP’s Bureau for Crisis Prevention & Recovery (BCPR) and, if present, ISDR and OCHA. These agencies drive the UN’s disaster preparedness.

Also important is to supporting gender and protection service providers proactively to be an integrated part of disaster response (e.g. psychosocial and gender-based violence (GBV) services).

**Gender Analysis to inform Preparedness**

Conduct gender analysis *before, during and after* natural disasters. Use this analysis to stimulate discussions on the gender lessons learned. This data and reflection give excellent focus to preparedness and contingency planning for future disasters. GenCap and other Gender Advisers should always conduct field analysis with teams of field-based implementing partners. Collaborating on gender analysis in the field presents opportunities to do tool development, analysis and reporting together. This creates an active learning experience for all.

GenCap and other Gender Advisers are facilitators. The entry point is to work with partner field teams to ensure practical relevant tools and approaches are used to conduct relevant gender analysis in communities. Gather cluster-specific insights. Then, discuss gender lessons learned and recommended actions with individual cluster leads and their teams. This analysis can later make a valuable contribution to the vulnerability assessment which is conducted when disaster strikes.

**Vulnerability and Capacities Assessment**

Vulnerabilities and capacities of individuals and social groups evolve over time and determine people’s abilities to cope with disaster and recover from it. Social networks, power relationships, knowledge and skills, gender roles, health, wealth, and location, all affect risk and vulnerability to disasters and the capacity to respond to them. A vulnerability and capacities assessment is essential to identify who is most vulnerable, and why, which capacities need to be developed/ strengthened, as well as what relief and services are specifically needed. A gender analysis, as a critical part of a vulnerability and capacities assessment, is essential to ensure the right response for all women, girls, boys and men.

Tools and approaches used by assessment teams should allow the mapping of the different risks faced by women, girls, boys and men. GenCap Advisers should provide technical support in gaining gender-differentiated insight into both the capacities and the vulnerabilities of all disaster-affected groups.
Information Gathering and Management

Experience shows that hastily planned assessments planned often fail to collect essential gender and protection information. In the same rush, time and attention may not be paid to ensuring an appropriate gender mix in assessment team members. Ideally, women-to-women and men-to-men discussions should be conducted to identify the needs, coping abilities and best solutions for all in the affected populations. Although the initial rapid assessment has limited opening for consultation, there are various methods and tools to help maximise the inclusiveness that is possible. All follow-up assessments need to be structured to ensure that relevant data by sex, age, disability and context-relevant vulnerability is captured.

Preparedness should always put priority on having agreed assessment tools and approaches in place before disaster strikes. This is a responsibility of the NDMO, with technical input and support –as needed - from the international community. If in-country clusters are active, this will be a priority of OCHA and the inter-cluster forum. If the NDMO does not initiate common assessment tools and approaches, it is vital that the international community agree on a practical, inclusive tool for rapid assessments on which they collaborate. Likewise, clusters should agree on common sectoral assessment tools as part of their preparedness. Mandated to mainstream both gender and protection, clusters should ensure that assessment tools capture relevant gender and protection information.

GenCap and other Gender Advisers can provide advice and training to ensure timely gender input into baseline data, rapid needs assessment and sectoral assessment tools. It is also important to advocate for, and support, humanitarian actors to create a trained roster of men and women who speak relevant languages and bring gender awareness to assessments.

Early warning systems also warrant GenCap and other Gender Advisers’ focus. GenCap and other Gender Advisers can champion the development of efficient two-way early warning communications between women, girls, boys and men in communities and their government responders.

Planning

Country-level contingency plans and cluster work plans are central to preparedness. Standards and guidelines need to be agreed upon before disaster strikes. Planning is also fundamental to effective stockpiling.

