**Management response to the Disaster Resilience for Pacific Small Island Developing States (RESPAC)**

Project Title: Disaster Resilience in the Pacific Small Island Developing States RESPAC

 Project ID: 111184

Terminal Evaluation Mission Completion Date: 26 March 2021

Date of Issue of Management Response: 16May 2021

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**Context, background and findings**

The Disaster Resilience in the Pacific SIDS (RESPAC) project is funded by the Russian Federation, with a total project budget of USD7,500,000.

The purpose and direction of the project is set out in the Project Document (ProDoc) which states that the project aims to:

**Improve Pacific SIDS resilience to Climate related hazards**

 The overall project goal is to:

Effectively address the consequences of, and responses to, climate related hazards. RESPAC has three main Outputs as outlined below, along with a Project Management component:

Output 1: Strengthened early warning systems and climate monitoring capacity in selected PICs;

Output 2: Preparedness and planning mechanisms and tools to manage disaster recovery processes strengthened at regional, national and local level; and

Output 3: Increased use of financial instruments to manage and share disaster related risk and fund post disaster recovery efforts.

The initiation phase of the project started in June 2016 and the project was intended to complete its activities by December 2019, however a no-cost extension was approved in mid-2019 for closure in December 2020, Further no-cost extensions were approved for 31 March and due to lockdown in Fiji and Vanuatu until end of May. Fourteen countries and one territory in the Pacific Islands region are eligible for support from the project: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Tokelau.

The project has proven to be well implemented, with a collaborative approach that has successfully addressed the specific targets / indicators set out in the project design. The collaboration and partnerships with existing Pacific regional agencies and institutions have been particularly effective. The project has moved beyond the specific targets to addressing broader regional needs as they have been identified. The project has acted as a catalyst for the mobilisation of additional funds to address key risks and national needs.

Overall, the project has been pro-active in its work, and its approach has been highly valued by participating countries and territories, as well as project partners. Stakeholders commented on the high level of flexibility and responsiveness of the project and the project team, perhaps uniquely so for projects of this type.

COVID-19 has impacted on project delivery throughout 2020, and additional project time has allowed outstanding elements to be completed in early 2021.

Findings for key evaluation criteria are summarised below:

Relevance: The project is highly relevant to the needs of the region and addresses key areas of risk and vulnerability for Pacific islands countries and territories. The Key development priority areas addressed are:

• Climate data and monitoring

• Early warning and preparedness

• Resilient recovery

The project design is well aligned with key UNDP strategies (in particular the sub-regional program document (SRDP) for the Pacific island countries and territories 2018 to 2022, and United Nations Development Assistance Framework) and Pacific regional strategies.

Effectiveness: The project is on track to achieve all the cumulative annual indicator targets by the end of the project.

Efficiency: Project implementation started slowly but by mid-2020 approximately 91% of total funds had been utilized. Management arrangements have operated with efficiency and flexibility.

Impact: Project impacts are expected over the long term. At the same time the project has assisted in direct disaster response and in this context project reports indicate that RESPAC has contributed to supporting recovery needs for over 10,000 families, in Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Sustainability: For the Pacific Islands region, risk and vulnerability are ongoing, particularly in relation to climate change. Some project outputs can be maintained at national level but only within national budget constraints. Sustainability cannot be assured without ongoing need for continued institutional support for Pacific Island governments.

**Recommendations and management response**

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| **Final Terminal Evaluation Recommendation** | Recommendation 1: In relation to future Project design to address some of the design issues encountered in the project, the TE recommends that UNDP consider the following in future project design: • Include a coherent overall design concept that links activities and targets with high level goals and aspirations that set the scene for project activities • Include explicit provisions to address inclusion of women, youth and vulnerable people in project activities and outcomes, as well as reporting • Include appropriate M&E provisions, including realistic indictors and targets that support clear reporting that, taken together, can be used to assist project management• Incorporate flexibility and clear opportunities for stakeholder (i.e. participating country and territory) input into project management decisions |
| **Management Response** | Agree. The listed recommendations to enhance project design will be taken into account for future project designs of development projects |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking[[1]](#footnote-2)** |
| **Comments** | **Status[[2]](#footnote-3)** |
| 1.1 Future project documents will undergo rigorous PREPAC reviews and comments  | December 2021 | UNDP, IRMU |  |  |

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| **Final Terminal Evaluation Recommendation** | Recommendation 2: In relation to future Project implementation Where procurement is a significant component of the project design, the TE recommends that specific expertise (or resources) be assigned to this aspect of the project to ensure quality [fitness for purpose] and timeliness in the procurement of goods and services |
| **Management Response** | Agree. The above recommendation on specific expertise be assigned to specific scale of projects to support effective implementation of the project will be taken into account for future projects. |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking[[3]](#footnote-4)** |
| **Comments** | **Status[[4]](#footnote-5)** |
| 2.1 For future projects on similar scale, procurement plan will be established as part of the project design phase before project is submitted for LPAC | December 2021 | UNDP, Procurement Unit |  |  |

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| **Final Terminal Evaluation Recommendation** | Recommendation 3: On sustainability recognizing that there will be an ongoing need for support in the sectors targeted by this project, the TE recommends that UNDP work with donors to develop a follow-up project that continues and/or scales up the work, in line with relevant regional strategies and plans. |
| **Management response** | Agree. This will be further informed through the final board meeting discussion for this project. |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| Sustainable Plan will be devised to determine key way forward | June 2021 | PMU/RSD/Govt  |  |  |

1. If the TR is uploaded to the ERC, the status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre database (ERC). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Status of Implementation: Completed, Partially Completed, Pending. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. If the TR is uploaded to the ERC, the status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre database (ERC). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Status of Implementation: Completed, Partially Completed, Pending. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)