TONGA STRATEGIC ROADMAP FOR EMERGENCY AND DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT 2021 - 2023

Strengthening emergency management performance through sector coordination and cooperation



National Emergency Management Office, Tonga Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications (MEIDECC), Government of Tonga

ACRONYMS

DEMP	District Emergency Management Plan	
FRDP	Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific	
MEIDECC	Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications	
NDC	National Disaster Council	
NEMO	National Emergency Management Office	
NEMP	National Emergency Management Plan	
NEOC	National Emergency Operation Committee	
PIEMA	Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance	
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure	
SPC	The Pacific Community	
SREM	Strategic Roadmap for Emergency Management	
TOR	Terms of Reference	
VEMC	Village Emergency Management Committee	
VEMP	Village Emergency Management Plan	

PARTNERS

The Tonga Strategic Roadmap for Emergency and Disaster Risk Management has been made possible with the support from the following partners









Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



FOREWORD

The Government of Tonga is committed to strengthening emergency and disaster management arrangements as a key pillar of our resilient development pathway.

Disaster events such as Tropical Cyclone Gita (in 2018) and Tropical Cyclone Harold (2020) along with other emergency situations will continue to impact on Tonga and our development aspirations - it is incumbent upon all of us to play our role in preparing and building resilience.

Central to our efforts is integrating disaster risk considerations and arrangements into all policies, plans, budgets and decision-making processes. We recognise this as an ongoing process requiring ongoing reform, training and awareness raising, and most importantly, coordination and cooperation.

The *National Emergency Management Act* mandates the **National Disaster Council** (NDC), and its committees to provide overall coordination and strategic direction for the ongoing strengthening and of Tonga's disaster management arrangements.

With the updating of the Act, this Strategic Roadmap for Emergency and Disaster Risk Management is a timely opportunity to take stock of and establish priorities that we need to progress in order to fully realise the purpose of the Act and build a resilient Tonga.

The Roadmap fills a niche gap in our planning framework – that being a shared plan that disaster managers, first responders and our cluster system can commit to and work on together. It provides the **National Emergency Management Office (NEMO)** with clarity on the direction and focus for emergency and disaster risk management in Tonga, and provides reference and guidance for the **National Emergency Management Committee (NEMC)** to oversee the progress and help provide strategic guidance to NEMO

As chairperson of the NEMC I whole heartedly endorse the Tonga Roadmap and look forward to working with colleagues across government, civil society, private sectors and development partners in its implementation over the coming years.

Chairperson of the National Emergency Management Committee

Hon. Poasi Tei Minister for MEIDECC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Tonga Strategic Roadmap for Emergency and Disaster Risk Management ('the Roadmap') is a joint product of the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) and National Emergency stakeholders. It has been developed with input from NEMO, Tonga Police, Tonga Fire & Emergency Services, and His Majesty's Armed Forces - Tonga, and Cluster representatives.

The Roadmap has been developed with support from the PIEMA Project, which aims to build safer communities through excellence in emergency and disaster risk management, with a focus on strengthening the foundations of trust, leadership and teamwork across the emergency and disaster risk management sector.

Importantly the Roadmap supports the implementation of the **Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015-2025** (SDF2015 – 2050), especially Outcome F: *a more inclusive, sustainable and effective land and environment management, with resilience to climate change and risk'*.

To do this, the Roadmap aims to:

- Enhance dialogue, communication, and shared commitment across the sector;
- Facilitate coordinated planning and monitoring of progress; and
- Support coordinated action towards a more effective sector.

At the core of this Roadmap is an emphasis on the need for ongoing dialogue and collaborative planning and action involving all key stakeholders.

The Roadmap highlights six Outcomes that the sector has identified to progress as priorities over the next three years. The Outcomes will be implemented and monitored overtime, and new Outcomes to progress will be identified.

The primary audience for the Roadmap is the emergency and disaster risk management sector in Tonga. The Roadmap will also be used to communicate to Tonga's disaster risk management partners as a basis for directing and coordinating support.

Vision and Goals

Vision

The Government of Tonga and its partners are coordinating efforts to ensure effective and efficient emergency and disaster risk management service delivery.

Outcomes

Outcome 1 Tonga has fully functioning Emergency Operation Centres supported by an established emergency coordination and communications system.

Outcome 2: Tonga's emergency and disaster risk management sector is more inclusive.

