ACP-EU Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific Project

Activity Report 2015
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Prepared by the Geoscience Division of the Pacific Community

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# CONTENTS

**FOREWORD**

**INTRODUCTION**

- BSRP Project at a glance ................................................. 1
- Expected Outcomes for Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific .................................................. 2
- Key stakeholders ........................................................................ 3

**REGIONAL WORK**

- Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific (SRDP) ........................................ 4
- Pacific cooperation leads to world first strategy ...................................................................................... 5
- Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA) ................................................................. 6
- Communications.............................................................................. 8

**COUNTRY UPDATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cook Islands</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated States of Micronesia</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiribati</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of the Marshall Islands</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nauru</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niue</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palau</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor Leste</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoa</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE – OUTCOME STATEMENT**

**ANNEX 1 – Regional Steering Committee Notes**

**ANNEX 2 – Financials (July – June 2015)**
It is with great pleasure that I present to you the second annual report for the Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) project, which is dedicated to effective disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) at regional, national and community levels across 15 countries in the Pacific region.

The year 2015 has been a fruitful one for the project, with clarity and direction being achieved for many of the 15 countries that are included in the overall scope of this work. It has also been a challenging year, with disasters becoming a reality for many of the countries within the project, along with the tragic loss of one of our team, Losana McGowan.

Tropical Cyclone Pam struck Vanuatu in early March, and also caused damage and widespread flooding in Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. The cyclone was the most intense in the southern hemisphere for 2015, and the worst disaster recorded in Vanuatu’s history. This extreme event highlights the importance and need to build the resilience of Pacific Island countries and strengthen our response to these increasing disasters. Less than three weeks later another disaster developed with Super Typhoon Maysak, which was the most powerful pre-April tropical cyclone on record in the northwestern Pacific Ocean. Maysak slammed into the Federated States of Micronesia on 31 March as it passed near Chuuk and Yap, resulting in 4 deaths and 10 injuries, with damage estimated at USD8.5 million.

These disasters, along with a myriad of other localised cases of flooding, as well as the onset of the region’s worst drought in almost a decade due to the prevailing El Niño, emphasise the critical importance of our work in helping communities and countries become more resilient to disaster.

Furthermore, the project has learnt from the experiences of these disasters, and been able to achieve great commitment and partnerships throughout the year, which will contribute to the long-term resilience of these countries.

Joint national action plans on how best to coordinate disaster risk management and adaption to climate change, and new state-of-the-art emergency operations centres, are key priorities for 2016, along with a renewed focus on understanding traditional knowledge in disaster preparation and learning from our experiences of disaster in recent years. The strengthening of the Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA), along with the launch of the strategic roadmap for emergency management in Niue, have created an innovative platform for emergency management and coordination that will facilitate our work.

I am proud to work with the countries in the project and the teams that are dedicated to helping reduce the real impact of disaster on the lives and livelihoods of our Pacific community.

Taito Nakalevu
Programme Manager
Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific
INTRODUCTION

The Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) project is a €19.36 million project supported by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC). This project directly responds to the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states’ and the EU’s priorities identified under the 2009 European Union Strategy for Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction.

The BSRP project has finalised its second year of implementation with its dedication to reducing disaster risks while supporting disaster agencies in preparing for, responding to and recovering from the inevitable disasters that strike in the Pacific region.

The importance of this project is ever more apparent as Pacific Island countries become increasingly exposed to risks such as cyclones, floods and droughts as a result of climate change. Currently, the Pacific region is facing the worst drought in almost a decade with many communities having water transported to supply critical needs and many people running low on clean and safe water. This drawn-out disaster is having a greater impact in Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu as these countries recover from the strongest tropical cyclone to cross land in the Pacific region in recorded history. Cyclone Pam directly hit Vanuatu as well as affecting Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Kiribati, with impacts on the livelihoods and economies of these countries, and especially disastrous impacts on crops and areas reliant upon subsistence farming.

Many of the 15 Pacific Island countries included in the project face development issues such as poverty, in addition to the barriers faced by remote communities and islands, which are then exacerbated by these kinds of disasters. The reliance on subsistence farming and the relatively small monetary economies in Pacific Island countries further affect their ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from the impacts of these environmental and natural disasters.

