The TAF/OFDA Disaster Training Program for the Pacific Islands, 1995-2003: An Evaluation

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Executive Summary
(6 Pages)

Purpose, Foci, and Method

This evaluation, of the ongoing "Disaster Training Program for the Pacific Islands" of The Asia Foundation (TAF) as grantee for the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), began in 1999 and focused on six principal program dimensions: (1) the Course Suite, (2) the Instructor Cadre, (3) Program Impact, (4) Cost-Sharing and Buy-In, (5) Inter-Agency/Inter-Organization Coordination, and (6) Internal Project Discipline and Management. To expedite presentation, TAF/OFDA program accomplishments on each of these dimensions are scored on a 10-point scale:

10 -- success/achievement "above and beyond" reasonable expectation.
9-8 -- full or nearly full achievement of program objectives.
7-6 -- partial or incomplete achievement of program objectives.
5-4 -- serious achievement deficiencies.
3-2 -- minimal achievement.
1-0 -- failure.

Several evaluation methods were used:

1. Reading program documents and materials from Washington, D.C.; Davis, California; and the Suva, Fiji Islands office of TAF/OFDA.

2. Visiting the first management site for the TAF/OFDA program in Davis, California in October 1999 and interviewing the OFDA Training Advisor in Miami that same month.

3. Making three extended regional visits to the South Pacific in November 1999, October 2001, and April-May 2003. During these visits arrangements were made to:

    a. Observe regional, workshop, or national deliveries of both "Introduction to Disaster Management" (IDM) and "Initial Damage Assessment" (IDA) courses.

    b. Visit three headquarters of National Disaster Management Officers (NDMOs): Fiji Islands, Cook Islands, and Tonga.

    c. Interview ten of the NDMOs and twice that number of staff as well as 25 former training program participants and instructors.

    d. Interview senior management and staff at South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) headquarters; the regional

representative of the U.N. system; and others involved in the training effort in the region.

e. Interview higher level political/administrative leaders in the Fiji Islands, Cook Islands, and Tonga.

f. Interview training experts and senior management at the Emergency Management Australia (EMA) Institute in Melbourne, Australia.

g. Visit Swinburne University of Technology (also in Melbourne) faculty and administrators charged with developing their graduate-level degree programs in Emergency Management.

4. Finally, designing and fielding a 35-item questionnaire (that is, a survey) to all former participants in regional courses put on or supervised directly by TAF/OFDA personnel. This survey provided especially important and intriguing input into this evaluation.

Findings

Dimension	Score (1-10 scale, with 10 highest)
One: The Course Suite	8.66 (Overall)
Logic and Synergy	9.00
Completeness/Finalization	7.00
Content—Intrinsic Quality	10.00

Explanation: The TAF/OFDA training program comprises 5 courses, one of which is the basic "how to train" course (TFI). The other 4 are substantive (the very important IDM and the more specific ExMan, EOC, and IDA). The IDA may turn out to be the most important in the long-term given the consistency/credibility/acceptance problems encountered in recent damage assessments in the region. The suite's logic and synergy are very impressive, giving it a score of 9.

At this point, however, the course suite is not fully developed and tested out. It is really in a 3-1-1 format in that three courses are fully developed, piloted, and refined (TFI, IDM, and ExMan), one is still being refined (EOC), and one (IDA) was only recently piloted (late April 2003). That mixed status renders a score of 7.

For intrinsic quality, no better validation exists than the fact that Swinburne University of Technology (SUT) in Australia has "mapped" the content of the TAF/OFDA courses against its requirements for *graduate-level* credit and agreed in writing to an articulation that allows former TAF/OFDA training participants to apply their courses toward graduate certificates and diplomas in Emergency Management. Given the rigor and

learning outcomes orientation of SUT's mapping of the TAF/OFDA courses, this acceptance yields a 10 score.

Two: The Instructor Cadre	7.00 (Overall)
Quality	8.00
Depth	6.00

Explanation: Although the two sub-dimensions (quality and depth of the cadre) cannot be completely separated, the division has evaluative utility. That is, the quality of the first and even second choices for instructors of the various courses is very good to excellent, but the pool becomes very shallow after that, especially for the more recently developed courses. In sum, that makes the instructor cadre good but fragile, yielding an overall score of 7 only.

Three: Program Impact	7.50 (Overall)
Individual Level	9.00
Organizational Level	8.00
National Level	5.00
NDMO's specifically	8.00

Explanation: The survey of former participants carried out by the evaluator and his team showed truly exceptional impacts of the TAF/OFDA training at the individual level (virtually everyone reported changing the ways that they did their jobs). Almost as strong were reports of the TAF/OFDA training having positive impacts on how the former participants were evaluated in performance reviews after returning to their positions. Moreover, the vast majority also reported that they were able to make changes or successful recommendations for change at the organizational level after returning from the training. A score of 9 is the result.

Troubling, however, was a consistent and statistically significant difference between how men and women reported being evaluated and how much success they had in organizational change post-training. Compared to the men, women reported lower (but still high in absolute terms) success rates in both post-training job evaluations and attempts at organization-level innovation. While hardly startling, this discrepancy merits further thought.

Interestingly, statistically significant training impact differences were also evident based on whether the former participants had disaster experience in the previous five years. If they had such experience, they saw higher value in the TAF/OFDA training. That is, the more their direct disaster experience, the more highly they evaluated their TAF/OFDA training.

Perhaps more important on this program impact dimension, however, is the fact that most of the nations have simply taken the TAF/OFDA courses wholesale and made them *their* disaster training programs. For example, the NDMO office of the Fiji Islands lists seven courses in their program—five of which are the TAF/OFDA courses. The NDMO of Papua New Guinea told this evaluator that he intends to simply take the entire TAF/OFDA suite and make it his training program. A score of the 8 appears fair here—and perhaps too conservative given that "taking" the program is quite a compliment.

The problem area on this dimension is "national impact," where the NDMO offices are—with a couple of exceptions—relatively weak administratively and especially financially (budgets). This weakness translates into an inability to reach down effectively into their societies and have on-the-ground impacts on community vulnerability and risk management. This problem results in a score of only 5 at this point in time, although fairness requires that it be noted that impact in this area is outside the control of TAF/OFDA.