Outcome 3: Government Policy, planning, budget and procurement processes actively supports the mainstreaming of disaster risk management in Tonga.

Outcome 4: The Cluster System in Tonga is fully institutionalised and strengthened.

Outcome 5: Tonga has clear standards and guidelines for evacuation process management in Tonga with increased safety and security of Evacuation Centres.

Outcome 6: Tonga practices Participatory Village Emergency and Disaster Risk Management planning and implementation.

Summary of Disaster Management Arrangements

Tonga is among the most disaster-prone countries in the world with many hazards predicted to intensify with climate change.

The Emergency Management Act 2007 (Act) provides the legal framework for all emergency and disaster risk management policies, procedure and programming in Tonga.

The National Disaster Council (Cabinet) is the highest governing body with three national committees providing governance support: the National Emergency Management Committee (NEMC), the National Emergency Operation Committee (NEOC), and the National Recovery Committee (NRC). The National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) serves as a secretariat for emergency committees together with the Act.

The Act mandates Tonga to develop emergency management plans at National, District (islands) and Village level which would then become the governing document for emergency and disaster risk management in Tonga. Emergency management plans are 'live' documents to be reviewed each year to accommodate the new and changing environment in Tonga.

The Act is currently under review and expected to be finalised in 2021. As proposed in the revision, the new Act will have broader scope and allows a comprehensive approach for Disaster Risk Management, covering all phases of disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness, emergency response and recovery. Once endorsed, the Act will be called Disaster Risk Management Act. However, new Act will still maintain the key approach for emergency coordination and response.

Agencies involved in emergency and disaster risk management in Tonga possess a range of capabilities and perform various roles and responsibilities across the 'policy and preparedness', 'emergency response', and 'relief and recovery' phases. The Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications (MEIDECC) is responsible for climate resilience and disaster risk management in Tonga. NEMO is embedded within the MEIDECC and responsible for the coordination of risk reduction and emergency management activities in Tonga. Other key emergency management actors include line Ministries, and First Responders (including the Tonga Police, Tonga Fire & Emergency Services, and His Majesty's Armed Forces - Tonga, Tonga Red Cross Society), humanitarian organisations, church and faithbased organisations and various utility corporations.

With Tropical Cyclone Gita (Feb 2018) came the inaugural activation of Clusters in Tonga, coordinated through NEMO, headed by individual line Ministries and supported by relevant non-government actors. The Cluster system was established in Tonga through Cabinet endorsement in 2015.

The revised Act aims to describe institutional arrangements and sectoral responsibility for DRM in more detail, and legally mandate the Cluster system. NEMO has a plan to develop a **Disaster Risk Management Regulation** and a **Disaster Risk Management Policy Framework**, to further define the emergency management legal framework as well as policy structure to regulate and guide disaster risk management work in Tonga.

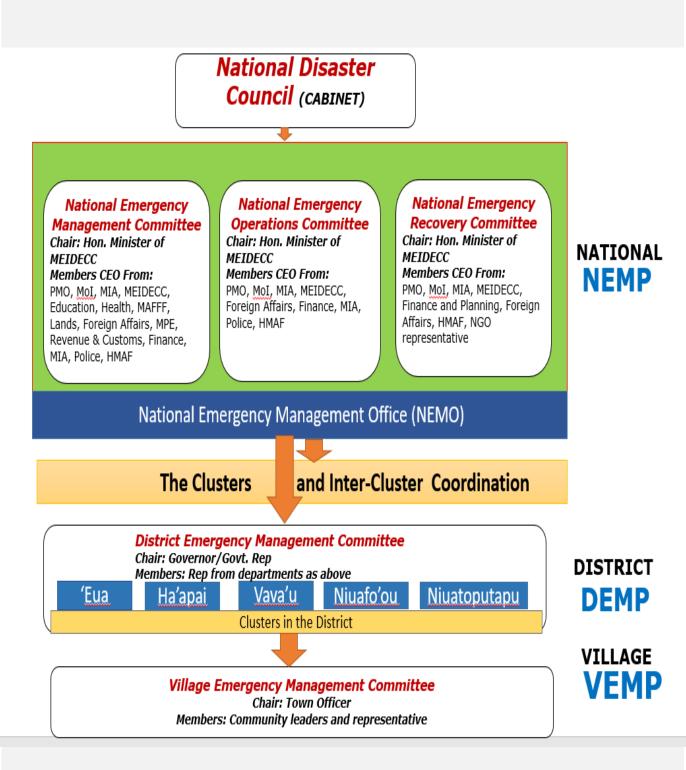
The development and/or review of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) including that of the Clusters will further specify roles, responsibilities, and procedures that connect sector actors and enable the operationalisation of the sector through coordinated preparedness, response and recovery phases.

