



PROGRAMME BRIEF



WOMEN'S RESILIENCE TO DISASTERS PROGRAMME IN THE PACIFIC

Photo: UN Women/Rahel Steinbach

THE ISSUE

The Pacific is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world. Disaster risks converge with critical socio-economic vulnerabilities, environmental degradation, climate change, and more recently COVID-19, making the Pacific a disaster hotspot. Annual economic losses from disasters in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) more than doubled between 2017 and 2019.

Disasters affect women, girls, boys, and men differently. Recent UN Women and UNICEF research confirmed that women, children, and youth are among the most vulnerable to natural hazards, conflict, climate change, and other threats such as COVID-19. Similarly, analysis of mortality rates from recent disasters in Asia and the Pacific region shows that women and girls die in greater numbers and have different and uneven levels of resilience and capacity to recover.

Women's voice, agency, leadership, and participation are under-supported, under-resourced, and under-valued. Even though women and girls face disproportionate disaster and climate risks, they also bring essential knowledge, skills, resources, and experiences to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Yet their capacities remain

unleveraged in conventional resilience building processes. As a result, women are generally absent in the development of resilience strategies and decision-making processes for prevention, mitigation, preparedness, and recovery.

GENDER GAPS

The situation is compounded by significant gaps at the global, regional, and country level in relation to the following.

- The availability and use of sex, age, and disability disaggregated data (SADDD) to understand differential impacts.
- Knowledge sharing on women's resilience.
- An enabling environment for building women's resilience including gender-responsive capacities, leadership, policies, strategies, plans, tools, coordination mechanisms, and funding.
- Translation of commitments into action.
- Private sector partnerships for women's resilient livelihoods and businesses.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The Women's Resilience to Disasters (WRD) programme proposes a comprehensive package to strengthen the resilience of women and girls with the goal of ensuring that the lives and livelihoods of women and girls are resilient

Photo above: Woman leader from Kiribati, Republic of Kiribati informing the Women's Resilience to Disasters approach in the country to leverage the capacities and address the needs of local women.

to disasters and threats, contributing to sustainable, secure, and thriving communities. **The expected end-of-programme outcomes are twofold:**

1) **Prevention, preparedness, and recovery policy frameworks, systems, processes, and tools are gender-responsive, implemented as a result of local women's and girls' advocacy, and enable:**

- the leadership, advocacy, and participation of women's organisations;
- capacity development of DRR, gender, and resilience stakeholders;
- increased access to knowledge, guidance and expertise on gender-responsive disaster resilience;
- a community of practice, strategic networks, and gender-responsive coordination mechanisms and partnerships.

2) **Women and girls have voice and agency to withstand multiple hazards, recover from disasters, and increase their resilience to future disasters and threats, through:**

- gender-responsive preparedness and early warning systems;
- locally appropriate mechanisms, assets, services, and products;
- partnerships for women's resilient livelihoods and businesses;
- innovative and alternative climate and disaster resilience livelihoods for women; and
- capacity development for women's disaster and climate resilience businesses.

HOW THE PROGRAMME WORKS

In the Pacific, the WRD programme will initially be implemented in Kiribati, Vanuatu, and Fiji. It has been designed for replication and upscaling in the region and worldwide. WRD programme implementation will be driven at country level and supported by regional and global components.

The country components will provide targeted action to strengthen women's resilience and build gender-responsive systems, advancing different elements of the WRD depending on the national context, policy priorities, existing initiatives, needs, and capacities.

At the regional level, the focus will be on knowledge management, advocacy, and gender and disability support for regional mechanisms, movements and coalitions, including the Pacific Resilience Partnership.

The global component will advance gender-responsiveness in global DRR and climate processes, ensure global knowledge sharing and advocacy on women's leadership for disaster resilience, and provide a platform for sharing good practice for gender-responsive resilience and voices from the Pacific.

The WRD approach adapts to the changing COVID-19 context and is guided by the principles of localisation and ownership in recognition of the importance of country driven and locally-owned action focused on local priorities. The WRD also aligns with the Pacific Resilience Standards linked to the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP).

The WRD Programme is funded by 

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Photo above: Makeshift surge shelter to protect women and their families from cyclone related flooding in the Republic of Kiribati.