In terms of the NDMOs themselves, the group as a whole is very good, but the problem is the unevenness within the group and their varying understanding of the TAF/OFDA training program. That is, they all "embrace" it and want it, but a few don't appear to fully grasp what the program is and actually entails, especially when they return home. Nonetheless, the comprehension is higher than it was two years ago, so the result is a program impact score of 8 for the group as a whole.

Four: Cost-Sharing and Buy-In 6.00

Explanation: The documentation is excellent here and shows considerable cost-sharing and national buy-ins, but the deficiency is in the number of nations cost-sharing (only five).

Five: Inter-Agency/Organization Coordination 9.00 (Overall)

With Regional "Lead Agency"	9.00
With Other Donors/Sponsors	9.00

Explanation: The TAF/OFDA relationship with the Disaster Management Unit of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (DMU-SOPAC), the regional lead agency for disaster management in the Pacific, is excellent. They cooperate and coordinate closely in training, with DMU-SOPAC not only cost-sharing but also deferring to a TAF/OFDA leadership role in training. The score on this sub-dimension is a solid 9.

Equally positive is the TAF/OFDA relationship with such other donors as UN-OCHA and the IFRC. The best evidence of the acknowledged place of the TAF/OFDA program in the Pacific is the document creating a coordinating structure for disaster training in the region: The Pacific Emergency Management Training Advisory Group (PEMTAG). The purpose of PEMTAG is to avoid conflict among donors, assure non-duplication of

efforts, and maximize training coordination. Significantly, the document was signed jointly by DMU-SOPAC, UN-OCHA, TAF/OFDA, and IFRC. The score on this sub-dimension is an equally solid 9.

Six: Project Discipline and Management 10.00

Explanation: Given its very modest resources and staffing, the TAF/OFDA training program in the Pacific has had an extraordinary impact. The courses are disciplined, the program is disciplined, and the documentation and record keeping are excellent. A score of 10 here is merited.

Conclusions and Recommendations

On behalf of OFDA, TAF has developed a well regarded and successful disaster training program, which is now well accepted not only by the nations of the region but also by other donors and especially the lead regional agency. Not the case as recently as February 2000, the TAF/OFDA program is seen as a full partner in improving disaster management in the Pacific region and has "a place at the table," especially in the training area.

Nonetheless, the TAF/OFDA program has several problems: (1) the course suite is still unfinished; (2) the course suite is also "incomplete" without a follow-on to the IDM course; (3) the instructor cadre, while good to excellent in quality, is not deep enough to sustain the training over the long-term; (4) marked disparities in training capacity remain between so-called "lead" nations and others; and (5) most of the National Disaster Management Offices in the various islands remain organizationally and financially weak.

Therefore, evaluation-based recommendations come at two levels, general and specific. Derived from an overall view of the TAF/OFDA program and especially comparing the situation with four years ago, the general recommendations are as follows:

1. *Given its national-level impacts and hard-won full partner status in the region, the program should be continued and, if possible, enhanced.*

2. *To emphasize the preceding point, it is also recommended that further monitoring and evaluation be discontinued, with any savings being reallocated to direct program activities, as long as major changes do not occur in TAF/OFDA personnel and/or in TAF/OFDA relations with the lead agency (SOPAC).*

Six more specific recommendations also flow from the evaluation:

1. *Internal staff and office support in the South Pacific should be a program funding priority to avoid the danger of overload and burnout, in particular with the addition of North Pacific island nations—a very challenging expansion.*

2. *The program should fully complete its course suite, and quickly.*

3. *The program should seek to leverage host-country governments to increase policy and budgetary support to their respective NDMOs. Along this line, if the Government of the Fiji Islands does indeed create a "Ministry of Disaster Management," the program can and should use this precedent as a template for similar efforts in other islands.*

4. *The TAF/OFDA course suite should be "nationalized" to the fullest extent possible, which may require TAF/OFDA to help (or push in some cases) the NDMO structures in each country to take the training out to their communities, particularly those most at risk.*

5. *Increased cooperation should be sought with the Emergency Management Institute in Melbourne, Australia.*

6. *Mechanisms should be found to support former TAF/OFDA training participants so that they can take advantage of the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma opportunities being offered them under the "Recognition of Prior Learning" formula developed in conjunction with SOPAC and Swinburne University of Technology in Australia.*

The Evaluation
(22 Pages)

I. Introduction

A "Dimensional" Approach to Evaluation

Program evaluations tend to be lengthy, descriptive, and discursive. This evaluation, of the ongoing "Disaster Training Program for the Pacific Islands" of The Asia Foundation (TAF) as grantee of the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), takes a different and hopefully more efficient tack.

With four years (1999-2003) of monitoring/observing experience with the TAF/OFDA program, this evaluator has identified six principal program dimensions:

1. The "Course Suite"—its logic and synergy, completeness, and content.

2. The Instructor Cadre—quality and depth.

3. Program Impact—at the individual, organizational, and national levels with particular attention to National Disaster Management Officers (NDMOs).

4. Cost-Sharing and Buy-In.

5. Inter-Agency/Inter-Organization Coordination—with the regional lead agency and with other donors and sponsors.

6. Internal Project Discipline and Management.

More specifically, TAF/OFDA program accomplishments on each of the above dimensions will be scored on a 10-point scale, where the numbers indicate as follows:

10 -- success/achievement "above and beyond" reasonable expectation.
9-8 -- full or nearly full achievement of program objectives.
7-6 -- partial or incomplete achievement of program objectives.
5-4 -- serious achievement deficiencies.
3-2 -- minimal achievement.
1-0 -- failure.

After a brief background on the program and a description of the review process, this evaluation will be structured along the six program dimensions, followed by additional comments and observations, and then a conclusion with recommendations.

It should be noted, however, that with the permission and assistance of the TAF/OFDA office in Suva, Fiji Islands, the evaluator also commissioned a confidential (respondent name protected) 35-item mail/fax survey (see Appendix A) of 152 former training program participants who had participated in regional TAF/OFDA courses. Supplemented by other evaluation tools (especially document reviews and interviews), this survey, completed in the spring of 2002, provided interesting data that inform and support key points of this report.