The 'First Responder' agencies that includes Tonga Police, Tonga Fire and Emergency Services, and His Majesty's Armed Services -Tonga have mandated emergency service roles and responsibilities in Tonga. These are specified in the Police Act of 2010, the Fire and Emergency Services Act of 2016, and His Majesty's Armed Forces Act of 2016 respectively.

NEMO has an established communication and coordination mechanism with 'First Responder' agencies to be used during emergency operations.

The current National Emergency Management Plan (NEMP) further integrates these key agencies in the structure and function of emergency response. The 'First Responder' agencies are represented on each of three National Emergency Committees.

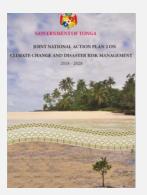
Tonga Emergency Governance Structure



Key Documents



The Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015 – 2025 includes Outcome F: a more inclusive, sustainable and effective land and environment management, with resilience to climate change and risk.



The Joint National Action Plan on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management 2018-2028 includes Objective 1: Mainstream climate change and disaster risk management approaches into government legislation policies and plans at all levels.



The Emergency Management Act (2007)

Establishes the NEMO, the NEMC and other emergency management arrangements. The Act is currently being updated and is expected to be complete in 2021.

The Roadmap will support emergency and disaster management stakeholders work together to progress and operationalise these national strategies

The Roadmap builds on existing strengths and addresses challenges of emergency management coordination in Tonga. Through the consultation process, the following sector strengths and challenges were identified by stakeholders.

Strengths

- Global and regional emergency managementrelated targets are reflected in national and sector plans.
- Strong Cabinet leadership and engagement at senior levels.
- Functioning sector-based Cluster system and emergency management committees at the national, district, and village-level.
- Lessons learned identified from recent experience in emergency situations (small and large scale).
- A strong foundation of trust and partnership across government, civil society and private sector.
- A NEMO with a growing skill set and with clear organizational planning and structure.
- Growing capability across the sector.
- Strong community human resources when emergencies/disasters hit.
- Demonstrated response coordination between NEMO, Police, Fire and Armed Services during large and small emergencies.

Challenges

- Limited awareness of emergency management responsibilities and lack of mainstreaming across government planning and budgeting/procurement processes.
- Disjointed and incomplete reporting of emergency management contributions from stakeholders.
- Limited community awareness and engagement, particularly in preparedness activities.
- No standard guidelines/operating procedures for response work, including evacuation centre operations.
- No process for coordinating and tracking international aid resources in response and recovery phases.
- A NEMO with limited human resource capacity and capital resources to implement programs and procedure

About PIEMA

PIEMA was established in 2013 as a coordinating mechanism that engages directly with Pacific Island countries to create 'excellence in emergency management'. PIEMA has a focus on building the foundations of trust, leadership, and teamwork among key emergency management agencies. The Pacific Community (SPC) provides secretariat services to PIEMA and manages the PIEMA project.

The PIEMA project is providing the opportunity to support all Pacific islands embark on a SREM development process and is also supporting the development of a Regional SREM, which will serve as a framework for coordination across disaster managers and decision makers across the Pacific.

PIEMA plays a key role in supporting delivery of the Boe Declaration Action Plan, as well as the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP).



PACIFIC ISLANDS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ALLIANCE

THE TONGA ROADMAP

Purpose

This Roadmap aims to support progress against the Tonga SDF2015 – 2025 by promoting and supporting greater coordination and collaboration across the emergency and disaster risk management sector.

Enhance dialogue, communication and shared commitment Effective disaster management requires whole-of-sector engagement and commitment. Key to achieving this is ongoing dialogue around issues of shared importance where decisions can be made, and progress can be assessed. This recognises that a functioning, accountable and collaborative approach to decision making and planning is the foundation on which long-term and sustainable change will be based.

Facilitate coordinated and ongoing planning and monitoring of progress The Roadmap identifies six priority Outcomes with associated annual Milestones. Together, they represent a set of priorities that stakeholders have identified for collective action at this particular point in time. It is expected that the Outcomes detailed below will be updated by the sector as sector priorities change.

