



# National Disaster Risk Management Office

Ministry of MEIDECC, Tonga

## NEWS LETTER

June-August 2025

*NDRMO's mission is strengthen resilience and improve preparedness to save lives, protect livelihoods and assets of communities and individuals from the impact of hazards*

Established in 2007, with the enactment of DRM Act 2021, NDRMO focus on national disaster resilience through policy, planning & partnerships

### NDRMO - News Updates

GP2025 for DRR in Geneva:

## Tonga Highlights National DRR Progress at Global Platform 2025 in Geneva



*Director of NDRMO Tonga Mr. Mafua-'i-Vai'utukakau Maka delivers Tonga's country statement at GP2025 in Geneva, highlighting progress on the Sendai Framework, including DRM decentralization and strengthened early warning systems.*

### In this Newsletter

- Tonga Highlights National DRR Progress at Global Platform 2025 in Geneva
- Exercise Longreach 2025 held in Tonga
- Australia Assist-NDRMO conduct Stakeholder Workshop to Shape DRM Capacity Roadmap
- NDRMO Participates in Integrate Pasifika 3rd Regional Co-Design Workshop
- NDRMO & Ministry of Education Prepare for 2025 Nationwide Tsunami Drill
- NDRMO at the Pacific Regional Loss and Damage Dialogue 2025
- NDRMO Tonga Strengthens Capacity on Flood Risk Management in Thailand
- NDRMO Attends ADB Integrated Flood Management Training in Singapore
- National EOC Awareness Training held
- Review SOPs for Shelter, NFI, Logistics Clusters
- NDRMO Joins Meeting on Geohazard Early Warning Systems in Japan
- NDRMO Staff Complete Training in China on Disaster Prevention and Resilience
- EOC Training in Vava'u Builds Preparedness
- CDRI-NDRMO Conducted Survey, Assesses Critical Infrastructure & Vulnerabilities
- Japan-Tonga JCC Meeting on Build Back Better
- NDRMO at 7th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure in France
- Meeting held with CSOs on VDRMPs Phase II

From 2 to 6 June 2025, the Director of the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) Tonga, accompanied by a team from the Office, participated in the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025) held in Geneva, Switzerland. This global forum serves as the most comprehensive multi-stakeholder mechanism for reviewing progress and accelerating actions under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

Throughout the week, the Director and NDRMO team actively engaged in a wide range of high-level and technical sessions, including the Asia-Pacific Sendai Focal

Points Meeting, Multi-Stakeholder Plenaries, and various bilateral meetings and thematic events. The Director presented an official country statement on Tonga's progress, achievements, and challenges in implementing the Sendai Framework.

The delegation highlighted Tonga's strong progress, particularly in decentralizing disaster risk management through the rollout of Island and Village DRM Committees and the development of inclusive DRM Plans. Other achievements include the installation of early warning sirens across the country, expansion of emergency operation centers to island

level, and strengthened cluster coordination under the DRM Act 2021.

Through its interventions, Tonga reaffirmed its commitment to community-led resilience, locally driven disaster planning, and regional collaboration. The Director called for continued international support to sustain the country's DRM decentralization process and ensure that village-level preparedness and climate resilience remain a priority. NDRMO Tonga's active participation in GP2025 further strengthened the country's visibility, partnerships, and leadership in regional and global disaster risk reduction efforts.

## Tonga Hosts Exercise Longreach 2025 to Strengthen National & Regional Disaster Response Coordination



Participants of Exercise Longreach 2025 at the opening ceremony in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, including national agencies and international partners working together to strengthen disaster response coordination and interoperability

From 2–7 August 2025, the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) Tonga, in collaboration with the Australian Government and partners from across the Pacific, successfully hosted Exercise Longreach 2025—a multi-day disaster simulation and coordination exercise aimed at enhancing national and regional response capabilities.

The exercise brought together representatives from Tonga's line ministries, defence forces, humanitarian partners, and regional organisations. It featured a Simulation Exercise (SIMEX) held

at the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and a Tabletop Exercise (TTX) at Tanoa Hotel. These components tested Tonga's operational readiness to manage a large-scale emergency involving international assistance, based on a scenario simulating the impact of a Category 5 tropical cyclone.

The exercise focused on activating the NEOC, coordinating across the national cluster system, managing incoming humanitarian and military support, and ensuring effective information sharing and logistics.

