

Management Response – El-Nino Evaluation 2017

Summary of management response

Humanitarian response will remain a critical feature of Australia engagement with Papua New Guinea and this evaluation will help to strengthen our approach going forward and our partnership with the Government of Papua New Guinea to respond to disasters more effectively.

Recommendation	Response	Explanation	Action plan	Timeframe
<p>1. It is recommended that DFAT (post) develop by mid-2018 broad contingency plans for assessing and responding to the human impacts of future slow onset disasters in PNG, including in circumstances where the Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) requests Australian or international assistance to mount a large-scale multi-faceted response and (ii) does not request Australian or international assistance despite the risk of increased morbidity and mortality and an apparent need for assistance. 	Agree	DFAT agrees with the recommendation noting that as a bilateral partner, DFAT's responses to disasters need to take into account the partner government's requests for assistance.	The Humanitarian Officer at PNG post will review the humanitarian response guidelines in the Crisis Action Plan (CAP) in consultation with the Corporate Area at Post (as the CAP coordinator) and with HMB/HPD to ensure contingencies for responding to the impact of slow impact disasters are in place for both scenarios.	Q2 2018
<p>2. Once a decision is made to respond to a slow onset disaster in PNG it is recommended that DFAT (post) apply a formal (but efficient) planning process. The plan should include a clear statement of options, assumptions and risks to facilitate input from relevant stakeholders in DFAT. The plan should address both diplomatic and humanitarian imperatives and risks and seek to resolve any tensions between them. DFAT (post and Canberra) should develop a format for such a plan and SOPs for such a</p>	Agree	DFAT always seeks to balance diplomatic and humanitarian imperatives when considering response options.	Planning processes are already in place for responding to disasters. The Humanitarian Officer at PNG Post will review these processes as necessary so they are adequate for responding to slow onset disasters.	Q1 2018

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<p>planning process. If something is already in place it should be reviewed to determine if it is fit for purpose in light of this recommendation.</p>				
<p>3. In concert with other donors it is recommended that DFAT (post) encourage the Government of PNG to formally agree thresholds and standard operating procedures with humanitarian partners for standing up a high-level PNG inter-departmental technical working group for rapid disaster assessments which includes representation from humanitarian partners.</p>	Agree	<p>Agreed, noting that whether and how a country responds to a disaster is a matter of national sovereignty. As a bilateral partner, DFAT's responses to disasters need to take this into account.</p>	<p>In Q4 2017, UNDP, working with PNG's National Disaster Centre, has stood up a Joint Inter-Agency Needs Assessment Team (NAST) standby arrangement.</p> <p>In mid-November 2017, a two-member design team was also deployed by UNDP to redevelop NDC's standard interagency Rapid Needs Assessment Tool. The Humanitarian Officer at Post will continue to work with UNDP to progress and finalise the tool redesign by Q1 2018.</p>	In train
<p>4. In any future slow onset emergency in PNG affecting water and food security where there are reasons for concern about impacts on malnutrition and mortality it is recommended that DFAT (post) join with other donors in advocating for the conduct of rapid food security and nutrition assessments as per widely accepted international standards e.g. SPHERE.</p>	Agreed	<p>As above, agreed, and should be noted that whether and how a country responds to a disaster is a matter of national sovereignty. As a bilateral partner, DFAT's responses to disasters need</p>	See action plan for Rec 3.	In train

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		to take this into account.		
<p>5. It is recommended that DFAT (post) advocate for the replacement of the phase categorisation commonly used in 1997-98 and again in 2015-16 to assess food supply in Papua New Guinea with an internationally accepted food security standard that more broadly encompasses access to food to provide a more accurate methodology for estimating emergency food aid needs. Consideration should be given to Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), recognising that this would require a substantial investment by the PNG Government and donors.</p>	Agreed		<p>The Humanitarian Officer at Post will liaise with partners including UNDP, WFP, IOM, UNICEF and FAO to progress discussions with the Government of PNG to review food security standards.</p>	Q3 2018
<p>6. It is recommended that DFAT (post) request the authors of the manual Assessing village food needs following a natural disaster in Papua New Guinea published by the CPP with DFAT funding to revise it to ensure it makes provision in the category definition and on the assessment form for assessing access to food more broadly and generally conforms to international good practice.</p>	Agreed		<p>The Humanitarian Officer at Post will submit this request through the governance team at Post which manages the daily relationship with CPP partners.</p>	Q1 2018
<p>7. It is recommended that DFAT (post) embed longitudinal data collection and analysis on livelihoods and community level resilience and vulnerability to ENSO events in suitable DFAT (post) development and/or AHP programs that have reach into vulnerable LLG, to complement and ground-truth other sources of early warning information while also informing long-term resilience programming, planning and policy.</p>	Agreed		<p>The Program Strategy and Gender team at Post will work with other Australian High Commission teams to better utilise monitoring systems at district levels to ground truth reports and provide early warning information.</p>	Q2 2018