With gender-sensitive planning, pre-positioning and government-approved lists of allowed relief items can ensure that food and non-food relief meet assessed needs and do not cause harm. Harm can take many forms including an increase in the incidence of GBV when relief supplies are inappropriate; opportunistic promotion of baby formula that undermines breastfeeding and gaps in the supply of preferred contraceptives.
Disaster simulation exercises are increasingly used to test contingency plans. They help responders to experience the real-time pressure of disaster response, to identify gaps in their preparedness and to mobilise resources to ‘prepare right’. Simulation exercises can only be effective if location-relevant gender and protection issues are woven into the disaster scenarios. OCHA, NDMOs and other organisations that conduct simulations must design (or customise) these exercises to reflect local reality. Some design will be by internal staff, others by simulation consultants or a combination of both.

GenCap and other Gender Advisers can make a valuable contribution by ensuring that insightful gender analysis informs these planning processes and advocating for both women and men to be involved actively.

In contingency planning, GenCap and other Gender Advisers can assist in hazard prioritisation based on gender and vulnerability analysis and lessons learned from previous disasters. They can assist in ensuring sectoral response plans include GBV and other gender concerns. When contingency plans are included in simulation exercises, GenCap and other Gender Advisers can add value by helping to ensure gender and protection concerns are integrated meaningfully into the simulation and into the follow-up revision of the contingency plan.

The GenCap and other Gender Advisers’ opening in simulations is with the design team. Three challenges often exist that Advisers can help designers to address; ensuring locally relevant gender and protection issues are woven realistically through the scenarios; ensuring enough social sector actors have roles so that gender and protection issues are addressed; and facilitating active participation for men and women in the simulation. In many countries, most government officials who are selected for simulation training are men. The gender gap in emergency surge teams will not be overcome until men and women have equal opportunities to learn essential skills. Simulations are vital in building this capacity. GenCap and other Gender Advisers can work with NDMOs to find creative solutions if there is shortage of women trained in disaster preparedness and response.

Sectoral/cluster work plans are also openings for GenCap and other Gender Advisers. Work plans need to be informed by a gender analysis. They also need to ensure prevention and response mechanisms are in place to minimize the incidence of GBV in affected populations and to ensure humanitarian actors do not participate in sexual exploitation and abuse.

GenCap and other Gender Advisers can also support governments and humanitarian actors in developing context-specific operational guidelines that are inclusive (e.g. guidelines for providing IDP services or relocation).
Capacity Building

Engaging communities in preparing better for natural disasters is key to reducing risk. The objective is to enhance, and build onto, the existing knowledge of women, girls, boys and men. Active and equal engagement of women and men in this process enhances the coping strategies of the community against hazard risks and reduces its vulnerability against them. For these reasons, many governments actively support communities forming disaster management committees. International or local NGOs often partner with government, as implementers, to facilitate community committees creating and implementing disaster management plans.

GenCap Advisers do not operate at community level. However, they can help train and build the gender capacity of key implementing partners, and their trainer-of-trainer teams, who work in community-level disaster preparedness. These capacity-building activities can be used strategically to promote meaningful participation of males and females, by generation, including people with disabilities and other minority or vulnerable groups.

Resource Mobilisation

UN resolutions, evaluations and donors all demand evidence that humanitarian investment is meeting the distinct needs of the most vulnerable women, girls, boys and men.

Part of GenCap and other Gender Advisers’ contribution to preparedness is to ensure that identified gender needs are reflected in Flash Appeals, CAPs and other funding mechanisms. Supporting this is training on the IASC Gender Marker to ensure that projects are designed in such a way as to target beneficiaries, gender coding is accurate and clusters monitor that projects are implemented to fulfill their gender code.

As GenCap and other Gender Advisers, we share in the UN’s responsibility to create a better balance between preparedness and response. We have a role to keep gender-inclusive preparedness on the agenda.
CASE STUDY: GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PREPAREDNESS – PACIFIC SUB REGION

Context
The activities included in this report (Gender Action) were conducted by GenCap Adviser Linda Pennells (July 2011 to March 2012) but build onto the one year of work by GenCap Adviser, Deborah Clifton. Both GenCap Advisers were based with OCHA Pacific in Suva to support the Pacific Humanitarian Team in 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs).