Through Exercise Longreach, NDRMO and partners assessed interoperability, strengthened coordination protocols, and reinforced the importance of operating under a unified national command structure.

NDRMO extends its appreciation to all local and international participants, especially the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Australian Defence Force (ADF), and the Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC) for their ongoing support to strengthen Tonga's resilience.

### NEOC Conducts Full-Day Simulation Ahead of Exercise Longreach

On Friday, 1 August 2025, the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) conducted a full-day simulation exercise at the NDRMO Office ahead of Exercise Longreach. Coordinated by the Early Warning and Response Division, the simulation tested staff roles and response procedures under a Category 5 cyclone scenario. Using updated NEOC templates, manuals, and briefing materials, NDRMO personnel practiced sitreps, action planning, logging, and coordination protocols. The exercise enhanced national readiness and familiarised staff with NEOC functions before the international phase of Exercise Longreach began on 4 August.





## Stakeholders Workshop with Australia Assist Shapes Roadmap for Future Humanitarian Expert Support



The National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO), in partnership with the Australia Assist Programme, convened a Multi-Stakeholder DRM Capacity Strengthening Workshop on 16 July 2025 as part of the Australia Assist Phase II Stakeholder Engagement Visit.

The full-day workshop brought together government agencies, humanitarian clusters, civil society organisations, first responders, and regional partners to present and validate

findings from Tonga's recent Disaster Management Capacity Assessment. Participants identified and prioritised strengths and gaps in Tonga's DRM system, while also discussing practical steps to strengthen institutional capacity and technical support.

The workshop laid the groundwork for a Capacity Strengthening Roadmap aligned with Tonga's national DRM frameworks and priorities. Outcomes included a shared

understanding of priority DRM challenges, agreement on next steps for technical assistance, and initial inputs for a multi-year roadmap to guide future Australia Assist deployments in support of Tonga's resilience.

The Australia Assist Programme has been a long-term strategic partner of NDRMO, providing experienced humanitarian experts for many years to support disaster preparedness, response, and recovery in Tonga.

## NDRMO Participates in Integrate Pasifika 3rd Regional Co-Design Workshop



From 30 June to 4 July, the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) Tonga was represented by Mr. 'Aisea Fungavai and Ms. 'Ofa Masiwawa at the 3rd Integrate Pasifika Regional Co-Design Workshop, organized by the Pacific Community (SPC) in Nadi, Fiji.

The workshop brought together regional stakeholders to review the progress of the Integrate Pasifika (IP) information and knowledge-sharing platform, with a focus on its design, functionality, and role in strengthening disaster and climate

resilience. Key discussions covered the Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee and Technical Working Group, the establishment of Communities of Practice, and strategies to address gaps in disaster risk information flow and collaboration.

Through its active participation, NDRMO highlighted Tonga's commitment to improving access to reliable disaster risk information and to advancing regional cooperation in preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience-building.

### NDRMO & Ministry of Education Prepare for 2025 Nationwide Tsunami Drill



On 20 August, NDRMO held a meeting with the Ministry of Education's Safety and Conciliation Division to finalize arrangements for the 2025 Tsunami Drill for Schools. The drill aims to strengthen preparedness and ensure the safety of students across Tonga by testing evacuation procedures, building awareness, and reinforcing a culture of safety in schools. This collaboration highlights the strong partnership between NDRMO and the education sector in advancing disaster preparedness at the national level.

11-15 August 2025, Apia, Samoa

## NDRMO at the Pacific Regional Loss and Damage Dialogue & Climate Change Roundtable



The National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) Tonga participated in the Pacific Regional Loss and Damage Dialogue and Roundtable 2025, held in Apia, Samoa. Hosted by SPREP in partnership with Climate Analytics, the Dialogue & Roundtable brought together Pacific governments, youth,

civil society, NGOs, academia, and the private sector to advance regional priorities on climate change-induced Loss and Damage (L&D). For more than three decades, Loss and Damage has remained a priority for the Pacific. The 2025 Dialogue built on this momentum by moving beyond discussion to

action, with a focus on practical and locally relevant solutions. Participants explored opportunities linked to the establishment of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) and the expansion of the Santiago Network (SNLD), alongside lessons emerging from national dialogues in Niue, Tonga, and the Cook Islands. The event highlighted the urgent need for financing, evidence-building, and pilot projects to address climate-induced impacts, ranging from economic losses to cultural and social displacement.

