

Terms of Reference: Disaster READY Community Based Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation Review and Learning Initiative

Introduction

The Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) is a partnership between Australian Government and 6 AHP partners (Australian non-government organisations) with a focus on disaster response, as well as disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience. In DRR and resilience, the AHP delivers the Disaster READY program across the Pacific and Timor-Leste. The Disaster READY program recognises DRR and resilience building as critical climate actions.

The Australian Humanitarian Partnership Support Unit (AHPSU), through Alinea International, is seeking an individual or team to lead an independent review and learning initiative for community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) and climate change adaptation (CCA) activities being implemented across the Disaster READY program.

The review is scheduled to take place between May 2025 to February 2026. It will require both desk-based work and in-country component with travel to selected Disaster READY target countries in the Pacific. It is estimated to require up to 70 days input.

Overview

Disaster READY is a DRR and resilience program funded by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) through the AHP mechanism. Disaster READY strengthens the ability of local communities and organisations in the Pacific to prepare for and respond to crises, and to better absorb, manage and bounce back from disaster and climate change exacerbated shocks. AHP partners deliver locally-led programs through their networks in Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste. DFAT has partnered with 6 Australian NGOs and their consortium partners to deliver on these priorities: CARE Australia, Caritas Australia (CAN DO), Oxfam Australia, Plan International Australia, Save the Children Australia and World Vision Australia.

The Partnership is currently in Phase 2 of programming (2022-2027). In the lead up to Phase 2, partners participated in country and project-level design processes to support work to be undertaken between 2022-2027. All projects and country-level plans are designed to support the achievement of the following end of program and intermediate outcomes:

- **End of Program Outcome:** Women, youth, children, people living with disabilities and other at-risk groups, are better prepared for and more resilient to disasters and climate change, in selected Pacific countries and Timor-Leste
- **Intermediate Outcome 1.1:** Communities (especially vulnerable groups) plan and implement effective, inclusive, and integrated disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation activities.
- **Intermediate Outcome 1.2:** Local civil society actors (NGOs, CBOs, OPDs, churches, informal groups) have improved institutional and technical capacity to fulfil their role in effective disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation.
- **Intermediate Outcome 1.3:** National and Sub-national governments are supported to lead effective, inclusive and coordinated disaster preparedness, climate change adaptation and response activities.
- **Intermediate Outcome 2.3** AHP NGO partner responses in Disaster READY countries demonstrate increased local leadership, coordination, and capacity.

Under Intermediate Outcome 1.1, Disaster READY partners have undertaken a range of CBDRM and climate change adaptation (CCA) activities during Phase 1 of Disaster READY (2017-2022) and Phase 2 (2022-present). This has included supporting communities to establish community preparedness/resilience plans that assess key risks and outline plans and measures to mitigate these. The plans outline priority actions for the community to improve preparedness and resilience to the impacts of climate and non-climate related hazards. Across this work, there is an emphasis on 1) ensuring the impacts of climate change are intrinsic to the development of these plans and 2) a focus on inclusion to ensure all members of the community's specific needs are addressed. Partner's CBDRM and CCA activities should also align with and complement broader local Government mandated process and initiatives.

The independent consultant/team will undertake a review and learning initiative into the CBDRM and associated CCA work being undertaken through Disaster READY. The review will assess what works, where, for whom and in what circumstances (including the importance of linking community-based initiatives to the other Disaster READY outcomes), while the learning focus will capture best practice, ensure cross country and cross-agency learning, and provide future-focussed recommendations. The review will provide the chance for capacity development of implementing partners, particularly local partners, to assist in the capture and analysis of community-based initiatives. At the same time, learning will provide valuable input into design processes for potential future resilience programming.

Scope: Review Users

Primary users of this review and learning initiative will include the AHP Disaster READY partners, relevant DFAT sections (including the Disaster Preparedness & Response and Climate Resilience & Finance Branches and Posts) and the AHPSU. Secondary users include the broader humanitarian and development sector.