Finally, it should be noted that the TAF/OFDA program (at the time for the islands of the South Pacific only) was evaluated in late 1999, with a report filed in February 2000. Because it not only provides extensive background on the program's successes but also identified certain late 1999 problems and challenges to which the program was expected to respond in 2000-2003, the Executive Summary of that February 2000 report is attached (Appendix B) to this evaluation.[1] The major conclusions at that time were as follows:

1. The program had stimulated impressive interest in and participation from key actors in the South Pacific (SP) region, especially from the various National Disaster Management Officers.

2. A new course had been developed—Introduction to Disaster Management (IDM)—that was not only innovative and successful, but also a worthy candidate for use elsewhere in the world, including as a "bounce-back" transfer to the LAC region.

3. One program problem was that only two training courses (the IDM just noted and the basic Training for Instructors (TFI) course) had been fully developed, tested, and refined, which left the "suite," ideally five or six courses, quite underdeveloped.

4. The "interactive methodology" that is a hallmark of OFDA overseas training generally was fully embraced and a clear success in the SP region.

5. OFDA's commitment to a common disaster management terminology was adopted and largely adhered to, representing a regional step forward in professional communication among and between the various SP island nations.

6. Local and national contributions ("buy-in") to the TAF/OFDA training were impressive, especially given resource and budget scarcities in the islands.

7. The instructor cadre for the training program was good in quality but lacked depth.

[1] The full February 2000 evaluation may be obtained from the evaluator at olsonr@fiu.edu

8. The single biggest problem was the lack of a well organized and managed lead agency in the SP region to which the TAF/OFDA training program could confidently relate and with which it could coordinate and hopefully "institutionalize" disaster management training in the region.

These February 2000 conclusions (mostly positive but with three problem areas identified) helped guide the subsequent monitoring of the TAF/OFDA program. As will be explained below, the TAF/OFDA program became substantially more complicated in 2003, when the North Pacific island nations of FSM (Federated States of Micronesia) and RMI (Republic of Marshall Islands) were added, taking it from a "South Pacific" to an even larger "Pacific Islands" coverage. That expansion, however, only increased responsibilities and challenges for a program that had never been simple, as the next two sections will outline.

Background

Following a series of major disasters in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region in the mid-1980s, the OFDA/LAC regional team began designing and developing a "Disaster Management Training Program." After review and deliberation, OFDA/Washington subsequently determined that its OFDA/LAC training program should be transferred to other regions of the world, modified and adapted as appropriate. The first transfer attempt came in the South Pacific, officially starting in 1994 but not really getting underway until 1995.

OFDA's training efforts in the South Pacific (through the grantee, TAF) were intended to serve as a component of a larger regional effort by the United Nations-sponsored South Pacific Disaster Reduction Program (SPDRP), which was to run for four years (1994-1998). The SPDRP proposal explained how all of the components were (supposed) to fit together:

> The Regional Training Component is one of six components in the SPDRP; the other five include: In-country Training and Technical Assistance, Disaster Mitigation, Regional Support Materials, Information Management and Regional Cooperation and Coordination.

The SPDRP proposal outlined a compelling need for training:

> SPDRP … lacks an element to assist countries develop their own capacity to organize and conduct training. In the absence of [such capacity], the achievements and, more importantly, the sustainability of SPDRP's outcomes will be undermined. This particularly applies to sustaining improvements in disaster management capability and performance. Without strengthening regional and in-country capacity to conduct training, it will be difficult for countries to maintain an effective standard of disaster management performance.

In essence the TAF/OFDA program was to meet that need, what a local official called "the hole in the U.N. [sponsored] program."

The initial U.N.-supported SPDRP ("I") ran from 1994 through mid-1998 and led to the design of a follow-on program, SPDRP II (mid-1998 through mid-2001) housed within the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), the regional lead agency for the South Pacific and funded by the Government of Australia and the Government of New Zealand.

Significant organizational problems developed within SOPAC's SPDRP I and SPDRP II and between SOPAC and organizations like TAF/OFDA. Indeed, the February 2000 evaluation of the TAF/OFDA program identified SOPAC management problems as a key obstacle for the TAF/OFDA program—and about which TAF/OFDA could do little except wait, watch, and hope.

SOPAC subsequently created an internal "Disaster Management Unit" (DMU) and brought in a director, who settled down the program, gave it a coherent focus, and established good working relations with other agencies involved in the region, including TAF/OFDA. This was a major step forward without which it is doubtful that the TAF/OFDA program would have enjoyed even minimal success.

In 2003, the DMU was re-mandated to focus more on mitigation, planning, and preparedness, and it was renamed as the "Community Risk Program." This change is conceptually healthy given the need to view disasters more holistically and not simply in "response" terms.

To these changes in the lead agency in the region, the TAF/OFDA program has also, as noted above, faced significant dynamics within—and then a considerable expansion of—its geographic area of responsibility.

The Country Set

The total country set for the TAF/OFDA training program was originally supposed to be 10: Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

The small island nation of Niue was part of the regional program until 1997, but given its very small size and resource base, it has not able to organize itself on a national basis and is only a periodic and rather marginal participant.

In the case of Papua New Guinea (PNG), the government of Australia developed and funded a special $8 million bilateral disaster assistance program, so PNG was initially moved out of the TAF/OFDA program set (but not completely).

As a result, when the TAF/OFDA program started in 1995, it was really to focus on eight countries, but when Palau achieved independence from the U.S., it moved from FEMA support and into the TAF/OFDA set (but not completely). As a result, by February 2000

the TAF/OFDA program had a rather complicated 8 + 3 country set configuration, for a total of 11 (a core of eight countries plus three special cases—Niue, PNG, and Palau).

Subsequently, however, both Palau and PNG evinced more interest in the TAF/OFDA training and became more fully involved, making it essentially 10 countries and one special case (Niue).

Then the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) became independent of the U.S., and in early 2003 OFDA/Washington asked the TAF/OFDA program to include those two nations in the training. Because these two island nations are in the North Pacific, the TAF/OFDA effort saw a huge geographical expansion and its name changed to "Pacific Islands Disaster Training Program."

Therefore, the country set for the TAF/OFDA program as of July 2003 is essentially 13, or more precisely 12 + 1 (Niue).

While understandable given the dynamics of the region, the substantial changes in the country set over a mere eight years made TAF/OFDA programming much more difficult than it otherwise would have been. It also did not make the evaluation any easier.

