

2018 PRIVATE SECTOR DIALOGUE WITH FORUM LEADERS

PRIVATE SECTOR STATEMENT #1 – DISASTER RESILIENCE

Honourable Leaders, with all protocols observed, I shall start.

Majority of businesses in the Pacific are Micro and Small to Medium Enterprises and are vulnerable to natural disasters. A survey carried out by the Pacific Private Sector Organisation, the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation and partners found that 1 in 4 businesses do not recover after a large disaster strikes.

Cyclones Pam, Winston and Evan, in Vanuatu, Fiji and Samoa respectively, the Private Sector accounted between 45% to 78% of total damage, which amounted to a staggering USD\$1.5b

With these alarming figures and statistics, it is evident that resilience is everyone's business and affects all economic and social sectors.

There is an opportunity for the private sector to play a central role in building community resilience, and for their contributions to government led climate change and disaster related activities to be better utilised.

A paradigm shift in private sector engagement is required to a point where private sector is a core partner in all aspects of resilience building activities, and where their engagement is strategic and coordinated.

Deep-seated governance issues need to be tackled in order to provide space for the private sector to build their own and community resilience, and to engage with government led climate change and disaster activities.

We the private sector, request Leaders to:

Create enabling environment and incentives that support investment in adaptation efforts, disaster resilience and mitigation activities and effective recovery;

In response, we, the Private Sector, will ensure that resilience lies at the core of decision making processes, recognising that, according to the World Bank, for every \$1 of investment there is a \$7 return; and will provide capacity building to businesses and community on business continuity planning and preparedness. This will help build more resilient businesses and communities.

We the private sector, request Leaders to:

- Prioritise climate and disaster resilience of critical public infrastructure such as ports, bridges, power grids and roads, which once damaged cannot be reinstated quickly.
- Strongly support the review, modernisation and enforcement of the building codes appropriate to Pacific Island Countries.

The **private sector will** lead the initiative in the development for the terms of reference for the review of national building codes.

We will work to mobilise private sector investment to supplement traditional funding sources.

We commend Leaders' continued commitment towards climate change and building resilience and the associated impacts on the Pacific Communities, through frameworks such as the Paris Agreement, and the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) and we endeavour to work closely with you in these efforts.

3 September 2018
Nauru