

PRESS RELEASE

Pacific Risk Tool for Resilience (PARTneR-2) project supports Tonga's commitment towards strengthening disaster risk assessment capacities.



Nuku'alofa (7 November 2023) - More than 30 participants both from the Tonga government and civil society organizations are part of a three-day training program supported through the Pacific Risk Tool for Resilience (PARTneR-2) project. The scheduled training is the second of a three series capacity-building workshop and is jointly delivered by the Pacific Community (SPC) and National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) and the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO).

Providing an overview of the PARTneR-2 project, SPC representative Ms. Judith Giblin shared that the project addresses critical gaps across the Pacific region in the availability and use of low-cost and easily applied tools to support risk-informed decisions. She emphasized that the series of trainings are dedicated to advancing skillsets in the use of hazard risk modeling tools, and more specifically strengthening approaches to conduct risk assessment.

Undoubtedly, the cultivation of expertise within PICs to effectively utilize climate risk data in their decision-making and reporting processes, as well as the facilitation of regional and peer-to-peer support that is coordinated across PICs remains to be a key gap and efforts to address the challenges is reflected within the 2050 Blue Strategy, the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, and the Sendai Framework.

During the opening, Ms. Moana Kioa, Deputy Director of NDRMO underscored the need for partnerships and formalization of governance arrangements for data and analysis. She stated, "we need to work through existing cross-government coordination mechanisms to integrate risk

information and tools". She also indicated the need to develop fit-for-purpose information products and the importance of enhancing the capacities so that all levels of decision making are factoring in the risk elements. On behalf of the Government of Tonga, Ms. Moana expressed her thanks for the collaboration and partnerships with NIWA and SPC.

The PARTneR-2 project is funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). The next series of regional workshop will be held in Suva later this month and will provide an opportune platform for countries to raise any issues or ideas in how the project maybe further effectively delivered – additionally this workshop will also host the project steering committee meeting.

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