

Vulnerability of Pacific Island Country Hospitals: Critical Infrastructure that must be addressed

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Current situation

- The COP27 Loss and Damage Fund agreement was a celebrated win for Pacific Island Countries (PICs)
- Pacific Island Region is the most at risk region for EWEs
- Hospitals are not considered critical infrastructure but they should be as they straddle two adaptation sectors: infrastructure and health delivery
- 76 hospitals located in 14 Pacific Island Countries: **58% are physically vulnerable** based upon location putting a collective **63% of the population** at risk for losing services

The future we want to see

- As of 2022 70% of climate change funding addressed efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The adaptation funding gap must be filled in in order to address risks from vulnerability that are already “locked in.”
- Relocating or retrofitting hospitals in order to decrease risk are seen as large capital expenditures. Increasing adaptation funding based upon risks PICs face can help shore up vulnerable hospitals.
- Governments and development partners must stop seeing hospitals as luxury health development items and see them for the critical infrastructure role they play in reducing risk in the most vulnerable region of the world.

Country best practice example 1

- Relocating vulnerable or damaged hospitals



Country best practice example 2

- Adaptation of atoll hospitals without relocation options



Google Earth image of Nukunonu hospital (left), the new 2 story [Nukunonu hospital](#) built adjacent to old building shown in green.

Country best practice example 3

- PAHO safe and smart hospitals: Peebles Hospital Tortola, BVI



Why urgent action is needed now

- A number of PIC hospitals remain highly vulnerable



Google Earth view of the National Referral Hospital (NRH) (left), Proposed relocation site blue marker, with current location of NRH marked by red arrow (right).

Proposed recommendations for governments

- Commit to amplifying and prioritizing hospitals as critical infrastructure along with roads, bridges, ports and airports.
- Advocate for more funding to be allocated for adaptation as it pertains to health and critical infrastructure within your country and regionally.
- Recognize and give weight to hospitals spanning two critical sectors that are negatively impacted by extreme weather events and rising sea levels when discussing priorities.

Proposed recommendations for development partners

- Address adequately funding to reduce the adaptation gap
- Commit to recognizing and supporting programs that address the unique and “locked in” threats Pacific Island Countries face.
- Recognize that Pacific Island hospitals are not “big ticket luxury items” and invest in shoring them up to withstand EWEs
- Support and implement the UN Multi-dimensional Vulnerability Index and the COP 27 Loss and Damage Agreement.

Too Little, Too Slow

Climate adaptation failure
puts world at risk



Thank you!