The Evaluation Process

Monitoring and evaluation of the TAF/OFDA program began in late 1999 (four years after program initiation) and involved:

1. Reading program documents and materials from Washington, D.C.; Davis, California; and the Suva office of TAF/OFDA.

2. Visiting the first management site for the TAF/OFDA program in Davis, California in October 1999 and interviewing the OFDA Training Consultant in Miami that same month.

3. Making three extended regional visits to the South Pacific in November 1999, October 2001, and April-May 2003. During these visits arrangements were made to:

    a. Observe regional, workshop, or national deliveries of both "Introduction to Disaster Management" (IDM) and "Initial Damage Assessment" (IDA).

    b. Visit three of the NDMO offices (Fiji Islands, Cook Islands, and Tonga).

    c. Interview ten of the NDMOs and twice that number of staff as well as 25 former training program participants and instructors.

d. Interview senior management and staff at SOPAC headquarters, the regional representative of the U.N., and others involved in the training effort in the region.

e. Interview higher level political/administrative leaders in the Fiji Islands, Cook Islands, and Tonga.

f. Interview training experts and senior management at the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) in Melbourne.

g. Visit Swinburne University of Technology (Melbourne) faculty and administrators charged with developing their graduate-level degree programs in Emergency Management.

4. Using the TAF/OFDA database, designing and fielding a 35-item questionnaire (that is, a survey) to all former participants in regional courses administered or supervised directly by TAF/OFDA personnel. As was noted above, this survey provided intriguing findings and key input to the present report.

II. The Survey

Response Rate and Principal Questions

Of the 152 surveys delivered, 57 were filled out and returned, for a response rate of 37.5%. While not excellent, this is adequate for basic data analysis and interpretation (to be fair, the technology and logistics in the South Pacific were very problematic).

This survey sought answers to a set of key training impact questions but then also sought to analyze how demographic, employment, and other variables affected the answers. The key questions (along with a special question on the desirability and utility of advanced Emergency Management degrees from an Australian university) were as follows:

- Has the OFDA training experience changed the way that you personally do your job or carry out your responsibilities?
    - Scale from 0-10 where 10 is the highest impact.

- How would you rate the impact that the OFDA training has had on the way that your superiors have evaluated you?
    - Highly positive = 2; somewhat positive = 1; mixed positive, negative, or no impact = 0; somewhat negative = -1; highly negative = -2.

- Do you believe that the OFDA training program has had an impact on the way that your organization carries out its responsibilities?
    - Scale from 0-10, where 10 is the highest impact.

- Have you suggested or attempted any organization-level changes based on the OFDA training that were accepted, accepted in part, or rejected?
    - Yes, suggested changes accepted in whole = 3; yes, suggested changes accepted in part = 2; no, suggested changes were rejected = 1.

- Compared to other international/external courses, how would you rate the quality of the OFDA training?
    - Highly superior = 2; superior = 1; about the same = 0; inferior = -1; very inferior = -2.

- An Australian university is planning to offer a Graduate Certificate in Disaster Management. How useful to your career would such a Graduate Certificate be?[2]
    - Highly useful = 3; moderately useful = 2; only slightly useful = 1; no use = 0.

The Survey: General Findings

The survey results were quite positive and complimentary to the TAF/OFDA training. Indeed, even when a few responses showed relatively low numbers (and were therefore of particular interest), they were still in the positive range, just not quite as high. These were the overall findings:

- The vast majority (91%) of the respondents continue to work in the disaster field. This suggests relatively low short-term attrition and that the TAF/OFDA training

[2] There is a near perfect correlation between responses to the Graduate Certificate program and Graduate Diploma questions. Therefore, we only analyze the certificate program question.

will continue to have an effect on the ability of these organizations to respond to disasters.

- 81% reported that TAF/OFDA training affected the way they personally did their jobs (the respondents selected an 8 or higher on the 10 point scale).
- 83% believed that the TAF/OFDA training had a highly positive impact on how their superiors evaluated them. Another 9% believed that the training had a somewhat positive impact, for a total of 92%.
- 45% said that their suggested organizational-level changes were accepted in whole, while 47% said they were accepted in part.
- Consistent with the previous point, 89% believed that the TAF/OFDA training affected the way in which their organizations carried out their responsibilities (the respondents selected an 8 or higher on the 10 point scale).
- A statistical analysis then confirmed a positive and significant relationship between the belief that the TAF/OFDA training changed the way that respondents did their jobs and (1) how their superiors evaluated them (favorably), and (2) the impacts they had on their organizations.
- 40% offered that the TAF/OFDA courses were superior to other training that they had taken, while 20% said that the TAF/OFDA courses were highly superior (40% said they were about the same).
- All the respondents (a true 100%) were positive about the value to their careers of a possible Australian university Graduate Certificate in emergency management—81% believing that it would be highly useful, another 19% seeing it as useful.

The Survey: Specific Findings

One of the advantages to a survey with a decent number of responses is the ability to develop cross tabulations between items of interest—or to see them when they leap out. The following points were especially notable:

Gender. Of the 57 respondents, only 8—15%—were women. Despite the small number of female respondents, gender still showed a significant impact on several of the relevant questions. Table 1 on the following page shows the difference in mean response scores between men and women respondents on several of the questions, as well as the combined totals.

Women do not report the TAF/OFDA training as having as positive an impact on their superiors' evaluation of them as the men, although they still feel the impact was very positive. The same is true about women's perceptions of their impacts on their organizations. Similarly, women do not see the Australian certificate program as clearly of a career advantage as do the male respondents.

Table 1
The Gender Issue

	Has OFDA training changed how you do your job?	How big an impact has OFDA training had on how you are evaluated?	How big an impact has OFDA training had on your organization?	Have you suggested any changes in your organization because of your OFDA training?	How does OFDA training compare to other programs?	How useful would a certificate program be to your career?
Men	8.7	1.9*	8.1*	2.4	1	2.9*
Women	8.0	1.6*	6.0*	2.1	1	2.0*
Total	8.6	1.8	7.8	2.4	1	2.7

* denotes statistically significantly different means.

These gender difference findings merit further reflection and discussion, and the evaluator was able to interview, in May 2003, four women with direct experience as participants in the TAF/OFDA training. When asked about difficulties or barriers faced by women in the field of emergency and disaster management in the South Pacific, three of the four said, "big problem" and went on to offer personal examples of disregard or depreciation. One said, "I have a woman boss, so the problem has gone away—for now." It appeared from these three interviews that the gender problem was both generally cultural but also specific to military and police institutions, where emergency or disaster management has been rooted historically. Old attitudes persist apparently.