Support coordinated action towards a more effective sector

Workplans are to be developed for each Outcome. The Workplans provide a standardised and flexible tool for planning, implementation and reporting on Outcomes. Workplans set out key activities, strategies and tasks to guide implementation.

Workplans will be further detailed, updated and monitored continuously in accordance with the implementation and monitoring arrangements outlined below.

Vision

The Government of Tonga and its partners and stakeholders are coordinating efforts to ensure effective and efficient emergency and disaster risk management service delivery.



The Roadmap establishes the following six Outcomes to progress over the next three years. For each Outcome, Milestones have been identified to provide further guidance on the critical steps necessary to progress towards Outcome achievement.

Outcome 1 Tonga has fully functioning Emergency Operation Centres supported by an established emergency coordination and communications system.

Outcome 2: Tonga's emergency and disaster risk management sector is more inclusive.

Outcome 3: Government Policy, planning, budget and procurement processes actively supports the mainstreaming of disaster risk management in Tonga.

Outcome 4: The Cluster System in Tonga is fully institutionalised and strengthened.

Outcome 5: Tonga has clear standards and guidelines for evacuation process management in Tonga with increased safety and security of Evacuation Centres.

Outcome 6: Tonga practices Participatory Village Emergency and Disaster Risk Management planning and implementation.



Tonga has a fully functioning Emergency Operation Centres supported by an established emergency coordination and communications system

With limited interoperability among agencies and limited equipment in varying states of disrepair, there is a need to systemically plan out the communications infrastructure, equipment and processes required to support the sector in times of response. Consideration must be given to how these efforts can be integrated with, and gain efficiencies from, the rollout of the National Early Warning System.

Milestones

By end of 2021	 A fully operational EOC are established in Vava'u and Ha'apai a clear guidelines, protocols and communication system are established for Initial Damage Assessment
By end of 2022	 Relevant Acts and Plans have been reviewed and updated for emergency and disaster risk management coordination and communications content. Emergency protocols and SOPs are developed for First Responders that align with the Acts governing their respective internal operations (Tonga Police, etc.) SOPs for emergency management communications are developed and communicated. Fully operational EOC are established in Tongatapu
By end of 2023	 EOCs are established in Eua, Niuatoputapu and Niuafo'ou A fully functioning emergency management communications system is integrated with the National Emergency Operations Centre

OUTCOME 2



Tonga's emergency and disaster risk management sector is more inclusive

Aligned with the Tonga Strategic Development Framework's emphasis on ensuring gender, the needs of marginalised groups, those in remote locations, and those with disabilities are key considerations in all development efforts, Tonga's emergency and disaster risk management sector needs to strengthen culturally appropriate inclusiveness practices in planning and services delivery. Spearheaded by the Safety and Protection Cluster and supported by NEMO, efforts to mainstream inclusiveness practices among committees and across Clusters is required

By end of 2021	•	Gender and disability inclusive DRM guidelines is prepared
By end of 2022	•	Relevant Acts and Plans have been reviewed and updated for inclusiveness mainstreaming content.
By end of 2023	•	Inclusiveness principles, standards and practices mainstreamed across Clusters. Inclusive-focused emergency management simulation exercises are planned and conducted, and lessons learned developed and shared.



Government Policy, planning, budget and procurement processes actively support mainstreaming of disaster risk management in Tonga

The success in reducing risk and hence minimising the loss from disaster largely depends on effective distribution of resources for disaster risk management across Ministries and sectors mandated and supported through Act, Regulation, Policy and public financing.

Tonga is revising the existing Act bringing a renewed focus on disaster risk reduction along with emergency management. The new Act when approved will become a Disaster Risk Management Act. There is a need to develop regulation and policy framework to support the implementation of the Act.

On the resource distribution side, the best opportunity Tonga has is to make sure agency Corporate Plans appropriately consider sector risk the and allocates appropriate budget and resources to provide the required risk reduction and disaster response capability. Broad consultation and feedback processes while developing a Corporate Plan will ensure the mainstreaming of disaster risk management across the sector.