Humanitarian assistance in the Pacific has proven complex. Pacific Islands Countries and Territories are characterised by a high degree of disaster risk, with small and scattered populations spread out across a vast ocean, vulnerable to a disproportionate amount of the world’s natural disasters. Even relatively minor emergencies can affect populations significantly and overwhelm national response capacity and national budgets. In the past three years, sudden-onset crises in PICTs have included floods, cyclones, king tides, volcanoes, earthquakes and tsunamis.

Most PICTs lack the resources for ongoing and effective engagement with the various government, civil society, and private sector stakeholders working in disaster risk management (DRM). Few international humanitarian and development organisations have a physical presence in the island states, and responders operate from different locations around the Pacific. When a disaster exceeds national response and resource capacity, international humanitarian organisations are also faced with the challenge in responding to a localised humanitarian need from a regional capacity. Preparedness, therefore, is fundamental to efficient and effective response.

Humanitarian preparedness and response is further complicated by the fact that disasters have vastly different impacts on women, girls, boys and men. Failure to analyse and address these differences has been shown to increase the chances of doing harm and to exacerbate gender inequality. This is particularly relevant in PICTs, where levels of both disaster risk and gender inequality are among the highest in the world. Ensuring inclusive approaches and representative participation of affected and vulnerable groups in disaster risk management (DRM), is vital to effective preparedness, risk reduction and response. Although mainstreaming gender equality has been an international and national government priority for more than a decade, there are few isolated examples of good practices. A coherent and systematic approach to gender equality in DRM has yet to be firmly established.

Pacific women are often very much involved in local preparedness and initiatives for community resilience building; they have crucial roles at the household and community level. However, their roles in mitigating and preparing for disasters and in managing emergencies usually go unrecognised in formal disaster management circles and they tend to be excluded from planning.

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5 Seventy per cent of natural disasters occur in the Asia-Pacific region
6 For example, Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa, Auckland, Wellington, Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney, Honolulu, New Caledonia.
8 UNDP Asia-Pacific Human Development Report, Power, Voice and rights., 2010
9 With the exception of Tonga, which is not yet a signatory to CEDAW
10 PCIDRR
relief distribution. The presence of women and attention to gender differences evaporates at progressively senior levels, until we find it is virtually non-existent in national and regional level discussions. Similarly, the diversity of Pacific social actors, including youth, elderly, disabled men and women, minority ethnic and religious groups, with their varied knowledge, perspectives and needs, is invariably absent in decision-making.

Credible studies of gender-based violence (GBV) in the Pacific to date document that over 60% of women have experienced physical or sexual violence by their partner and that over 40% had experienced this within the previous 12 months. These studies also confirmed that such violence increases after a disaster. There was evidence in the aftermath of TC Vania, as well as in the response to the Solomon Island Gizo tsunami response. Violence by non-family members, particularly sexual assault of young girls, was also shown to increase at times of crisis, and was further exasperated by displacement.

**Humanitarian Coordination**

The Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) was established in July 2008 to support Pacific Island governments in providing timely, consistent and coordinated disaster response. OCHA coordinates this body made up of all major disaster response stakeholders, whose members are grouped into seven response sectors or “clusters”. Since its inception three years ago, the PHT has been involved in more than 15 emergencies in eight countries.