NDRMO's participation reaffirmed Tonga's commitment to shaping Pacific-led solutions, strengthening national capacity, and amplifying the voices of communities most affected by the climate crisis. NDRMO Tonga gratefully acknowledges financial assistance from UNDRR for its participation in this event.

## NDRMO Tonga Strengthens Capacity on Flood Risk Management in Thailand



From 21-25 July, NDRMO Tonga participated in the 19th Training Course on Integrated Flood Risk Management in the Changing Climate, held in Bangkok under the Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific II (BSRP II) programme.

The training addressed the growing threat of floods in the Asia-Pacific region and focused on integrated strategies such as climate risk analysis, early warning systems, physical flood modelling, and community-based approaches. Cross-cutting themes included gender inclusion, transboundary

governance, and effective risk communication, ensuring a holistic approach to flood risk reduction. The knowledge gained will support NDRMO's work in reviewing Tonga's flash flood response plan, revising the Terms of Reference for the flood cluster, and developing realistic simulation exercises to strengthen national preparedness. It also contributes to Tonga's long-term vision of establishing a National Disaster Preparedness Centre, while enhancing regional resilience through shared learning and collaboration.

### NDRMO Attends ADB Integrated Flood Management Training in Singapore

Mr. Aisea Fungavai, of NDRMO Tonga, attended the Asian Development Bank's Integrated Flood Management (IFM) Training, held alongside the Singapore International Water Week (SIWW) Spotlight 2025. The training brought together government officials, technical experts, and practitioners from across Asia and the Pacific to strengthen knowledge and skills in managing increasing flood risks under climate change. Sessions covered climate impacts on floods, urban and coastal flood modelling, economic analysis of flood projects, community resilience, and innovative technologies for risk reduction.

Mr. Fungavai's participation provided an opportunity to share Tonga's experiences, gain insights into regional and global best practices, and build partnerships that will support ongoing efforts to improve flood preparedness and resilience at both community and national levels. NDRMO Tonga acknowledges the support from ADB for this event.



24-26 June 2025

## Strengthening Disaster Response: National EOC Awareness Training



The National Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Awareness Training was conducted from 24–26 June by the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) in collaboration with first responder agencies and with support from the Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA).

The three-day workshop aimed to enhance Tonga's disaster response capabilities by equipping emergency management personnel with the skills and knowledge to operate effectively within the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC).

Guided by the PacIMS framework and Tonga's updated NEOC Manual, the training covered NEOC functions, emergency

coordination, situational reporting, and action planning. Sessions combined theory, hands-on exercises, and a simulated emergency scenario.

By embedding best practices and addressing gaps, the training significantly strengthened the readiness and proficiency of NEOC staff, marking another step forward in Tonga's journey toward a more resilient and well-coordinated disaster management system. Special thanks to the facilitators: Mr. Lazarus Vaipulu (NDRMO), Mr. Christopher Baker (Tonga Fire & Emergency Services), and Mr. Siosaia Tongamohenoa (Tonga Police) for their contributions. NDRMO acknowledges the financial support from the BSRP II (SPC).



## Strengthening Humanitarian Coordination: Developing SOPs for Shelter, NFI, & Logistics Clusters



On 9–10 July, the Early Warning and Response Division of NDRMO, in collaboration with the Intercluster Coordinator, facilitated the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Shelter and NFI Cluster and the Logistics and Coordination Cluster.

The two-day workshops brought cluster members together to draft these essential SOPs, designed to guide coordination, decision-making, and response during emergencies. With technical and funding

support from NEMA New Zealand, the sessions provided both structure and momentum to strengthen cluster systems.

The successful outcome represents a significant step in enhancing the readiness and effectiveness of Tonga's disaster response mechanisms. Building on this achievement, NDRMO plans to replicate the approach across other Clusters, ensuring a consistent, coordinated, and resilient national response system.





## NDRMO Joins Global Meeting on Geohazard Early Warning Systems in Japan



The National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) Tonga participated in the Global Kick-Off Meeting of the UNESCO-IOC/JFiT Project on Geohazard Early Warning Systems (EWS), held from 16–20 June in Tokyo, Japan.

