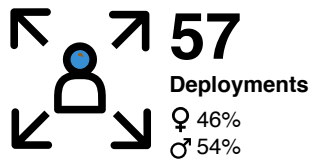


Pacific



In support of Australia's Partnerships for Recovery policy, the program **expanded in the Pacific**, exceeding the Australia Assists Annual Plan target⁴ by re-allocating deployment months from other regions. RedR Australia training initiatives such as the **inaugural Pacific Essentials of Humanitarian Practice** course provided an opportunity to **build critical capacity** in the region and **strengthen existing partnerships** with government agencies, the UN, regional organisations ([SPC](#), [PDF](#), [IPPF](#)) and the private sector ([DT Global](#)).

Top 3 profiles deployed to the Pacific



Pacific pandemic surge

Australia Assists supported **27 deployments to COVID-19 preparedness and response** roles across eight Pacific Island countries to support the health security of our near neighbours.

Response

With Fiji and Papua New Guinea hardest hit in the region, the program's provision of emergency public health, information management, communications and protection personnel **filled critical human resource gaps**. For example, deployee Gregory improved the efficiency of health coordination systems by working as a critical connector alongside the Papua New Guinea government and [WHO](#) Incident Management Team. This enabled key **issues to be escalated** to relevant ministers and a **streamlined flow of information** into situation reports. In Fiji, support to COVID-19 outbreaks manifested in **mainstreaming protection and gender considerations** throughout government toolkits for community workers via COVID-19 Protection Advisor, Jess.

Preparedness

The program **bolstered preparedness and contingency planning** for several Pacific nations through both in-country and remote deployments. Two Ni-Vanuatu deployees worked together within Vanuatu's Ministry of Health. Sharin advised the Ministry of Health Emergency Operations Centre on prevention and preparedness measures, such as **vaccination rollouts and medical inventory standards**. Rowan provided logistics support to **ensure those standards were met** by undertaking inventory assessments in 42 health centres throughout three provinces and mobilising free public transport from community hubs to vaccination sites.

Australia Assists connects the UN with national systems

Australia Assists played an important role as connector between the UN and national systems, **driving collaborative work to achieve mutual humanitarian objectives**. In addition to 12 deployments that were directly embedded in Pacific government ministries, eight deployees to UN agencies were also seconded to ministries or worked closely with government counterparts in a capacity building function. Among them:

- Philippe, [FAO](#) Fiji Disaster Risk Management Specialist, helped ensure that food security gets the administrative attention it deserves, by establishing a Climate and Disaster Risk Resilience Unit within the Ministry of Agriculture. He developed national tools to assess disaster-related losses in the agriculture sector, which **align Fiji with international disaster risk management standards** (including the Sendai Framework). Philippe's work also enhanced coordination between government ministries and humanitarian partners to **rebuild capacity in disaster-impacted communities**.
- Tim, a [UNICEF](#) Fiji Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Specialist, spent 90 per cent of his deployment at the **Ministry of Health** where he analysed and improved the content, quantity and distribution of water, sanitation and hygiene kits. His information management work also enabled government departments to **share information efficiently and**

accurately, thanks to his direct access to National Disaster Management Office data collection systems.

- Maxwell, a COVID-19 Education Learning Systems Technical Advisor with UNICEF Fiji, increased community awareness about the pandemic through his work with the **Ministries of Education** in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga and Samoa. Specifically, he worked with ministry officials, heads of schools, teachers and parents to inform them of **COVID-19 precautions, inclusion, welfare and protection measures**.



*The government and UN Agencies are able to utilise **reliable and accurate data and information on the needs of vulnerable groups** conducted by the deployee in the Lau region to assess the impact of TC Yasa and TC Ana.*

— Chief of Mission, IOM Fiji, on deployee, Daniel.



Pacific Community (SPC) DRM Specialist, Gina, at the launch of the Pacific Incident Management System (PacIMS) online awareness course she helped develop to improve coordination between emergency responders.

Working in the wake of cyclones

Following Tropical Cyclones Harold (April 2020), Yasa (December 2020), and Ana (January 2021), **13 deployees assisted in response roles** spanning national emergency operation centre support, crop damage assessments, information management, evacuation, procurement, donor funding and reconstruction. Daniel, a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, represented [IOM](#) Fiji on a joint UN-Government mission to seven of Fiji's most remote islands, which had been devastated by both Tropical Cyclone Harold and Ana. With a **focus on vulnerable groups**, his consultations with village representatives fed back to the Protection Cluster, ensuring that food security, shelter, and water, sanitation and hygiene were top priorities.

What challenges emerged?

- COVID-19 restrictions on travel have made it difficult to conduct **in-person risk assessments** and **due diligence** checks on new partners, which has put those emerging partnerships on hold.
- Recurring COVID-19 outbreaks have **disrupted deployments** and forced the **postponement of critical training** in the region.



*There is no question of Greg's **technical expertise** and the efforts he made to go **above and beyond** the scope of this role in order to **contribute to the overall COVID-19 response** ... He made extensive and thoughtful efforts to **build technical capacity in local counterparts**.*

— Humanitarian Coordination Specialist, UNDP PNG, on deployee, Gregory.



M&E Specialist Daniel interviews Turaga ni Koro in Komo Island, Fiji, as part of his work compiling a TC Yasa and TC Ana Detailed Needs Assessment for IOM.