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<th>Pacific Regional Clusters</th>
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<td>Health and Nutrition</td>
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<td>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
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11. For example, distribution is often done through traditional leaders, in Samoa Displacement Report (Draft, Jan 2011); Vanuatu cyclones distribution management: 600+ bags of rice were ruined by rain during distribution and other bags ‘walked’. GenCap/Vanuatu Red Cross Society consultations with communities, NDMO and non-government humanitarian actors formed a consensus that if women had been involved in this exclusively male distribution process, there would have been more equity and less waste.
12. For example, NAPs
13. UNFPA Family Health & Safety Studies, using WHO methodology, in Solomon Islands, Samoa, Kiribati; women aged 15-49 years who have ever been in a relationship.
14. The Tanna Women’s Counselling Centre documented more than a 300% increase in new domestic violence cases and in cases of men defaulting on paying child support in the nine months after TC Vania compared to a year earlier. Cyclone-caused economic hardship was identified as a key reason for wife beating and for defaulting on child support.
16. As part of a process of Humanitarian Reform to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response, agreed by the international humanitarian community, through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2005.
17. INGOs, regional organizations, UN Agencies, ICRC, IFRC, donors
18. Early recovery, emergency education, health & nutrition, logistics, protection, shelter, and water-sanitation- hygiene (WASH)
PICTs have created a Pacific Framework for Disaster Risk Management 2005-2015 and member states have national DRM platforms guided by the Hyogo Framework for Action.

**Gencap Strategy: DRM in the Pacific**

The GenCap Adviser’s strategy for her eight-month assignment was to:

- To engage the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) and its clusters in more routine proactive gender mainstreaming by 1) demonstrating that a gender analysis is essential to efficient and effective beneficiary targeting and 2) by introducing practical gender tools.
- Bringing a gender lens to key inter-agency and inter-cluster processes led by the Resident Coordinator/OCHA, with special focus on preparedness.
- Building sustainable gender support to the PHT as part of the GenCap exit strategy.

**Gender Action: Gender Mainstreaming in Humanitarian Action in the Pacific**

1. **Engaging the PHT and its Clusters**

   1.1 **Using post-disaster gender analysis to inform preparedness**

   Two disasters were revisited from a gender perspective to identify gender insights that could better inform preparedness and contingency planning.

   **Vanuatu Cyclones:** Gender issues were explored in the response to two rapid-succession tropical cyclones in Vanuatu. Cyclones Vania and Atu struck Tafea Province in January-February 2011. The gender lessons learned process was conducted in collaboration with the Vanuatu Red Cross Society in September 2011. The feedback session in Vanuatu was hosted by the National Disaster Management Office (16 participants: eight male/eight female); highlights were presented at the regional level to the Inter-cluster Coordination Group and the annual 14-country PHT regional workshop. Gender insights were reported by cluster to inform preparedness. In addition, cyclone-triggered issues needing action were identified and raised with relevant cluster coordinators. One example: botched bush abortions arising when funded repairs to the reproductive health clinic of the island’s hospital were diverted.

   **Samoa Tsunami:** Field gender analysis in tsunami-affected areas was conducted in collaboration with the Samoa Red Cross/IFRC and the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Development. The tsunami struck in September 2009. Although there was copious documentation on the tsunami, there was scant reference to the differentiated impact on women, girls, boys and men. The discussions with tsunami victims in their related communities were held just prior to the Samoa NDMO’s Contingency Planning workshop. A two-page gender briefing note was provided to OCHA/NDMO who facilitated the workshop and field issues were raised in discussions. Reporting was cluster specific and follow-up discussions on field findings and issues needing action were held
with relevant clusters. Examples: Ministry of Health removing condoms from dignity kits, quality and coordination problems in psycho-social counseling.

Based on these field findings, the GenCap Adviser was able to provide locally-grounded suggestions to the NDMO which was revising Samoa’s National Disaster Management Plan.

**1.2 Demonstrating how gender analysis in disaster response can improve response, recovery and preparedness**

Two natural disasters unfolded during the GenCap Adviser’s mission. The GenCap Adviser focused on mobilising gender and protection specialists in the UN and responder network to mobilise their contacts, experience and data to: 1) enrich the PHT/OCHA’s gender and vulnerability analysis grounding the response 2) facilitate government and NGO gender networks in the disaster-affected Pacific island being part of disaster response (assessments, NDMO and PHT decision-making bodies) and 3) proactively keeping gender on the agenda as the disaster and response unfold.