Purpose

The review and learning initiative will have three components:

- 1) **Investigate progress towards the program outcomes with a focus on CBDRM and CCA activities:** The initiative will make an assessment of the quality of the work through Disaster READY and the extent to which it is contributing to improved levels of inclusive community preparedness and resilience over both phases of Disaster READY. It will review a sample of key CBDRM and CCA mechanisms supported through the Disaster READY program. This will include establishment of community disaster committees, support, establishment and implementation of community preparedness/resilience plans and other preparedness and resilience focused activities. It will assist implementing partners to assess how activities implemented through community preparedness/resilience plans contribute to inclusive community resilience. The review will be participatory and should provide feedback on the practical, on-the-ground changes that have resulted from the Disaster READY program and the extent that this has aligned with the needs of the affected communities.
- 2) **Programmatic learning:** the review will provide learning opportunities to improve quality of CBDRM and CCA work across the Disaster READY program, while supporting implementing partners to improve overall outcome reporting. This will include identifying areas of good and effective practices that are working within the program and/or initiatives from other related CBDRM and CCA programs that could be applicable to Disaster READY. The consultant will provide a plan to disseminate key lessons from this review to AHP and local partners. The consultant will include opportunities for learning and capacity development for AHP partners.
- 3) **Recommendations for the mechanism:** The review is expected to provide support and recommendations to AHP partners and develop future-facing recommendations to feed into design processes. During some of the review time period, DFAT will be running a separate Independent Evaluation of the AHP mechanism, including Disaster READY. The review must be well coordinated with the Independent Evaluation. It will be intentionally designed to be complementary to avoid any duplication.

Key Review Areas:

The review and learning initiative will draw on the Disaster READY Framing Resilience Guidance and Resilience Markers Rubric developed as part of the Disaster READY Phase 2 Design Update. In addition, the following indicative questions will frame the work:

- Over the 2 phases, to what extent have Disaster READY's CBDRM/CCA activities contributed to improved community preparedness and resilience? Are communities better prepared for rapid and slow onset disasters? How well are partners capturing the changes?
- To what extent have the CBDRM/CCA activities been inclusive of different groups within a community (such as people with disability, women, children and elderly) and addressed their specific preparedness and resilience needs?
- To what extent has key CBDRM mechanisms such as the establishment of community disaster committees served as a functioning model to lead on local preparedness and resilience activities?

- Do the community preparedness/resilience plans supported through the program adequately assess current and emerging risks pertinent to the specific context of the communities? Do they adequately integrate the impacts of climate change? To what extent do the community preparedness/resilience plans outline relevant and achievable strategies and priority actions to mitigate risks?
- To what extent are Disaster READY partners aligned with local government mandated disaster preparedness and resilience-building processes and tools?
- To what extent are the CBDRM/CCA activities sustainable and likely to continue at the completion of the program?
- To what extent has the CBDRM/CCA activities rolled out through Disaster READY enabled improved capacity to respond to the impacts of climate and non-climate related hazards?
- Has the work caused any unintended positive or negative consequences? Are there examples of innovation, good practices or locally led solutions have emerged that could be scaled or replicated.

Methodology

The methodology will be documented in a Implementation Plan that includes the relevant data collection, analysis and training tools. Where relevant, the review methodology will address the requirements of DFAT's Monitoring and Evaluation Standards ([DFAT Design and Monitoring and Evaluation Standards | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#)). The review and learning initiative approach should take full account of the program's focus on inclusivity. The proposed methodology should include:

- A **desk-based review process** (the consultant/team will be provided with relevant documentation, such as project designs, reports, MEL plans and existing evaluations);
- Planned **data sources and collection methods**, including a justification for the proposed approach (interviews with key stakeholders including DFAT, AHPSU, AHP partners, in country national and sub national Government stakeholders such as NDMO, community representatives and members). The process must be participatory and include workshops with partners, participation from community members and in country debriefs. It must also consider opportunities for capacity development of AHP partners; and
- A proposed **travel/data collection itinerary** (identifying country visits for stakeholder interviews and community monitoring – to be determined).