To help overcome these challenges, the BSRP project is helping to find ways to support countries to prepare for, respond to and recover from disaster. This is done through the implementation of disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies which are designed to be practical, helping to assess disaster and hazard risks while putting clear support measures in place to protect lives, assets and livelihoods of communities across the entire Pacific region. This approach also reduces the impact on government expenditure by ensuring resources do not need to be diverted from development budgets to disaster relief, recovery and reconstruction needs, as funding is proactively included before the disaster strikes.
BSRP project at a glance

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<th>Flag</th>
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Objective

Reduce the vulnerability to, as well as the social, economic and environmental costs of disasters caused by natural hazards, thereby achieving regional and national sustainable development and poverty alleviation in ACP Pacific Island states.

Purpose

To strengthen the capacity of Pacific Island countries to address existing and emerging challenges with regard to the risks posed by natural hazards and related disasters, while maximising synergies between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

Mission

We are an alliance of key national emergency response agencies in the Pacific Island countries and territories. We are committed to strengthening effective partnerships and generating efficiencies so we can help build resilience and safety in our communities.
Expected outcomes of the project

1. Countries helped to prepare for, respond to and recover from disaster by developing national and regional response plans, end-to-end early warning systems, emergency and evacuation centres, increased access to safe drinking water and the mitigation of disasters such as drought.

2. Strengthened institutional support for disaster risk management and climate change adaptation by helping develop joint national action plans (JNAPs) while also integrating DRM and CCA into national and sector-based strategy, planning and budgets.

3. Improved knowledge, public awareness, training and education by building meaningful understanding of disaster risk, exposure to risk and exposure to real-time risk and disaster information through regional and local databases. This also includes strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

4. Improved understanding of natural hazards and reduction of underlying risks by addressing gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact, and addressing underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

5. Increased coordination through creating partnerships in disaster risk management and climate change with a dedicated focus on the development of a regional strategy to address this. Enhanced support for the Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA) whilst increasing hazard risk management, knowledge management and supporting efficient financing whilst building on the work programmes of all CROP agencies (Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific).

Key stakeholders

- National governments are key partners in the BSRP project, with the team working alongside national disaster management offices to help strengthen response planning, early warning systems and decision-making tools to better coordinate disaster response and preparedness, as well as training personnel and reducing the long-term cost of disaster.

- Communities are also key beneficiaries, with activities designed to help people understand disaster risks and hazards better, so that they can reduce the impact on their lives and protect themselves and their families better. Resilience strengthening at community level, including schools, is paramount in this project to ensure communities can engage with early warning systems and understand the risk of disaster in real time, helping prevent the loss of life.

- Civil society organisations (CSOs) are critical for communicating information to many communities across the Pacific region and as such are effective partners in the BSRP project. The involvement of CSOs varies based on the needs of communities and their capacity to respond to disaster, but they are critical for community awareness and outreach.

- Utility companies and the private sector are responsible for much of essential infrastructure needed before, during and after disaster strikes, and they often have skills and capabilities that governments do not possess. A strong partnership with such groups brings additional national capacity to bear, and more importantly, provides technical capability in finding and maintaining solutions into the future.
Regional Work

Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific

The Pacific Community’s (SPC) Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific Project funded by the European Union (EU) with the support of other key partners and CROP agencies, helped facilitate the development of an integrated strategy addressing disaster risk management (DRM) and climate change (CC) in the Pacific. The key partners included the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), the University of the South Pacific (USP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

The Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific (SRDP) has been designed to succeed the existing separate regional frameworks on DRM and CC, i.e. the Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action (RFA) and the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change (PIFACC), respectively.

Although the strategy has not yet been finalised, the process of developing the document has promoted enhanced partnerships between DRM and CC actors in the region. The development of the strategy was highlighted in a number of regional and international fora, such as the 2014 International Conference of Small Islands Developing States in Samoa and the 2015 World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

SPC, in coordination with partners, also developed a compendium of case studies that focussed on resilient development projects and initiatives carried out in the Pacific region in recent years. The compendium highlights key lessons learnt and is a reference document for the region. It has been translated into French and is available online.