**Tuvalu drought 2011:** The gender-responsive was limited. UNFPA took the lead in identifying women and gender specialists in the Tuvalu government and in NGOs who could bring gender dimensions to the disaster management discussions. This information was fed to the PHT and Tuvalu government. On an ad-hoc basis, UN gender specialists participated in OCHA/NDMO teleconferences raising gender issues and suggestions. The Tuvalu government’s drought assessment, supported by the South Pacific Commission, was provided a gender lens, key questions and engagement tactics for equally reaching women and men by the GenCap adviser. One of the big gaps in preparedness that deepened vulnerability was inadequate and poorly maintained guttering: the GenCap Adviser circulated notes designed to trigger comprehensive gender analysis of flood impact and preparedness issues.

The result was disappointing. The gender tools provided the assessment team (13 male, one female) were not used. There was minimalist, inadequate gender information in the report. The Women’s Ministry was blocked by the Government from participating in the meetings where response decisions were made. OCHA requested inclusion but was rebuffed. Issues raised by the gender team in Suva by teleconference appeared to have little influence in Tuvalu. One example: the request that extra water rations be provided to pregnant and lactating women was rejected.

There were meagre benefits from the gender efforts invested. Lessons learned include; an essential part of preparedness is supporting NDMOs in practical gender mainstreaming in DRM; country-based preparedness must integrate women and gender networks that will effectively link them into response; the PHT and its regional clusters need an in-country partner that has good relationships with women’s, psychosocial and GBV networks.

Gender efforts did, however, have some impact. A number of humanitarian stakeholders stated that they now could ‘see’ more clearly some of the gender dimensions in drought and issues raised have fed into UNDP recovery and development discussions. A ‘Running File’ of gender issues was launched during the response: this will contribute to any future PHT lessons learned process.

**Fiji floods 2012:** It was obvious in the Tuvalu response that much more gender coordination is needed. The GenCap Adviser was the catalyst for the formation of a Gender Surge Roster within the
UN Gender Group (UNGG). The members are UN gender specialists whose agencies support them providing gender support to the PHT in emergencies. The Fiji floods are the first operational test of the Gender Surge team. The team is meeting for strategic discussions. Members take turns in attending critical NDMO, inter-cluster and cluster meetings, then keep each other informed using a ‘running file’ of gender issues related to the flood response. Gender specialists working for key responders outside the UN system (e.g. Red Cross and Save the Children) are being included, as appropriate.

Although it is too early to evaluate impact, it is clear that Gender Surge activities, to date, are bringing value. OCHA/PHT knows this gender pool exists and can be readily mobilised. The GenCap Adviser, located in the OCHA office, now rallies the Gender Surge. This responsibility will soon transfer to the UNGG as the Gender Surge is a UNGG activity. There is more consistent gender and protection presence at key meetings. The running file keeps gender specialists ‘in the loop’ while not demanding their presence at frequent meetings. Synergies and collaboration is unfolding. Two examples: a survey of flood-affected women market vendors is being conducted by the Pacific Centre and UN Women to enrich the Ministry of Agriculture’s damage and loss assessment. The first Gender Surge meeting led to four organisations meeting to achieve effective coverage of dignity kits and IEC materials.

1.3 Creating Preparedness Tools

Minimum Gender Standards for Cyclone Awareness were created for each cluster. The Resident Coordinator has required each cluster provide a written report on implementation. The GenCap Adviser and OCHA’s Humanitarian Officer have started a cluster-by-cluster review of each cluster’s work plan as well their implementation of the Minimum Gender Standards for Cyclone Awareness. This is an attempt to integrate gender accountability into OCHA core operational and monitoring support to regional clusters.