There is need for greater ownership and take up of emergency management plans at different levels by different ministries and cluster is critical to generate a systematic response and sustainability of any disaster risk management initiatives

By end of 2021		Tonga Disaster Risk Financing Strategy is developed. Tonga has new Disaster Risk Management Act endorsed by parliament. Tonga Emergency Framework agreement is developed and rolled out with pilot emergency procurement list.
By end of 2022	•	Tonga Disaster Risk Management Regulation is developed and endorsed by parliament. The guidelines for the use of "Emergency Fund' is developed and endorsed by government. Tonga National Disaster Risk Management Policy Framework developed. A broad consultation and feedback mechanism is established to support 'Corporate Plan' mainstreaming of disaster risk management.
By end of 2023	•	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan is developed Whole-of-government budget and planning processes integrate Disaster Risk Management processes.



The Cluster System in Tonga Is fully institutionalised and strengthened

The Government of Tonga established 'the clusters' through its cabinet decision in 2014. The first activation of 'cluster system' happened after Tropical Cyclone Gita hit the capital Tongatapu in 2018. Since then 'Clusters' have become integral to Tongan national emergency preparedness and response. There are currently nine clusters recognised at national level with varying strength and capacity. All the clusters are led by respective government ministries/departments and now need to be institutionalised and resourced to help strengthen their effectiveness.

Milestones

By end of 2021		All the clusters in Tonga have dedicated cluster focal point/coordinator. All clusters will have updated Terms of Reference (ToR), SOPs and workplan.
By end of 2022	•	All clusters (lead agency) have appointed full time cluster coordinator. All clusters (lead agency) integrate their cluster work plan and activities into their regular budget and Corporate Plan. All clusters (lead agency) develop and implement cluster emergency preparedness and Contingency Plan.

By end
 All clusters have fully functioning operational mechanism with systems and procedureS in place.



Tonga has clear standards and guidelines for evacuation process management with increased safety and security of Evacuation Centres

The proficient administration of evacuation centres is an important part of quality emergency management service provision - especially in contexts with variable shelter options and susceptible to natural disasters, such as Tonga.

The development and implementation of evacuation centre standards are needed to ensure Tonga's emergency management sector is meeting the needs of evacuees across the country, including at the village-level. Particular attention needs to be given to mitigating safety and protection risks.

Tonga's Cluster system includes both a Shelter Cluster and Safety and Protection Cluster who must work with NEMO and NGO partners on improving evacuation centre standards and practices. NEMO is working together with International Organisation for Migration to establish a new cluster dedicated to manage disaster displacement and evacuation centres.

Protocols, standards and guidelines should be developed to manage the overall evacuation processes in Tonga, with roles and responsibilities addressed via relevant MoUs and SOPs.

By end of 2021	•	A gap analysis is conducted comparing current evacuation practice with regional best practice.
By end of 2022	•	Disaster Displacement Data Matrix System is established. Migration and Sustainable Development Policy (MSDP) Implementation Road Map is developed for Tonga The National Risk Assessment Report of evacuation centres is developed. The standard and protocol for Evacuation Management including the management of evacuation centre is developed and endorsed which would have clear linkage to National, District and village emergency management plan.
By end of 2023	•	Tonga specific disaster displacement report is prepared. Resources secured for the implementation of a Tonga Evacuation Management Plan and the implementation is underway.



Tonga practices Participatory Village Emergency and Disaster Risk Management planning and implementation

The existing Emergency Management Act has mandated Government of Tonga to establish emergency management committee at National, Island/District and Village level. The Committees have their respective plans to develop and implement.

The establishment and strengthening the capacity of Village Emergency Management Committee (VEMC) to engage the broader community in developing and implementing Village Emergency Management Plan (VEMP) is a key for the successful emergency and disaster risk management in Tonga.

There is a need to raise broad-based awareness across Tonga, including at the community level on emergency risks and management procedures. VEMCs need establishing where currently they do not exist, and all VEMCs require capacity strengthening through government and non-government partnerships. The engagement and active participation of skilled VEMCs and community members is critical to local-level response capability.

By end of 2021	VEMCs and VEMPs are established/updated across Tonga.Capacity Development and VEMP implementation plan/project is developed.
By end of 2022	 The VEMPs are integrated into District Emergency Management Plans (DEMPs) and then to NEMP. Resources for VEMC capacity development, and VEMP implementation plan, secured.
By end	Rollout of VEMC Capacity Development and VEMP Implementation plan underway.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Implementation of the Roadmap will be coordinated by NEMO and guided by NEMC. Each Roadmap Workplan is assigned to either NEMO or a cluster lead (known as a 'Workplan lead') to action and report progress. Workplan leads will report progress at NEMC meetings on an annual basis through NEMO. The figure below describes the Roadmap implementation and monitoring cycle.