One of the women, however, said that she never experienced, saw, or even heard about any gender problems (lucky woman).

Age. The average age of the respondents was 42 years. The youngest was 22 while the oldest was 59. The standard deviation was 8.6 years.

The respondent's age influenced only two of the questions of interest. Older respondents were less likely to be influenced by the TAF/OFDA training than their younger classmates. On the other hand, the older the respondent, the more career useful he/she (he usually) believed an Australian university certificate program would be.

Education. Seventy-four percent of the respondents have post-secondary education. This includes tertiary, vocational, and technical education. As Table 2 on the following page shows, respondents with more than secondary education reported changing how they did their jobs more than those with secondary education only. Similarly, those with post-secondary education believed that they were evaluated more positively at work after the TAF/OFDA training. These results suggest that post-secondary education increased the impact of the OFDA training.

Table 2
Education Effects

	Has OFDA training changed how you do your job?	How big an impact has OFDA training had on how you are evaluated?	How big an impact has OFDA training had on your organization?	Have you suggested any changes in your organization because of your OFDA training?	How does OFDA training compare to other programs?	How useful would a certificate program be to your career?
Secondary Education	7.5*	1.4*	7.2	2.4	1	2.6
Post-Secondary Education	8.8*	1.9*	7.8	2.4	1	2.7
Total	8.4	1.8	7.6	2.4	1	2.7

* denotes statistically significantly different means.

Recent Disaster Experience. Thirty-nine (68%) of the respondents reported having worked a disaster in the past five years. As Table 3 below shows, recent experience in a disaster significantly influenced a respondent's view of the TAF/OFDA training across several grounds, all of them very positive toward TAF/OFDA. This finding, that disaster experience increased a respondent's appreciation for the TAF/OFDA training, suggests that training immediately following an event will have greater than normal organizational impacts (the "window of opportunity" phenomenon).

Table 3
Disaster Experience Effects

	Has OFDA training changed how you do your job?	How big an impact has OFDA training had on how you are evaluated?	How big an impact has OFDA training had on your organization?	Have you suggested any changes in your organization because of your OFDA training?	How does OFDA training compare to other programs?	How useful would a certificate program be to your career?
No recent disaster experience	7.7*	1.6*	6.9*	2.3	1	2.4*
Recent disaster experience	8.8*	1.8*	8.0*	2.4	1	2.9*
Total	8.4	1.7	7.6	2.4	1	2.7

* denotes statistically significantly different means.

Comparison with Other Training. Finally, 39% of the respondents reported having taken other (i.e., in addition to TAF/OFDA) disaster training courses. A rather fascinating finding, for those respondents who have taken other training courses, the TAF/OFDA impact was enhanced. That is, it appears that experience with other training actually *increases* appreciation of the TAF/OFDA approach. As Table 4 on the next page also indicates, this is also the one time where a statistically significant (although very marginal) difference emerges on the question of respondents suggesting changes to their

organizations: Additional TAF/OFDA courses increased suggestions for organizational change.

Table 4
Other Training Experiences

	Has OFDA training changed how you do your job?	How big an impact has OFDA training had on how you are evaluated?	How big an impact has OFDA training had on your organization?	Have you suggested any changes in your organization because of your OFDA training?	How does OFDA training compare to other programs?	How useful would a certificate program be to your career?
No other disaster courses	8*	1.7*	7*	2.3*	NA	2.8
Other disaster courses	9.2*	1.9*	8.5*	2.5*	NA	2.6
Total	8.4	1.8	7.6	2.4	NA	2.7

* denotes statistically significantly different means.

Interestingly, and to follow-up on the comparison issue, in two late April 2003 interviews, which happened to be absolutely sequential (eliminating the possibility of cross-contamination), a pair of NDMOs used virtually identical language about "other" (non-TAF/OFDA) training. One said that "The OFDA training was the gold standard by which I judge everything else," the other saying that, "For me, OFDA set the bar."[3]

In sum, although one would not want to over-interpret survey findings (former trainees are usually grateful for the experience), the results for the TAF/OFDA training are gratifying. The program is clearly well regarded. All responses were positive and interesting, with the results indicating that training impacts are likely to be long-term for both individuals (especially) and organizations. The gender issue, however, must be reflected upon very carefully.

To be noted also is the unanimously positive response to the idea of an Australian university graduate degree in emergency management. Interviews subsequent to the survey (in April-May 2003) reveal that many of the TAF/OFDA training participants lack university degrees, despite impressive professional credentials acquired over the years. Understanding that the TAF/OFDA courses may count as credit toward an Australian graduate degree, many of these individuals see the possibility as enabling them to move ahead professionally. One said, "I hear footsteps behind me, and me without a university credential …." A clear poignancy adheres to this unfinished sentence.

[3] This evaluator was unaware at the time that these statements were not mere rhetoric; they had an empiric referent that will be discussed below on page 15.

III. The Six Evaluation Dimensions

One: The Course Suite—8. 66 (Overall)

Logic and Synergy	9.00
Completeness/Finalization	7.00
Content—Intrinsic Quality	10.00

The TAF/OFDA training program comprises five courses, one of which is the basic "how to train" course, Training for Instructors (TFI). The other four are substantive: Introduction to Disaster Management (the very important IDM); Exercise Management (ExMan); Emergency Operations Centers (EOC); and Initial Damage Assessment (IDA).

The three more advanced courses (ExMan, EOC, and IDA) build on TFI for technique and IDM for substance, although exceptions can be made for individuals to "skip ahead" at times. Interestingly from a disaster response viewpoint, the IDA course may turn out to be the most important in the long-term given the consistency/credibility/acceptance problems encountered in recent damage assessments in the region.

The suite's logic and synergy are very impressive, giving it a score of 9. Although it may be addressed in the future, the problem that keeps this score from a 10 is the lack of a follow-up to the IDM course. That is, the TAF/OFDA program has an "Introduction to Disaster Management" but lacks the next level. To be fair, the program attempted early-on a more advanced "Disaster Program Management" (DPM) course imported from the LAC region. The reaction, however, was not positive and led to the design of the IDM course.