1.4 Providing Gender Technical Support to Humanitarian Partners

Gender technical support takes many shapes and flows to various humanitarian actors. These examples show the diversity:

- Providing gender input into the redesign of the Pacific Disaster Net, the Pacific’s web hub of disaster preparedness and response information.
- Facilitating a session on gender in food security at Fiji’s 2011 Strengthening Disaster Response in the Agricultural Sector Workshop.
- Participating in a mock inter-cluster coordination meeting at the regional workshop for AusAid DRM staff.
- On-request provision of gender input into new documents and processes unfolding in the clusters.
2. Enriching the Gender Dimensions of Inter-Cluster Coordination Services

2.1 Ensuring robust gender focus throughout the Pacific Islands’ biggest annual DRM event

The Annual PHT Regional Workshop is the anchor DRM learning and sharing event each year in the Pacific. It is the only time regional responders (UN, IFRC, IOs) and cluster coordinators spend a week working with NDMOs and donors to improve disaster preparedness and response. The previous GenCap Adviser, Deborah Clifton, successfully used the PHT to showcase gender. In 2011, OCHA was able to follow her lead and get funding again for 10 women leaders to attend the forum. The AusAid funding brought the participation of women to 48% of registered participants. This reflects a vibrant mix of male and female national and international attendees. Most especially relevant, however, is that the AusAid funding increased the presence of Pacific Island women from 10% to 18% of participants.

*Gender activities at the 2011 PHT included:* presenting Gender Lessons Learned-Cyclone Vania (Vanuatu); facilitating a Gender Marker session and introducing the Gender Marker Tip Sheets; conducting a ‘gender caucus’ session to gain insight/recommendations from those interested in gender equality; ensuring gender input into the two-day simulation featured at the workshop.

Outcomes included: good profile for gender concerns in most discussions and some progress made on integrating gender issues into cluster plans; a number of examples were compiled of gender progress unfolding in Pacific DRM; and recommendations from the gender caucus fed into the PHT plenary on ‘next steps’.

2.2 Capacity Building

Pacific Island disaster management offices want and need support in humanitarian coordination and in gender mainstreaming. These two capacity gaps were identified by NDMOs and verified in a DRM skills review conducted by OCHA. Regional clusters confirm similar needs. This triggered the development of a three-year proposal entitled *Improving the Quality of Pacific Humanitarian Engagement*. The proposal centres on providing advisers to NDMOs and to Regional Clusters to help strengthen coordination and gender mainstreaming. A support component funds women’s participation in DRM at the country and regional level. A senior gender specialist is proposed to be the project manager supported with technical expertise from OCHA, ISDR and UN Women. The project manager would mentor and build gender capacity of the advisers. The previous GenCap Adviser intensively supported the PHT/OCHA in designing this proposal and the current GenCap Adviser supports the ongoing consultation and revision.

AusAid’s multi-month revision of its major DRM funding mechanism has required a new strategy for funding this needed capacity building in gender and coordination. New openings for funding are being pursued. One example: The GenCap Adviser has provided input to the Pacific Centre, which is

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19 Without the eight AusAid funded women, there would have been only 11 Pacific Island women at the workshop. Without affirmative action, there were 27 male Pacific Islanders.
taking the lead on designing a UN joint program in DRM with AusAid. Efforts are being made to integrate key elements of the Quality of Pacific Humanitarian Engagement Project.

2.3 Simulations

Simulations are used widely in the Pacific as active learning exercises for disaster preparedness. Many, however, are gender-blind or scenario designers insert gender and protection issues into the disaster scenario but then do not interject when simulation participants do not pick them up. Often gender and protection issues are absent in the preparedness and response actions created in the simulations. OCHA Pacific, with the assistance of a simulation consultant, created a simulation for the 2011 PHT Regional Workshop. The GenCap Adviser was asked to contribute.

There were many lessons learned. Gender and protection issues were well woven into the scenario and the update bulletins. About 40% of the simulation participants were women so both men and women shared in the learning. A short gender lens was introduced at the simulation launch to help participants keep gender and protection issues on their minds as the simulation unfolded. The gender lens was also used in feedback discussions. The simulation was off to a good start, but it was soon evident that there were not enough roles designed for social sector actors: there were lots of gender issues but not enough role players who perceived it their responsibility to respond specifically to them. The simulation was short of catalytic roles (i.e. government gender machinery, social sector NGOs, crisis centres). The simulation was evaluated at the gender caucus held the following day and gender feedback was given both to the workshop plenary and to the simulation design team. As the designer facilitates approximately 10-12 workshop training events, (many with similar simulations), it is hoped the lessons learned will have a snowball effect and strengthen future simulations.

