Honiara, Solomon Islands – In Honiara last week, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) led training to develop 21 new Emergency Response Team trainers for the Solomon Islands.

The participants engaged in eight days of training on the various activities Emergency Response Teams are expected to perform and also learnt how to provide this training to other personnel in their respective Provinces or organisations.

The training reflects collaboration at the local, regional and national levels with SPC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), working together to prepare the training materials, which were reviewed by the Solomon Islands Red Cross Society (SIRCS) and National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) before being delivered to participants representing Red Cross and Solomon Islands Government at the provincial level, as well as NGOs such as Oxfam, Save the Children and World Vision.

Following the training, participants will receive support from Red Cross and the NDMO to provide multi-agency Emergency Response Team training in their home provinces.

In opening the training, the Secretary-General of Solomon Islands Red Cross, Joanne Zoleveke, and the Director of the NDMO, Loti Yates, challenged participants to take the opportunity afforded by this training to strengthen relationships between partners and to prepare to co-deliver Emergency Response Team (ERT) training at a provincial level.

Mr Yates emphasised that with the majority of the Solomon Islands' population in the Provinces, local response to disasters is of critical importance.

He said it was essential that all agencies worked together, according to the same standards and procedures in line with the Solomon Islands National Disaster Risk Management Arrangements to allow information to be shared and effective response measures put in place to support people affected by disasters.

The training was facilitated by Dr Kirstie Méheux (SPC), Douglas Clark (New Zealand Red Cross), Cameron Vidu (Solomon Islands Red Cross) and George Baragamu (National Disaster Management Office).

The training was organised by French Red Cross and Solomon Islands Red Cross as part of the Together Becoming Resilient! Project made possible with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and is implemented in partnership with the National Disaster Management Office, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and SPC.

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