Several of the NDMOs stated in May 2003 that they would like to revisit the DPM, saying that "we're ready for it now." If DPM were to be added, it would bring the TAF/OFDA suite to six courses.[4]

At this point, however, even in its five-course format, the suite is not fully developed and tested out. The reality is that the suite is "3-1-1" with three courses are fully developed, piloted, and refined (TFI, IDM, and ExMan), one still being refined (EOC), and one (IDA) only recently piloted (late April 2003). That mixed status renders a score of 7.

For intrinsic quality, no better validation exists than the fact that Swinburne University of Technology (SUT) in Australia has "mapped" the content of the TAF/OFDA courses against its requirements for *graduate-level* credit and agreed in writing to an articulation that allows former TAF/OFDA training participants to apply their courses toward graduate certificates and diplomas in Emergency Management (Appendix C). Given the rigor and learning outcomes orientation of SUT's mapping of the TAF/OFDA courses, this acceptance yields a 10 score.

[4] The TFI course is currently being replaced with a shorter, more focused and updated "Effective Presentations" course.

Two: The Instructor Cadre—7.00 (Overall)

Quality	8.00
Depth	6.00

Although the two sub-dimensions here (quality and depth of the cadre) cannot be completely separated, the division has evaluative utility. That is, the quality of the first and even second choices for instructors of the various courses is very good to excellent, but the pool becomes very shallow after that, especially for the more recently developed courses. In sum, that makes the instructor cadre good but fragile, yielding an overall score of 7 only.

Three: Program Impact—7.50 (Overall)

Individual Level	9.00
Organizational Level	8.00
National Level	5.00
NDMO's specifically	8.00

As explained previously, the survey of former participants carried out by the evaluator and his team showed truly exceptional impacts of the TAF/OFDA training at the individual level (virtually everyone reported changing the ways that they did their jobs). Almost as strong were reports of the TAF/OFDA training having positive impacts on how the former participants were evaluated in performance reviews after returning to their positions. Moreover, the vast majority also reported that they were able to make changes or successful recommendations for change at the organizational level after returning from the training. A sub-dimension score of 9 is the result.

Troubling and worth repeating from above, however, was a consistent and statistically significant difference between how men and women reported being evaluated and how much success they had in organizational change post-training. Compared to the men, women reported lower (but still high in absolute terms) success rates in both post-training job evaluations and attempts at organization-level innovation. While hardly startling, this discrepancy merits further thought.

Interestingly, statistically significant training impact differences were also evident based on whether the former participants had disaster experience in the previous five years. If they had such experience, they saw higher value in the TAF/OFDA training. That is, the more direct disaster experience of the participants, the more highly they evaluated their TAF/OFDA training.

Perhaps more important on this program impact dimension, however, is the fact that most of the nations have simply taken the TAF/OFDA courses wholesale and made them *their* disaster training programs. That is, the program has had not only individual but also organizational impacts. For example, a brochure of the NDMO of the Fiji Islands lists

seven courses in their program—five of which are the TAF/OFDA courses (see Figure 1 on the following page, which reproduces the pertinent section of the Fiji Islands NDMO brochure).

Similarly, the NDMO of Papua New Guinea told this evaluator that he intends to simply "appropriate" the entire TAF/OFDA suite and make it his training program. Another NDMO said in an interview, "Let's be honest here, the OFDA training *is* our national disaster training, period. And that is true for the other islands as well."

A different NDMO offered a broader perspective on the TAF/OFDA training, saying that, "Without it, we would all still be sitting here isolated on our little islands and thinking only response." This person also wanted special note taken of the IDM course, which he said, "changed our mentalities and made us think mitigation too."

A key actor in SOPAC echoed these comments, observing that "The NDMOs hold the TAF/OFDA training as precious. They feel a pride of ownership in it, and they—fairly or unfairly—judge all other training by it." The final fillip to this line of argument occurred when an Australian emergency management course was brought to the NDMOs and "trialed" in late 2002. It was roundly criticized for not being up to "OFDA standards." The course was returned for "retooling."

A score of the 8 thus appears fair here on organizational level impact—and perhaps too conservative given that adopting or wholesale "appropriation" of the TAF/OFDA training is quite a compliment.

The problem area on this dimension is national impact, where the NDMO offices are—with a couple of exceptions—relatively weak administratively and especially financially (budgets). This weakness translates into an inability to reach down effectively into their societies and have on-the-ground impacts on community vulnerability and risk management. This problem results in a score of only 5 at this point in time, although fairness requires that it be noted that impact in this area is outside the direct control of TAF/OFDA.

The Government of the Fiji Islands, however, is actively considering the creation of a "Ministry of Disaster Management." If this organizational advance is realized, it will be important not only to Fiji itself but also to other island nations whose governments may follow the lead. The Fiji initiative would also change the "5" score on this sub-dimension.

In terms of the NDMOs themselves, the group as a whole is very good, but the problem is the unevenness within the group and their varying understanding of the TAF/OFDA training program. That is, they all "embrace" it and want it, but a few don't appear to fully grasp what the program actually entails, especially when they return home. Nonetheless, the comprehension is higher than it was three years ago, so the result is a program impact score of 8 for the group as a whole.

FIJI NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME

The National Disaster Management Training under the Disaster and Risk Management Training Advisory Committee (DARMTAC) as approved under Cabinet Decision CP 02 312 of 15th July 2002.

PURPOSE OF THE DARMTAC

The DARMTAC is to provide a forum to advance national disaster management training for the benefit of the disaster fraternity and stakeholders.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE DARMTAC

Generally the membership include:

- Head of National Disaster Management Office (NDMO)
- Academic Adviser
- Reps from training providers
- Reps from disaster management fraternity organisation

OBJECTIVES OF THE DARMTAC

Networking

Conduct meetings between disaster management fraternity and training providers.

- Facilitate the development of quality standard of courses program.
- Bring together, providers to co-ordinate the development of courses.

National Policy

Advocate for the integration of Risk Management into National Planning Policy.

- Seek formal recognition of the DRAMTAC by the National Training Authority.
- Advocate and implement training initiative.
- Endorse and support Professional Development Plans developed by the NDMO

Academic

- Endorse the award of national qualification in Disaster and Risk Management.
- Monitor policies and criteria for the approval of new programs.
- Oversee the requirement of local accreditation.
- Advise the SOPAC/DMU on the current and future need of Disaster Risk Management in the country.