Key steps in the review will include:

- 1) Developing a detailed Implementation Plan, including methodologies, review question matrix, data collection tools, interview guides, a framework for data analysis, and timeline. The review team should ensure that the perspectives of the affected peoples are central to planning. The plan will be updated and finalised based on feedback from the AHP NGOs, DFAT and the AHPSU.
- 2) Developing a rubric, drawing from existing Resilience Markers, with input from key stakeholders identifying clear standards for each of the review questions to enable the review team to make transparent and informed findings, identify capacity gaps and define capacity development opportunities
- 3) Conducting a desk review of background documents and development of data collection tools.
- 4) Collecting data through key informant interviews, focus groups, surveys, direct observation and/or other appropriate data collection techniques. Ensure all sectors of the community are reached, including people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Other stakeholders to include are government, civil society organisations and humanitarian coordination platforms and clusters.
- 5) Identifying and drafting, with partner input, short stories/case studies that demonstrate the concerted efforts of the Disaster READY program to address climate change in the Pacific and Timor-Leste.
- 6) Analysing and triangulating data against the review questions and rubric.
- 7) Presenting preliminary findings for sense checking workshops with stakeholders, relevant DFAT representatives and the AHP staff and partners. It will be important for partners to see how input from various stakeholders (e.g., local

communities, project beneficiaries, and implementing partners) have informed the findings through an evidence matrix or similar.

- 8) Write a review and learning report suitable for publication, which may be published on DFAT's official website, the AHP website and elsewhere.
- 9) Communicate key findings through a verbal report to the Review Committee members and AHP NGOs. This may be delivered remotely.

Notes:

- Data collection will need to be culturally appropriate and consider issues of language and literacy.
- Data collected will be disaggregated by gender, disability, and other relevant attributes.

Ethics and safeguarding

The approach to ethics and safeguarding will be documented in the Implementation Plan and must include high standards of ethical conduct. The review process must be conducted in line with DFAT's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy and DFAT's Ethical Research and Evaluation Guidance. The following points should be addressed:

- child protection and safeguarding protection policies
- informed consent practices for review participants
- the management of confidentiality and privacy considerations
- the management of expectations of review participants
- data protection and data sharing practices
- training of data collectors on the above.

Review Governance

The review and learning initiative process, and the report produced, must be suitable for circulation as DFAT or the AHPSU may publish the review report. The report should also provide the basis for AHP partners to share findings with local partners, affected communities and to generate wider learning. The Review Report executive summary should be suitable for broad dissemination as a standalone document. The report must reach DFAT standards of accessibility to enable publication.

Review Committee

The AHPSU will set up an Review Committee to support the initiative. The Review Committee will include representatives from the AHP NGOs implementing the program, DFAT, AHPSU and potentially other stakeholders. The role of the Review Committee will include:

- reviewing the review plan and coordinating feedback
- reviewing the draft review report and coordinating feedback
- reviewing and endorsing the final review report
- supporting with suggested literature or stakeholders to be part of the review process
- participating in other ad hoc meetings and discussions on the review as required.

Key Documents

Some documents that will be useful for the review and learning initiative are included below. The AHPSU and DFAT will also make available to the Team Leader other information and documents relating to the project and the AHP as required. The review team is expected to independently source other relevant material and literature.