Co-hosted by UNESCO-IOC, JICA, and the Japan Meteorological Agency, the meeting brought together officials and experts from Pacific and Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to advance tsunami and multi-hazard early warning systems. Key sessions reviewed achievements and

gaps in end-to-end Tsunami Early Warning Systems (TEWS), explored the integration of single-hazard SOPs into multi-hazard frameworks, and developed roadmaps for training, drills, awareness programmes, and regional planning meetings.

NDRMO Tonga's participation highlighted the country's commitment to regional cooperation and to strengthening early warning capabilities, particularly in the face of volcanic and tsunami risks. NDRMO Tonga acknowledges the financial assistance from JICA for this activity.

## NDRMO Staff Complete Training in China on Disaster Prevention and Resilience



The 2025 Training Seminar on Disaster Prevention and Reduction Capacity Building for Pacific Island Countries was held in Wuyi, China, from 10–19 August. Organized by the China Pacific Island Countries Center for Disaster Risk Reduction Cooperation, the seminar focused on strengthening disaster prevention, resilience, and regional cooperation. NDRMO was represented by Mr. Taha Manu, Mr. Tevita Lemani, and Mr. Peni Toe'api, who successfully completed the 10-day training. Their participation reinforced Tonga's commitment to building technical capacity and enhancing partnerships to improve disaster risk management across the Pacific.

## Vava'u EOC Training Builds Preparedness Ahead of Cyclone Season



The Early Warning and Response Division of NDRMO conducted a three-day Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Training in Vava'u from 26–28 August. The program combined theoretical sessions with a simulated exercise to strengthen the Island EOC's ability to manage emergencies in a coordinated way.

The training also introduced the forthcoming

Island EOC Manual and equipped participants with skills to respond effectively as cyclone season approaches. Similar trainings will be delivered in Ha'apai and 'Eua in the coming months to reinforce preparedness across the islands. NDRMO acknowledges the technical support from NEMA and financial support from BRSP II (SPC) for this training.

## NDRMO Staff Complete Forklift Training in Fiji



From 21–25 July, Mr. Lazarus Vaipulu and Mr. Paea 'Ilangana from the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) completed a Forklift Training in Suva, Fiji, under the BRSP II programme. The training covered safe forklift operations, pre-operational checks, basic maintenance, and workplace safety, with both staff successfully certified as forklift operators. Their new skills will enhance NDRMO's warehouse and logistics operations, including the development of SOPs and future in-house training for staff. NDRMO acknowledges the financial support from BRSP II (SPC) for this training.

## Tonga Showcases Infrastructure Pipeline at Infrastructure Conference 2025 in Brisbane



A Tongan delegation led by the Deputy Prime Minister of Tonga attended the Pacific Infrastructure Conference 2025, held at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre from 18–20 August. The conference brought together over 500 regional leaders, government officials, investors, and development partners to advance sustainable and resilient infrastructure development across the Pacific under the theme “Shifting the Dial on Pacific Infrastructure: quality, resilience, connection.”

During the event, the Deputy Prime Minister delivered a presentation on the Tonga Infrastructure Pipeline 2025, outlining the country’s infrastructure priorities and opportunities for investment.

The conference provided an important platform for Tonga to highlight national priorities, engage with international financiers and technical experts, and strengthen partnerships to deliver inclusive, climate-resilient, and locally owned infrastructure aligned with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

## CDRI-NDRMO Conducted Nationwide Survey Assesses Tonga’s Critical Infrastructure and Vulnerabilities



The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), in partnership with the NDRMO, carried out a nationwide survey in Tonga from 8–17 July 2025 to assess critical infrastructure and vulnerable areas, providing a stronger understanding of national resilience needs.

In addition to Tongatapu, the survey extended to the outer islands of Vava’u and Ha’apai, where data was collected on over 3,610 critical infrastructures, including schools, health centres and clinics, faith-based church evacuation centres, water tanks, and first responder facilities. This data provides an essential baseline for preparedness ahead of the 2025–2026 cyclone season, while also helping to identify long-term priorities for strengthening infrastructure resilience.

NDRMO acknowledges the financial and technical support from SPC for this activity and extends appreciation to its key national partners, the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Ministry of Public Enterprises, whose collaboration was important to the successful completion of the survey.

