

NEW ZEALAND TALKING POINTS

**GLOBAL COMPACT ON MIGRATION
THEMATIC SESSION 2**

PANEL 1: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ERADICATION

- Note the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals to 'leave no one behind' and showcase New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme.
- New Zealand currently takes 10,500 temporary workers annually (mostly from the Pacific) through the Recognised Seasonal Employer programme (RSE). RSE is a labour mobility scheme which provides temporary workers for the horticulture and viticulture sector.
- Participants are trained in appropriate skills through specialised training, but also in other trades skills which can directly benefit those workers through enabling them to take up other work within the sending country once they return.
- In terms of formal training, Vakameasina, a programme funded through NZ Aid, provides English language, numeracy, financial and computer literacy, health and life skills training to over 1,000 RSE workers every year. This training is highly regarded by the RSE employees, who are particularly interested in improving their financial literacy skills.
- RSE workers take more than income with them; they take skills and future work opportunities home.
- An example of how well-governed and well-informed migration policies can harness the development benefits of migration to alleviate poverty and create a win-win.

PANEL 2: HUMAN MADE CRISES AS DRIVERS OF MIGRATION

- During New Zealand's two-year term on the UN Security Council from 2015-16, we prioritised conflict prevention as an area where the Council needed to perform better. To this end, we advanced several successful initiatives aimed at putting conflict prevention into practice, including by having the UN Secretariat provide monthly informal briefings to Security Council members on emerging threats. New Zealand is therefore highly supportive of new UN Secretary-General Guterres' prioritisation of conflict prevention as part of his reform agenda.
- New Zealand played a proactive and constructive role as an elected member of the Security Council. We believed it was all members' responsibility to try and tackle the major peace and security issues on the Council's agenda, not just the big (permanent five) members. On Syria, the Middle East Peace Process and migration issues we worked with elected and permanent members to try and find practical solutions.

PANEL 3: ADVERSE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL DISASTERS AS DRIVERS OF MIGRATION

Climate Change

- In a number of vulnerable countries in South and East Asia the situation is rapidly becoming critical. While traditional drivers of migration exist, such as lack of or under-employment, poverty and political instability, new drivers of migration relating to climate change are developing. Climate change-related pressures such as hunger, poverty, insecurity and conflict over access to water and other resources increase, so too will the pressures to migrate.
- For Small Island Developing States in the Pacific, the potential for increased climate-induced migration is of real concern. Low-lying islands such as Atafu, Fakaofu and Nukunono in Tokelau are at great risk of rising sea levels and the vulnerabilities associated. We have an interest in addressing the impacts of climate change for the people of the Pacific, through effective adaptation and mitigation projects.
- Global responses to climate change should continue to focus on mitigation and adaptation measures, recognising that migration may eventually lie at one extreme of the adaptation response continuum.
- New Zealand, as a member of the Pacific Islands Forum, agreed to the 2008 Niue Declaration on Climate Change which states the expressed desire of Pacific peoples to continue to live in their own countries.
- Global labour mobility has increased in recent decades; this trend will inevitably accelerate as uncertainty and instability caused by climatic change threaten livelihoods and lifestyles. Initially it will be professional and skilled personnel who will be able to choose when to migrate and where to go, but eventually even unskilled workers will follow.
- New Zealand is using a sustainable development approach to aid to boost skills in the Pacific. One benefit of this approach is should Pacific Islanders need to migrate in the future, they have the skills to manage migrating to new countries and find work.
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- New Zealand reiterates its full commitment to the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, and calls for a coordinated UN approach to climate change and the range of issues affected by climate change.

Natural Disasters, and lessons learned from the Canterbury earthquakes and rebuild

- New Zealand has committed to engage in the Platform on Disaster Displacement, which has been established to replace the Nansen Initiative, and to take forward its Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change. New Zealand is also a signatory to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.
- New Zealand is a trusted partner that, at the request of partner governments, can respond quickly in support of Pacific governments when a disaster strikes. Small island developing states in the Pacific also face disproportionately high risks and damage due to their small and vulnerable economies.
- While many people are displaced after a disaster from a lack of shelter, resources, there are also the incoming migration procedures to be aware of for immediate humanitarian support, and meeting labour requirements for the rebuilding of the affected area.
- Our experience with the Christchurch earthquakes of 2011 and 2012 is that the rebuild grew the building industry within the region by 150% for more than four years. The sector required additional people from outside the immediate area to fulfil that demand. Those people also required housing and community facilities in an already damaged city, so the infrastructure around migration had to be accounted for within resilience and disaster planning.
- Local labour supply in Canterbury continues to be tight, and migrants have been the supplementing factor. New Zealand maintains a specific skills shortage list for Christchurch, particularly in the construction and trades industries. This allows migrants to apply for temporary work visas through Essential Skills instructions or Work to Residence pathways.
- New Zealand connected this labour demand with our sustainable development aid, through bringing skilled workers from the Pacific. The Canterbury Reconstruction Programme is a pilot which includes 24 workers from Tonga, Fiji and Samoa, who have been provided with one-year visas to work with three employers as skilled carpenters. These workers are gaining qualifications and experience. As part of the programme, the carpenters are working towards NZQA level 4 in carpentry. At this stage, 21 of the 24 will be graduating in June 2017 with the qualification. The skills and the experience they have gained while working in New Zealand will benefit the workers' job prospects and their communities. Specific aspects they will be able to take home and share with other community members there range from a practical understanding of modern health and safety practices to skills in building retaining walls, which will contribute to disaster risk reduction efforts in areas vulnerable to climate change.
- The population of Christchurch fell 6% after the earthquakes, although nearby areas experienced population increases. While the outward flows of migrants were initially predominantly male, the proportion of males grew again through the labour required for the rebuild. We note that, post-earthquake, female participation in the labour market dropped. New Zealand would therefore encourage other countries' national disaster risk reduction and resilience planning to incorporate a rights-based approach and gender aspects.
- Regular temporary migration (the tourism and international student markets) declined in Canterbury in the wake of the earthquakes, which had an impact on both the local economy and the wider national economy. This was partly because Canterbury is a large and economically important region in its own right, and partly because some international markets were concerned that all of New Zealand was potentially earthquake-prone.