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through knowledge and expertise in:

- Poverty Reduction
- Good Governance
- Crisis Prevention



# Training on gender and disaster risk management

## Session 2 – Key concepts – hazards, disaster, risk, vulnerability

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# What is a hazard?

- A hazard is a phenomenon, of natural or human origin, with a probability of occurring in a particular time and space
- Potential danger that human lives or material goods are affected or damaged
  - *Definitions adapted from Controlled Vocabulary on Disaster Information, CARDIN*

# Examples of hazards

## ■ Geo-morphological

- Earthquake
- Landslide
- Volcano, tsunami

## ■ Hydro-meteorological

- Cyclones
- Floods, heavy rains, droughts
- King tides

## ■ Technological

- Chemical spills
- Plane crash, ferry sinking
- Nuclear accident



# What is risk?

- **Expected losses** of human lives, injured persons, damaged property and economic activity due to a particular dangerous natural phenomenon

**\*\* HIGH \*\* MEDIUM \*\* LOW \*\***

*Definitions adapted from Controlled Vocabulary on  
■ Disaster Information, CARDIN*



# More on risk

- Risk is a **FUNCTION** of the combination of potential hazards, vulnerability and capacity
- Governments are increasingly taking an **“all hazards” approach** to risk management



# What is vulnerability?

- **Degree of loss** resulting from a potentially harmful phenomenon
- The degree of **vulnerability of communities** is measured by, among other things, their living conditions, level of organization and ways of using environmental resources



# Vulnerability factors

- **Physical** – eg. disability, fitness, strength
- **Environmental** – eg. extreme cold weather, land degradation
- **Economic** – eg. poverty, lack of assets
- **Social**
  - ❖ Political – eg. ongoing civil war
  - ❖ Institutional – eg. weak disaster management body
  - ❖ Organizational – eg. lack of community planning
  - ❖ Educational – literacy, education level
  - ❖ Ideological – cultural – eg. customary behaviours expected of women and children



# What is a disaster?

- A serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing widespread human, material or environmental losses, which exceeds the ability of the affected society to cope using only its own resources
- Can be **SLOW ONSET** or **SUDDEN ONSET**

# Risk and vulnerability



 Capacity

**DISASTER = materialization of a risk**



# Disasters are not natural

- Disasters usually result from **human activity and behaviour** in relation to society and the environment
- Government **development policy** choices also can tend to create disasters or prevent them

# Climate change is not natural



“There is *very high confidence* that the net effect of human activities since 1750 has been one of warming.”

“Anthropogenic warming over the last three decades has *likely* had a discernible influence at the global scale on observed changes in many physical and biological systems.”

*4<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report, IPCC, 2007*

*Written by 40 top climate scientists from various regions*

# Climate change is not natural



“Advances since the 3<sup>rd</sup> AR show that discernible human influences extend beyond average temperature to other aspects of climate:

- Sea level rise
- Changes to wind patterns, affecting storm tracks
- Increased extreme temperatures -- hot and cold
- Heat waves, droughts and heavy precipitation events”

*4<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report, IPCC, 2007*

*Written by 40 top climate scientists from various regions*



Fa'afetai

*Vinaka vakalevu*

Meitaki