The key documents will include:

- Project documents including project proposals and annual reports
- Country specific CBDRM guidance documents
- Phase 2 Framing Resilience Guidance and Resilience Markers Rubric.
- *Australia's International Development Policy: For a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous Indo-Pacific*, Commonwealth of Australia, August 2023 [Australia's International Development Policy | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade \(dfat.gov.au\)](https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/publications/australias-international-development-policy)
- *DFAT Monitoring and Evaluation Standards* [dfat-design-monitoring-evaluation-learning-standards.docx \(live.com\)](https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/publications/dfat-design-monitoring-evaluation-learning-standards.docx) including *DFAT's Ethical Research and Evaluation Guidance*
- Australasian Evaluation Society *Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations*, [AES Guidelines web v2.pdf](https://www.aes.org.au/guidelines) and the *AES Code of Ethics* [AES Code of Ethics web.pdf](https://www.aes.org.au/code-of-ethics)
- Australia's Humanitarian Policy: Making a difference for people in crisis. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/publications/australias-humanitarian-policy>
- Australia's International Gender Equality Strategy. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/development/australias-international-gender-equality-strategy>
- Australia's International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/publications/australias-international-disability-equity-and-rights-strategy-advancing-equity-transform-lives>

Timing and deliverables

The Review will run from **May 2025 to April 2026**.

Review outputs:

- An **Implementation Plan**: developed at the beginning of the process confirming the review methodology and outlining key activities, travel, dates and so on;
- A **progress update and preliminary findings report**.
- A **draft review report**;
- A **final review report**: incorporating feedback from the draft review report and outlining key findings, lessons and recommendations against the review criteria and KEQs.

The table below outlines the proposed timings and payments for each of the review deliverables:

Table 1. Review deliverables and milestone payments

Deliverable	Timing	Payment
Implementation plan	June 2025	25%
Progress and preliminary findings report. This will include a verbal presentation of findings.	December 2025	25%
Draft review report	February 2026	25%
Final review report and completion of presentation of key findings	March 2026	25%

In addition to these deliverables, the review team will provide monthly verbal updates to the Review Committee on progress against the Implementation Plan.

Budget

The maximum budget for this work is **AUD \$100,000**. This budget includes all inputs for the lead consultant and (if applicable) the team, such as travel costs, administration fees and other support costs.

Submission requirements

Expressions of interest (EOIs) should be submitted to ap-recruitment@alineainternational.com by 5pm (AEST) on the 21st of May 2025. EOIs should include:

Item	Details	Page limit	Criteria
Cover letter	Briefly introduce the consultancy and/or team members, values and mission as well as key examples of similar work completed.	Up to 1	Quality of relevant experience
Proposed methodology	Outline the proposed methodology in-line with the guidance provided in this ToR.	Up to 5	Quality of technical proposal
CVs of key personnel	Outline the relevant skills, experience, qualifications and work history of each team member in-line with the required skills and experience below. Identify roles within the review team.	Up to 2 pages per team member	Quality of relevant experience
Detailed budget	Outline the breakdown of work per review team member, travel, administration and any other relevant support costs.	Up to 1	Budget represents value for money

Required skills and experience

Consultant/s are expected to possess the following skills and experience:

- A postgraduate qualification in evaluation, international development, humanitarianism or a related field;
- Significant demonstrated experience conducting reviews or evaluations, including outcome and process evaluations. The ability to produce high quality evaluation reports and presentations that comply with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's [Monitoring and Evaluation Standards](#);
- Highly developed communication skills, including advanced English speaking and writing skills, and proven record communicating with project participants and partners, including through interpreters;
- Relevant subject matter knowledge and experience (i.e. disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation approaches to development and humanitarian issues, including GEDSI integration in climate and disaster resilience);
- Experience working with a large number of diverse stakeholders in an effective and culturally sensitive manner and experience working in the Pacific and/or Timor-Leste;
- Experience designing, capturing, analysing and presenting qualitative and quantitative data;
- A demonstrable understanding of data privacy, consent and ethics – including the ability to comply with Child Protection and Safeguarding requirements; and

Desirable skills and experience

It is desirable that lead consultant or other members of the review team possess the following skills and experience:

- Proficiency in one (or more) of the official languages used in Vanuatu, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands.

Contact details

Please send any queries related to the ToR to:

Liam Sharp, Disaster READY Coordinator

liam.sharp@ahpsu.com

** Please do not send submissions to this email address, refer to the submissions section above. **