Finally SPC, in coordination with partners, has developed a regional synthesis report which summarises actions undertaken in CC and DRM over the last 10 years, under the two previous regional strategies for CC and for DRM. This report is expected to be finalised in the first quarter of 2016.

Current snapshot

The strategy was approved in 2014 to succeed the previous frameworks by both SPC’s Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) and by the SPREP Council. However, it failed to gain final approval at the Forum Leaders Meeting in 2015. This was due mostly to timing, as some countries feared the strategy might undermine the Pacific island countries’ and territories’ negotiations at December’s UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) conference in Paris (COP21).
Pacific cooperation leads to world first strategy

The draft Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific (SRDP) was recognised at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai for its innovative ability to engage with key partners, donors and countries to create an integrated approach to disaster risk management and climate change adaptation in the region.

This draft Strategy was the first of its kind in the world and the process of its development was shared at side events and information stalls at the Sendai Conference. These shared experiences, lessons learned and trends in the development and implementation of effective climate and disaster risk management approaches in the Pacific will hopefully inform other regions in their development of similar frameworks, to better support the creation of climate and disaster resilient development across the world.

H.E President of Kiribati, Anote Tong stressed the importance of bringing CC and DRM together for the Pacific.

Panelists at the Pacific Island event highlight the role of the Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific (SRDP) in integrating climate change adaptation and disaster risk resilience.
Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance

The Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA) began in 2014 as part of the BSRP project. PIEMA was created with a range of stakeholders who invest in helping create best-practice emergency response across the entire region. The stakeholders include national disaster management offices (NDMOs), Pacific Islands chiefs of police and the Pacific Islands fire and emergency services. With the BSRP project objectives focusing on increasing resilience to disaster along with more coordinated disaster management and climate change adaptation, the PIEMA alliance helps make this a reality within the emergency services sector.

PIEMA aims to strengthen a coordinated approach by emergency services in preparing for, responding to and recovering from disaster. It strengthens the capacity of key national response agencies in Pacific Island countries and territories. It focuses on building trust, leadership and teamwork in response agencies, whilst creating common language, systems and doctrines to ensure consistent and credible information is collected and used in times of crisis.

PIEMA was formed through the support of SPC, the Australasian Fire & Emergency Services Council (AFAC), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the New Zealand Ministry for Civil Defence and Emergency Management (MCDEM). PIEMA has a membership of 21 countries and 15 agencies.

Key achievements for 2015

Key achievements for PIEMA in 2015 have been diverse, from increased operational partnerships to supporting countries through training and resource development. Highlights are given below.

- **Strategic Agenda 2020 endorsed**: PIEMA achieved a milestone in December 2015 with the finalisation for publication of the Strategic Agenda 2016–2020. This is the strategic plan or roadmap for emergency management and will form the basis of specific strategies to support and strengthen the emergency services and civil defence agencies in the Pacific.

- **Strategic roadmap for emergency management (SREM) concept**: The SREM concept was developed by PIEMA as a way to further the strategic direction of PIEMA at the national level, as well as develop a more integrated and responsive direction for emergency management agencies in countries. The concept has received very favourable responses from PIEMA member countries, and resulted in the successful publication of the Niue SREM in September 2015. Currently Kiribati and Vanuatu are progressing through the development of their national SREM documents and it is anticipated that more countries will request this valuable tool.
Increased twinning partnerships: PIEMA has successfully advocated for increased twinning arrangements between AFAC member agencies and PIEMA member countries and agencies. In 2014 there were six twinning arrangements, and in 2015 there are now nine arrangements in place with a further three under discussion.

Common incident management systems: PIEMA, with the support of AFAC and WPIAFC, has started two pilot projects on development of common incident management systems (CIMS) in Fiji and Palau. The CIMS developed is derived from the original incident command system (ICS) and follows the modern concepts of AIIMS (AFAC) and NIMS (WPIAFC/ FEMA). Other Pacific Island countries have expressed interest in developing CIMS networks.

International recognition of PIEMA: PIEMA was recognised as a key partner in the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) for the Pacific region and was invited to attend the second global INSARAG meeting in the United Arab Emirates in October 2015. This invitation and attendance was supported by the New Zealand (NZ) Government (MFAT) and the NZ Fire Service. PIEMA is now recognised as the conduit for implementation of the Pacific Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Strategy to be developed in 2016.