The PHT simulation was also restructured by the GenCap Adviser into a one-day table top exercise used with UN Women and other gender specialists. (Materials available in the Gender in Humanitarian Action Workshop file on the gender page of the phtpacific.org website)

The GenCap Adviser also participated in two simulations conducted with Fiji’s NDMO: the Tsunami Preparedness and Table-top Exercise sponsored by the Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (Hawaii) and the PACWAVE 11 Tsunami Exercise.

The three simulations provided the GenCap Adviser with evidence-based input to comment on OCHA’s Integrated Approach to Emergency Simulation (IAES) facilitator manual and simulation scenario examples.

2.4 Information Management, Communications and Advocacy

The GenCap Adviser contributed to the PHT vulnerability analysis compiled by OCHA for the Tuvalu drought and Fiji flood response; provided gender input into the Information Management training
of NDMO staff organized by UNFPA and OCHA; and routinely provide gender input into communication and advocacy.

2.5 Gender Input into OCHA Planning and Operations

Serving the PHT, but being hosted by OCHA Pacific, also offered the opportunity to provide gender suggestions on OCHA planning processes. Specific input was provided on OCHA’s Asia-Pacific Regional Office on its realignment of functions and its 2011-2012 strategy paper and performance framework.

3. Establishing Sustainable Gender Support to the PHT

The PHT is required to implement the IASC Gender Policy. The policy has three major elements: ensuring that humanitarian action mainstreams gender, prevents and responds to GBV and prevents and addresses sexual exploitation and abuse. Championed by the Resident Coordinator, the GenCap Adviser facilitated UN agencies agreeing to coordinate gender integration in Pacific humanitarian action. UN Women, supported by UNFPA, is taking responsibility for coordinating gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action; UNFPA and OHCHR for GBV prevention and response; and the RCO for prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

After sorting leadership, the next step was to ensure sustainable structures and processes were in place. Much GenCap energy has been invested in ensuring there is sustainable gender support to the PHT and its clusters after the GenCap Adviser’s assignment ends. Activities have focused in three areas: the UN Gender Group (UNGG) and UN Women support to the PHT as well as engaging the UNCT/PHT in institutionalizing gender services.

3.1 Collaborating with the UN Gender Group to support the PHT

Gender specialists or focal points from all UN agencies are members of the UN Gender Group. Traditionally, the UNGG focused on development issues. The GenCap Adviser has actively supported the UNGG to enter humanitarian space. The UN Gender Group has recently amended its TOR to include humanitarian action. To support the PHT and its clusters, the UNGG has created a Gender Surge Roster from its membership. Surge responsibilities have been mapped and include gender input and advice to the Suva-based PHT and its clusters. For some, it will include deployment on assessments and support missions.

3.2 Supporting UN Women to increase activity in humanitarian action

In 2011, the mandate of UN Women was expanded to cover humanitarian action – both preparedness and response. This is especially important in the Pacific. UN Women has 48 staff in the Pacific Islands, the largest pool of gender expertise in the Region. UN Women also has six country offices, including many of the most disaster-prone PICs: Samoa, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands,
Kiribati, Fiji and PNG. UN Women is well placed by mandate, expertise and location in the Pacific to be the engine of gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action. UN Women offices in Samoa and Fiji provide accessible service to the respective offices of the Resident Coordinators.