NDMO SHORT COURSES

Funding

Due to the limited funds within the Fiji NDMO most of the short courses sponsored by:

- South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)
- The Asia Foundation/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (TAF/OFDA)
- Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC - Bangkok)

Courses

Fiji participants have attended the following regional courses offered by TAF/OFDA.
Introduction to Disaster Management.

- Training for Instructors.
- Exercise Management.
- Emergency Operation Centre Management

Fiji NDMO Course Adaptation Process

This process involves the adaptation of Regional course to our needs.
The adaptation process is conducted by the Training Workshop Group (TWG).
Two courses already adapted at the National level include :

- Introduction to Disaster Management (IDM)
- Training of Instructions (TFI)

List of Courses on the Adaptation Pipeline

- Emergency Operation Centre Management
- Exercise Management

NDMO COURSES IDENTIFIED FOR FIJI

- Introduction to Disaster Management (IDM)
- Training of Instructors (TFI)
- Exercise Management
- Emergency Operation Centre Management
- Initial Damage Assessment
- CHARM Sensitization
- Crisis and Disaster Management
- Evacuation Center Management

OTHER TRAINING ISSUES

- NDMO through the DARMTAC is embarking towards the integration of Disaster & Risk Management in the School Curriculum.
- Closely work with SOPAC for the Graduate Certificate in Disaster and Risk Management through Swinburne University.

Figure 1
The NDMO-Fiji Brochure

Four: Cost-Sharing and Buy-In—6.00

The February 2000 review of the TAF/OFDA program noted (p. 13) the following about financial contributions to the training program from the island nations:

> Although uneven across the various islands, local buy-in (in kind or cash contributions) is respectable, especially given the very limited resources of the countries and the fact that the disaster management offices or organizations are generally not well funded by their governments. As selected examples of in-cash or in-kind support (all valued in US dollars), Palau cost-shared $500 for a July 1999 TFI; Fiji contributed $550 to a June 1999 TFI; the Solomon Islands contributed $1,400 to a May 1999 IDM course; and the Cook Islands cost-shared $600 for a June 1998 ECM course. The regional total would be greater than the sum of these four, as several other courses were cost-shared but not as well documented.

TAF/OFDA documentation on cost-sharing has improved over the past three years. Table 5 below is a summary of the more recent contributions, with the data drawn from accounting sheets filled out for each individual cost-shared activity.

Table 5

South Pacific Cost-Sharing Contributions, March 2000-November 2002
(in U.S. Dollars)

Date	Contributor/Site	Function	Cash	In-Kind	Total
Nov 4-8, 2002	Samoa	TFI-National	1,000	2,100	3,100
Sept 9-12, 2002	Samoa	IDM	500	1,000	1,500
Aug 6-12, 2002	Palau	IDM	0	700	700
June 14-17, 2002	Tuvalu	IDM Workshop	90	0	90
May 6-June 19, 2002	Kiribati	IDM	600	0	600
Oct 9-11, 2001	Samoa	IDM-National	0	1,100	1,100
March 29-31, 2001	Tonga	IDM Workshop	0	250	250
Dec 12-15, 2000	Tonga	IDM Workshop	10	340	350
March 6-11, 2000	Tonga	IDM	550	0	550
TOTAL in U.S. Dollars			2,750	5,490	8,240

Source: TAF/OFDA Office in Suva, Fiji Islands 2003

It may be slightly unfair to give a score of only 6 on this dimension, but on the other hand, one would like to see more of the island nations represented in the cost-sharing. That is, the issue is not so much the dollar amounts, which continue to be quite respectable or at least credible demonstrations of good faith, but rather the small number

of nations (only five in fact between March 2000 and November 2002) comprising the list.

Five: Inter-Agency/Organization Coordination—9.00 (Overall)

With Regional "Lead Agency"	9.00
With Other Donors/Sponsors	9.00

The TAF/OFDA relationship with SOPAC's Disaster Management Unit (now the Community Risk Programme), is excellent. They cooperate and coordinate closely in training, with SOPAC not only cost-sharing but also deferring to a TAF/OFDA leadership role in training. Alan Mearns, the DMU/CPR director, said simply, "TAF/OFDA is our strongest partnership; I don't know where we would be without them. They have made an incredible contribution to the Pacific Islands."

Equally positive is the TAF/OFDA relationship with such other donors as U.N.-OCHA and the IFRC. The best evidence of the acknowledged place of the TAF/OFDA program in the Pacific is the document creating a coordinating structure for disaster training in the region: The Pacific Emergency Management Training Advisory Group (PEMTAG). The purpose of PEMTAG is to avoid conflict among donors, assure non-duplication of efforts, and maximize training coordination. Significantly, the document was signed jointly by DMU-SOPAC, UN-OCHA, TAF/OFDA, and IFRC (see Figure 2 on the following page).

Therefore, the score on this sub-dimension is an equally solid 9.

Six: Project Discipline and Management—10.00

This dimension merits a score of 10. The courses are disciplined, the program is disciplined, and the documentation and record keeping are excellent. The program has been faithful to the OFDA training ethos.

The TAF/OFDA program has been able to secure both acceptance and success with very modest resources and staffing. In fact, given the logistical and planning difficulties inherent in a huge region with scant infrastructure (not to mention island, cultural, and personality differences), program impacts have been remarkable.

Annex A:
Diagram of the proposed
EMT system in the Pacific

Pacific Emergency Management Training Advisory Group

PEMTAG

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Public Safety and Risk Management Programme
- **Policy Development and Managing Community Risk Course**
- **Planning and Programme Management Course**

OFDA Pacific Disaster Training Program
- **Introduction to Disaster Management Course**
- **Training For Instructors Course**
- **Exercise Management Course**
- **Emergency Operations Centre Course**
- **Initial Damage Assessment Course**

UN Training
- **UN Disaster Management Training Programme**
- **UN Emergency Response Awareness Workshop**
- **UNDAC Induction Course**
- **UNDAC Refresher Course**

Emergency Services Training
- **Coordinated Incident Management System**
- **Urban Search & Rescue Courses**

Red Cross Training
- **Field Assessment & Coordination Team Course**
- **Emergency Response Unit Courses**
- **Regional Disaster Response Team Course**
- **Emergency Management Workshops**