PIEMA has also become an Observer Member of the PICP Conference as of 2015, as well as an Associate Member of the Western Pacific Islands Association of Fire Chiefs (WPIAFC) in the North Pacific.

Looking ahead

2016 will be a major year for PIEMA, with the second PIEMA meeting to be held in September. This will be the largest gathering of Pacific emergency management agencies ever seen, with attendees expected from at least 26 countries.

PIEMA will be advocating the further development of strategic roadmaps at national level in Pacific Island countries, whilst working with donors to develop funding support for the implementation of strategic roadmap action plans at national level.

PIEMA will develop an integrated CIMS package for countries, with the support of AFAC and WPIAFC. This will involve several large-scale exercises over the next 12 months to operationalise the CIMS.

PIEMA will work with INSARAG to develop and implement a Pacific USAR Strategy. Under the strategy, by 2020 every first responder will be trained in USAR Category 1 Light Rescue. A national USAR accreditation framework will be trialled in two countries.
Communications

Key achievements

- Visibility and communications work during 2015 included many activities that targeted a range of audiences and stakeholders. However, activities were affected by the fact that the Communications and Media position within the project was vacant for half of the year, due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Internationally, the project was represented at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan in March, where the Compendium of Case Studies on Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific was launched; and the UNFCCC COP21 meeting in Paris in December.
- The project contributed to widespread coverage of the Fiji Climate Change Summit held in September, which highlighted climate change and its impacts, as well as how communities are preparing for disaster in the region.
- A short documentary was shot in Tuvalu that focuses on understanding traditional practices for disaster resilience; its editing and release is expected in 2016.
- Information materials, brochures, factsheets and USBs were produced to provide widespread awareness and understanding of the project, its beneficiaries and its achievements in 2015.
- A week of disaster-focused events was held jointly with UNISDR and UNOCHA in October, which sensitised a range of local and international media to the work of the project.
- Emergency warning information brochures for Palau were produced and published.
- A media and communications training workshop was held in Fiji to help increase understanding of scientific information.

Looking ahead

Communications activities anticipated in 2016 include the following:

- Testing the effectiveness of disaster messages and campaigns to ensure the most vulnerable communities understand the messages in Samoa.
- Development of short documentary videos for four countries.
- Working with local radio stations, media agencies, NDMOs and meteorological offices in three countries to redesign disaster messages for communities so they are more effective and better understood.
- Regional media training.
- Increased international media coverage; increased social media presence.
- Rebrand of the disaster project with new merchandise and materials as required.
Tribute to Losana McGowan

In April this year our team tragically lost one of its beloved members, Losana McGowan. Losana was our Communications and Media Officer, and her bubbly, kind and empathetic personality left a deep hole in our team when she died.

Her expertise was broad, with more than 15 years of journalism and communications experience before joining the BSRP team, and she had developed innovative communications work to help communities better prepare for disaster over her career.

Losana’s ability to connect in an honest way, and her passion for her work, is something our team will never forget. Her dedication telling stories while caring about the people she was interviewing was an outstanding skill of Losana’s. She connected with communities across the entire region with ease and was passionate about climate change and development. Her life that was cut short far too early, and our team still feels a huge sense of loss.

Her tragic death was felt heavily by both our team and the broader SPC community, as well as the media and communications industry as a whole. The circumstances surrounding her death led to a change in the way the Pacific Community addresses domestic and family violence, with the development of a Domestic Violence Policy to help prevent this type of tragedy from happening again.

Our condolences and love continue to go out to each and every person who was lucky enough to be touched by Losana’s light, and to her family first and foremost, for their tragic loss.

As a new year begins and we move closer to the first anniversary of her death, we take the time to reflect on the wonderful person that we knew and worked with, Losana McGowan.

Losana McGowan
COOK ISLANDS

The Cook Islands comprises 15 islands, and an exclusive economic zone of 1.8 million km². The country is home to just under 15,000 people (2011 census), but has experienced significant population decline since 1996, with large numbers of Cook Islanders migrating to New Zealand, Australia and other countries in search of education and employment opportunities. The Cook Islands are self-governing, in an associated state relationship with New Zealand.