UN Women has a vital role to play in gender mainstreaming, both in development and humanitarian action, but requires capacity building and resourcing so it can successfully take on gender responsibilities in humanitarian action over time. UN Women seeks support to become familiar with humanitarian action and to find practical, manageable, high-impact ways of bringing its gender expertise into the humanitarian sphere. In order to build this capacity and comfort, a gender-balanced team of UN Women programme staff attended the 2012 GenCap technical workshop with the Pacific GenCap Adviser. This team assisted the GenCap Adviser to co-facilitate seven-day *Gender in Humanitarian Action* training that was designed to introduce key UN Women staff to the humanitarian architecture, actors, processes and issues. All Pacific regional clusters, the IFRC and a number of other key humanitarian responders participated. Each identified their gender approach, progress, challenges and entry points for UN Women. The 53 actions and entry points identified are now informing UN Women’s planning processes.

Other GenCap initiated collaboration included: involving UN Women field staff to gather gender lessons learned from the Samoan tsunami; delivering a gender in emergencies workshop to the UNGG based in Samoa which was organized by UN Women; supporting OCHA’s active participation in the UNGG co-chaired by UN Women and UNFPA; and input, in collaboration with OCHA, assisting UN Women to identify practical humanitarian actions to embed in UN Women’s regional work plan. One of the activities UN Women has undertaken is to be responsible for compiling a current contact list of gender specialists in all PICTs where they have programming: this resource on gender talent will be available for emergency preparedness and response. This brings an institutional home and sustainability to the contact networking initiated by the previous GenCap Adviser, Deborah Clifton.

The PHT is also creating entry points for UN Women. A critical example was revising the proposal *Improving the Quality of Pacific Humanitarian Engagement* to feature UN Women and the UN Gender Group as technical support to this multi-cluster multi-country three-year initiative – a step toward having UN Women be a respected, active and sustainable gender support to the PHT. The UNGG, co-chaired by UN Women and UNFPA, is tasked to provide gender input into UN joint programmes. The GenCap Adviser has provided gender input from a humanitarian perspective into two joint programmes.

### 3.3 Engaging the UNCT and PHT in institutionalizing gender support to humanitarian action

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20 The recently expanded mandate of UN Women now includes humanitarian response: one of the five UN Women goals is ‘to increase women’s leadership in peace, security and humanitarian response’ (Strategic Plan 2011 – 2013)
A pro-active exit strategy is unfolding to ensure continued gender mainstreaming support to the PHT/ICCG and its clusters after OCHA’s second GenCap Adviser assignment\textsuperscript{21} ends March 2012\textsuperscript{22}. These include the active engagement and capacity building of UN Women and the UN Gender Group as noted above. In addition, a Discussion Paper is being developed for the PHT/UNCT recommending next steps in gender mainstreaming support to HA. The recommendations include:

- Recruit a PHT Gender Adviser for one additional year to continue building robust gender leadership by UN agencies in the humanitarian sphere.
- Build capacity and seek resources to build a humanitarian team within UN Women to support the PHT.
- Initiate the UN Gender Group (UNGG) having membership in the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) as a vehicle for providing strategic gender advice and support to the PHT.
- UNGG co-chairs facilitate regular ICCG updates on its agenda. Likewise, ICCG chair facilitate regular updates from the UNGG’s Gender Surge Capacity Roster at its meetings.
- UNDAF / UNCT – Bring gender and humanitarian content more fully into UN joint and relevant programming

The discussion paper has been circulated to the UNGG for comment and is scheduled to be tabled at the upcoming meetings of the PHT Heads of Organizations and the UNCT.

**Conclusion**

The support provided by the two GenCap Advisers has assisted the PHT to adopt structural and operational change that is increasing, and has the potential to further increase, the gender responsiveness of its preparedness and response.

December 2012

\textsuperscript{21} One year assignment of Deborah Clifton followed by eight-month assignment of Linda Pennells.
\textsuperscript{22} In March 2012, a third GenCap Adviser, Anu Pillay, was deployed to the Region and was hosted by UN Women to support them to take on their role in disaster preparedness and humanitarian action coordination. This deployment was completed in December 2012 and the lessons learned from this deployment will be reported in the near future (updated on 10 December 2012)