Community Training
- **Community Based Self-Reliance Workshop**

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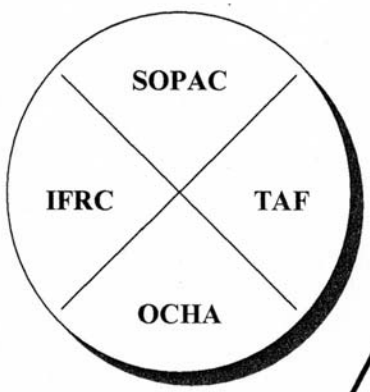

PEMTAG: effective EM training, based on validated needs analysis

Capacity-Building Mechanisms and Tools

AFAC
INSARAG
UNDAC System → Regional level

SOPAC advocacy → National Government level

Executive awareness training → National Disaster Committee level

Internationally accredited training courses → NDMO/Emergency Services level

Provincial/Island Government level

Community awareness workshops → Community level

Figure 2
The PEMTAG Structure

IV. Additional Comments/Observations

The linchpins to the TAF/OFDA program continue to be the NDMO offices in the various islands and their actual disaster and training management capabilities. The February 2000 review (based on data collected in late 1999) contained a table (p. 6) with "selected indicators" of the varying capabilities of the NDMO offices (named officers in place, personnel number, communications capabilities, training courses completed at the national level). This evaluator then used his April-May 2003 visit to update these indicators, with help from the TAF/OFDA program manager in Suva. The comparative (1999 versus 2003) results are shown in Table 6 on the following page. The arrow symbol (→) is used to denote changes from 1999 to 2003.

With the exception of Samoa, an overall upward trend is discernible on all of the islands on one or more of the indicators, with Fiji showing marked evolution. Even on Samoa, they have been able to implement both a national-level TFI and IDM.

Particularly reassuring is the increase in communication capabilities (e-mail), which is largely attributable to SOPAC support.

The problem will continue to be unevenness in advance among the various islands (it was noted as a problem in the February 2000 evaluation), but this may well have to be accepted as inevitable given the vast differences between island nations in the region. Moreover, the disparities will likely increase as FSM and RMI are mainstreamed into the program.

Table 6
SP/PI Region Disaster Management Capabilities, By Country
(Selected Indicators), 1999 & 2003

	NDMOs Named and in Place		FTE		NDMO Office Comm Lines		e-mail		Course TFI National?		Course IDM National?	
	'99	'03	'99	'03	'99	'03	'99	'03	'99	'03	'99	'03
1. Cook Islands	Y	Y	2	2	4	4	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
2. Fiji Islands	Y	Y	3	→ 12	3	3	N	→ Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3. Kiribati	N	→ Y	1	1	1	→ 2	N	→ Y	N	N	N	→ Y
4. Samoa	N	N	1	1	2	2	Y	Y	N	→ Y	N	→ Y
5. Solomon Islands	Y	Y	3	3	2	2	Y	Y	N	N	N	→ Y
6. Tonga	Y	Y	1.5	→ 2	1.5	→ 2	N	→ Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
7. Tuvalu	N	→ Y	1	1	1.5	→ 2	N	→ Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
8. Vanuatu	Y	Y	1.5	→ 3	2	2	N	→ Y	N	N	N	→ Y
9. Palau	Y	Y	6	6	2	2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
10. Papua New Guinea	Y	Y	5	5	2	2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
11. Niue	N	→ Y	1	1	2	2	N	→ Y	N	N	N	→ Y
12. FSM (Micronesia)	NA	Y	NA	5	Added to Program 2003							
13. RMI (Marshalls)	NA	Y	NA	1	Added to Program 2003							

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

Through its grantee TAF (The Asia Foundation), OFDA has developed since 1995 a well regarded and successful disaster training program in the South Pacific, recently expanded to include two island nations in the North Pacific. The TAF/OFDA training program is well accepted not only by the nations of the region but also by other donors and especially the lead regional agency, the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), supported by the governments of Australia and New Zealand. This was not the case as recently as February 2000 and represents a major program accomplishment. That is, the TAF/OFDA program is seen as a full partner in improving disaster management in the Pacific region and has "a place at the table," especially in the training area.

Nonetheless, the TAF/OFDA program has several problems: (1) the course suite is still unfinished because two of its five courses are not refined; (2) the course suite is also "incomplete" without a follow-on to the IDM (Introduction to Disaster Management), which would logically be a DPM (Disaster Program Management) course; (3) the instructor cadre, while good to excellent in quality, is not deep enough to sustain the training over the long-term; (4) marked disparities in training capacity remain between so-called "lead" nations and others; and (5) most of the National Disaster Management Offices in the various islands remain organizationally and financially weak within their own governments (despite marked improvements in certain countries) and have not yet taken the training down to the community level in their islands.

Therefore, evaluation-based recommendations come at two levels, general and specific. Derived from an overall view of the TAF/OFDA program and especially comparing the situation with four years ago, the general recommendations are as follows:

1. *Given its national-level impacts and hard-won full partner status in the region, the program should be continued and, if possible, enhanced.*

2. *To emphasize the preceding point, it is also recommended that further monitoring and evaluation be discontinued, with any savings being reallocated to direct program activities, as long as major changes do not occur in TAF/OFDA personnel and/or in TAF/OFDA relations with the lead agency (SOPAC).*

Six more specific recommendations also flow from the evaluation:

1. *Internal staff and office support in the South Pacific should be a program funding priority to avoid the danger of overload and burnout, in particular with the addition of North Pacific island nations—a very challenging expansion.*

2. *The program should fully complete its course suite, and quickly.*

3. *The program should seek to leverage host-country governments to increase policy and budgetary support to their respective NDMOs. Along this line, if the*

Government of the Fiji Islands does indeed create a "Ministry of Disaster Management," the program can and should use this precedent as a template for similar efforts in other islands.

4. *The TAF/OFDA course suite should be "nationalized" to the fullest extent possible, which may require TAF/OFDA to help (or push in some cases) the NDMO structures in each country to take the training out to their communities, particularly those most at risk*.

5. *Increased cooperation should be sought with the Emergency Management Institute in Melbourne, Australia*.

6. *Mechanisms should be found to support former TAF/OFDA training participants so that they can take advantage of the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma opportunities being offered them under the "Recognition of Prior Learning" formula developed in conjunction with SOPAC and Swinburne University of Technology in Australia*.