Strategic Direction

The NEMC will:

- Endorse the Roadmap
- Review the Roadmap progress

Review and Report

The NEMO will coordinate:

- Review progress in collaboration with stakeholders and ensure alignment with reporting requirements on national and regional commitments related to emergency management
- Propose updates to the Roadmap Workplans

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Coordinated Work planning

The NEMO will lead coordination of:

- Cluster meetings (and engagement with other stakeholders) to discuss and coordinate implementation
- Support development of Roadmap Workplans
- Provide technical support to stakeholders implementing the Workplans

Implementation

All relevant DRM Stakeholders will :

- Ensure that Roadmap activities are reflected in individual agency workplans or equivalent
- Implement relevant actions and collaborate with NEMO and others

Workplans

Roadmap Outcomes and Milestones will be progressed through workplans that set out actions to be implemented within a specified timeframe. The workplans will be endorsed by the NEMC and in doing so establishes a mandate for all agencies to take the necessary action to achieve the relevant Milestone and Outcomes. The NEMC will require progress reports on the implementation of the Workplans, as per the Roadmap Monitoring Framework detailed over the page. Workplan templates are attached to the Roadmap and will be maintained by the NEMO.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Monitoring Framework

The Monitoring Framework (below) establishes as simple set of indicators to demonstrate implementation and progress. Progress is to be reported through relevant reporting channels (NEMO / NEMC Reports). A report by the NEMC (coordinated through the NEMO) will be prepared annually, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to document issues, action taken and future directions.

Key Implementation Actions	Measure of Progress	Reporting	
NEMO reviews Outcome progress and (where needed) update Outcomes and submit it to NEMC for endorsement.	 Scheduled annual NEMC meetings are held with quorum attendance. NEMO to review progress of each Outcome (based on downstream reporting [see below]). NEMCO to reaffirm, modify or establish new Outcomes. NEMO to review overall performance against this Roadmap. Meeting minutes circulated by NEMO to relevant stakeholders. Changes and future planning endorsed by NEMC. 	 Workplan leads will coordinate and provide NEMO with all relevant documentation. Performance against the Measures of Progress will be communicated by NEMO at the PIMEA Annual Meeting. 	
Workplan leads work to integrate relevant workplans activities into their respective Cluster workplans and Ministry Corporate Plans.	 Evidence of integration into Cluster workplans. Evidence of integration into Ministry Corporate Plans. 	 Performance against the Measures of Progress will be communicated by NEMO at the PIMEA Annual Meeting. 	
Workplan implementation through Workplan leads (i.e. Sector Committees and NEMO).	 % of Workplan Milestones reported to be on-track or complete. % of Workplan Activities reported to be on-track or complete. Number of Workplans that have had Activities and Tasks updated. Number of gender and inclusion strategies and initiatives implemented. 	 Workplan leads will support NEMO to review progress of these measures and submit it at NEMC meetings for endorsement. 	

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Gender and Social Inclusion

The Tonga Strategic Development Framework emphasises inclusiveness across all seven outcomes, ensuring gender, the needs of marginalised groups, those in remote locations, and those with disabilities are key considerations in Tonga's development efforts. It was recognised that this Roadmap can support gender and inclusiveness priorities in emergency management by:

- ensuring activities provide for the effective involvement of women and marginalised groups (both in terms of decision-making and operational processes).
- supporting relevant Committees and Clusters to promote integration and mainstreaming of inclusiveness considerations into all aspects of disaster preparedness, response and recovery.
- addressing inclusivity as a standalone outcome of the Roadmap and consequently setting out a workplan with milestones to strengthen inclusivity practices through mainstreaming, led by the Safety and Protection Cluster.

These and other strategies align with and will also be supported through implementation of the PIEMA 'Responding Together: Strategy for Gender Equality in Disaster Management in the Pacific' and 'Becoming a Leader: a leadership learning pathway for PIEMA member agencies.'

Resourcing the SREM

The implementation of the Roadmap can be achieved in large part through low or no-cost actions, integrating into 'business as usual' emergency management work. However, there are some activities that require financial resources for completion. All agencies will take shared responsibility for sourcing funds for supporting these activities which are highlighted within each of the relevant Roadmap Workplans. In these instances, the Roadmap can be used to help communicate funding needs to government and development partners, making an influential case based on demonstrated country-led commitment and action to strengthen coordination for more effective and efficient service delivery.