11-14 August, Brisbane, Australia:

## Tonga Participates in Indo-Pacific Environmental Security Forum



The NDRMO Tonga took part in the Indo-Pacific Environmental Security Forum (IPESF) 2025, hosted in Brisbane by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command’s Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM). The forum gathered over 20 nations under the theme Operational Resilience to strengthen

collaboration on disaster management, environmental security, and civil–military cooperation.

Representing Tonga, Mr. Mafua-’i-Vai’utukakau Maka, Director of NDRMO, and Ms. ’Ofa Ema Petulisa Masiwawa highlighted Tonga’s disaster and environmental risk profile, lessons from the 2022 volcanic eruption and tsunami, and national priorities including DRM decentralization, community planning, multi-hazard early warning, and disaster risk financing.

Tonga’s participation underscored the importance of regional cooperation in humanitarian logistics, civil–military coordination, and resilience-building, ensuring Pacific perspectives are reflected in global environmental security discussions.

## DRR Awareness Training with Asco Motors Staff



On 26 August, the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) delivered a Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Awareness Training for staff of Asco Motors as part of efforts to strengthen preparedness and response capacity in workplaces. The session highlighted the importance of clear communication and proper planning to reduce panic during emergencies and provided practical guidance on evacuation procedures, emergency response, and workplace safety measures. The training underscored NDRMO’s commitment to supporting private sector partners in building resilience and ensuring safer, more prepared workplaces across Tonga.



6-8 June 2025, Nice, France:

## NDRMO Represents Tonga at the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure



avoided losses to drive resilience investments and advancing adaptive building codes that reflect local climate risks.

NDRMO Tonga was proudly represented by Ms. 'Ofa Ema Petulisa Masiwawa, Geospatial Officer, who joined a high-level panel discussion on Data, Technology, and Early Warning Systems for Coastal Infrastructure Resilience. Ms. Masiwawa shared Tonga's experiences and perspectives on applying geospatial data and early warning systems to strengthen coastal infrastructure resilience.

Alongside Ms. Masiwawa, Mrs. Lusía Toumou'a from the Ministry of Infrastructure's Building Resilience Division co-represented Tonga, contributing her expertise in disaster risk reduction and supporting future collaboration with CDRI.

Tonga's participation at ICDRI2025 highlighted country's voice in shaping global conversations on resilient infrastructure, ensuring that the unique challenges and solutions of Pacific Island countries are reflected in international resilience-building efforts.

The International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI2025) was held from 6–8 June in Nice, France, hosted by the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure

(CDRI) in partnership with the French Government. This year's conference focused on building resilient coastal infrastructure, emphasizing the importance of quantifying

19 August 2025:

## Japan-Tonga Joint Coordinating Committee Meeting on “Building Back Better” Vision



On 19 August, the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) participated in the second meeting of the Japan–Tonga Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC), supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The JCC serves as a platform to coordinate projects aimed at strengthening Tonga's capacity to implement the national vision of “Build Back Better” (BBB) following disasters.

The meeting reviewed progress under Tonga's BBB vision, with a key focus on the Phase II work plan for the development and

formalisation of Land Use Hazard Zoning in Tongatapu to support BBB and disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts. Discussions further highlighted JICA's ongoing support, including technical cooperation projects, capacity-building for NDRMO staff, disaster risk reduction planning.

The JCC reaffirmed the strong partnership between Tonga and Japan, working together to ensure communities are better equipped to withstand future disasters while advancing sustainable development.

### Consultation with CSOs on Phase II of VDRMP Roll-Out



On 22 August, NDRMO met with civil society organisations (CSOs) to discuss Phase II of the Village DRM Plans (VDRMPs) and Committees (VDRMCs) roll-out. The meeting reviewed progress from Phase I, where NDRMO teams reached 130 of 155 villages and received 56 nominations for committees. CSOs also reviewed the two-day agenda for upcoming district-level workshops plan across 23 districts, which will strengthen the role of 155 VDRMCs in preparedness, response, and resilience-building. The consultation reaffirmed the importance of CSO engagement in advancing this community-led DRM structure.

#### For Contact:

National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO), the Ministry of MEIDECC, Tonga  
Phone: 28004, 28005, Toll Free: 0800-6366, Website: [www.nemotonga.gov.to](http://www.nemotonga.gov.to)