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<p>8. It is recommended that DFAT (Canberra and Post) strengthen its appraisal processes to provide more rigour in critiquing the feasibility of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the recovery and resilience building components of proposed humanitarian activities (e.g. for agricultural recovery a proposal to bulk and distribute large quantities of planting material, for water security a proposal to drought-proof health facilities) (ii) the behavioural change or adoption expectations of proposed humanitarian activities (e.g. changing hygiene practices or adopting climate smart agriculture). 	Agreed		DFAT Humanitarian Response team at PNG Post will ensure response proposals are appraised by personnel with the appropriate expertise as part of the standard review process of proposals.	As required.
<p>9. If more time, resources and/or expertise are realistically required to realise resilience objectives and/or the changed behaviours or practices envisaged than is feasible with humanitarian funding alone, DFAT (post) should add development funding and if this is unavailable be wary of proceeding.</p>	Partially Agree	Development funding priorities are agreed by Australia with the Government of PNG and are governed by the bilateral treaty between the two countries. Ability to implement this recommendation will depend on the specific circumstances of the disaster, the position of the PNG Government	PNG Post will discuss with the Government of PNG as required and make appropriate supplementary provision from the development budget, as it has in the past, to support early recovery processes.	As required.

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		and the resources available.		
10. It is recommended that DFAT (post) in future extend humanitarian investments in time expressly to enable partners to conduct field visits to test and report recovery and resilience outcomes.	Agreed		The DFAT Humanitarian Response team at PNG Post will ensure this is possible where time, security conditions and budget permits.	As required.
11. DFAT (post) made a substantial investment in response to the 2015 drought by providing water tanks to health centres, but the vast majority of these are dependent on roof runoff and are likely to run dry in a drought. It is recommended that DFAT (post) now consider providing a more secure water supply for these tanks e.g. gravity fed systems.	Partially Agree	DFAT recognises the importance of appropriate interventions however this recommendation is not costed and does not take account of competing budget priorities.	Post will ensure more robust design standards in any future targeted water supply investments. But we will not seek to retrofit supply systems given the considerable cost involved and competing demands on the development budget.	As required.
12. It is recommended that DFAT (post) determine how the funds were utilised and reconcile all expenses.	Agree	DFAT auditing and risk management policies require regular auditing and assessment of programs. At PNG Post, fraud and risk management systems are in place to ensure compliance with	PNG Health team will undertake a more detailed review of the fund for the water tanks.	Q1 2018

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		funding requirements.		
13. It is recommended that DFAT (post) request NARI to verify its expenditure on M&E.	Agree	DFAT recognises the importance of partners following up their activities with robust monitoring and reporting. It is important that M&E is appropriately resourced in activity proposals.	The humanitarian officer at Post will request NARI to verify its expenditure on M&E.	Q1 2018
14. It is recommended that if DFAT (post) provides funding support for WFP's mVAM a request be made to WFP to submit the methodology for peer review by a competent international body or organisation to address any weaknesses, including those identified in this evaluation (refer to Annex 6, Analysis of assessments, Flaws in assessment methodologies).	Agree		Potential DFAT support for WFP's mVAM remains subject to budget availability. Where there is a desire to provide bilateral support, we will ensure appropriate peer review as recommended.	As required.
15. It is recommended that in future DFAT (post and Canberra) avoid providing logistics support for the delivery of food aid where the likely outcome is the provision of food that is not nutritionally significant in terms of duration. (Suggested that the minimum be six-weeks supply.)	Partially agree	Will depend on the nature of the disaster and the context of the response	Post reserves the right to provide logistics support where the context may warrant it, noting the concerns raised in the evaluation report.	As required.

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<p>16. Cash may not be the present in PNG but it is the future and it is recommended that DFAT (Post and Canberra) include PNG in the Cash Transfer Platform (CTP).</p>	<p>Partially Agreed</p>	<p>DFAT will consider a range of evidence-based options for responding to disasters. Consideration will be given to the nature of the disaster, and the willingness of the partner government to use a particular response option.</p>	<p>Post is in discussion with CTP consortia partners including Oxfam, Save the Children and WFP to potentially conduct a feasibility assessment in PNG.</p>	<p>Q2 2018</p>
<p>17. The quality of DFAT's response in PNG depends considerably on the capacity of the AHC Operations team, and it is recommended that DFAT (Post and Canberra) develop SOPs for rapidly augmenting this capacity in preparation for a response to ensure the team has the technical expertise and disaster response experience to effectively lead a response.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>DFAT recognises the importance of maintaining the capacity of staff at Post to respond to disasters. While Post maintains this capacity through training, we will need to supplement this through support from Canberra and engagement of expertise through</p>	<p>We already have this in place. Training to further build AHC staff capacity is planned for April 2018.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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		whole-of-government partners and humanitarian deployees.		
<p>18. It is recommended that in future large-scale responses in PNG, DFAT (post) be prepared to fund church coordination while providing incentives for collaboration between FBOs, NGOs and the PNG Red Cross e.g. for the purposes of needs assessments and rationalised distribution. These incentives would need to be built into funding agreements.</p>	Agreed		<p>DFAT has already forged a strong partnership between churches and NGOs through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership Program. Churches have formed a consortium to implement community Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster preparedness activities. Churches are working closely with other NGO consortium partners such as CARE and World Vision.</p>	As required.