Despite limited natural resources, remoteness from major trade and industrial centres, and a diminishing labour force, the Cook Islands is among the best performing Pacific economies with a GDP of around NZD300 million, and GDP per capita of NZD9,308. Tourism is the primary driver of the economy, with approximately 100,000 visitors per annum. Pearl farming, agriculture, fishing, financial services and the registration of ships are other important productive sectors.

The Cook Islands is located south of the equator in an area known for the frequent occurrence of tropical cyclones, and is affected by an average of 16 tropical storms each year. The country has been affected by devastating cyclones multiple times in the last few decades. For example, in 1997 Tropical Cyclone Martin and Cyclone Pam caused 22 fatalities, 19 of which were on Manihiki Atoll, where wind and storm surge destroyed nearly every building on the island, incurring about USD48 million in losses and crippling the local economy. More recently, in 2010, Tropical Cyclone Pat wrought widespread damage on the island of Aitutaki. The cost of the recovery and reconstruction came to NZD9.5 million.

Additional natural hazards faced by the Cook Islands include flooding, drought, fish poisoning and sea surge, as well as the effects of global warming such as sea-level rise, ocean acidification and coral bleaching; health and natural-resource based hazards such as pandemics and invasive alien species; and technological hazards such as aircraft crash, industrial fire and hazardous material spills. According to a recent study there is a 40% chance that in the next 50 years (100 year mean return period) one or more events in a calendar year will cause casualties exceeding 145 people in the Cook Islands.\(^1\)

Climate change and DRM are firmly embedded in the Cook Islands Sustainable Development Plan 2011–2015, and one of the eight priority areas is dedicated to ‘resilience’. DRM is governed by the Disaster Risk Management Act (2007) and the Disaster Risk Management Arrangements (2009).

The joint national action plan for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation (JNAP) is increasingly seen by sector stakeholders as the main planning document for DRM and climate change adaptation (CCA) in the Cook Islands and is beginning to serve as an important coordination mechanism for programme and funding alignment. A JNAP Programme Management Unit has been established to facilitate joint planning and coordination of the many CCA and DRM programmes happening in the Cook Islands.

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\(^1\) Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative, 2011. ADB/World Bank.
Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

• First aid training was provided to representatives from 3 of the 10 punas (districts) of Rarotonga with the other 7 to be completed in 2016.

• Supported Cook Islands National Disability Council with The Cook Island Girl Guides to carry out a survey of all people with disabilities in Rarotonga to improve disaster management practice. This began in 2015 and will continue in 2016. Every disabled person will have their own evacuation plan at the completion of this project.

Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end early warning systems (EWS), emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

• The project funded first aid training for 3 of the 10 punas (districts) on Rarotonga through Emergency Management Cook Islands (EMCI) and the Cook Islands Red Cross. Three puna groups have been trained with extension to the other seven occurring in 2016 with a total of 140 people expected to be trained ensuring a huge increase in first responders across the region once the training is completed.

• EWSs were improved with the maintenance of the tsunami/emergency siren system on Rarotonga and a total of 12 sirens reinstated to full operational mode.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

• Support the NDMO through the funding of a coordinator for the project to be located at the EMCI office. This position is important as it establishes a dedicated focal point for BSRP activities in Cook Islands. Previously responsibility was shared between the Director EMCI and Director Climate Change Cook Islands. This will not only benefit coordination of government but will increase the community safety and resilience effort.

• Support the Disability Association through training of surveyors in how to collect information and providing support for buying devices to collect data. These will be used to carry out a survey of people with disabilities across the islands. The Cook Islands National Disability Council and the Cook Islands Girl Guides Association are conducting the survey on Rarotonga with outer islands being facilitated in 2016. This is the first survey focusing on people with disabilities in 10–15 years with information being input into a central database for use by EMCI.

• Support travel and logistics for emergency management team to undertake travel across the islands of the Cooks to carry out awareness, community surveys and collection of local knowledge stories.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

• Reprint of the JNAP completed in 2015, with a review of the progress and effectiveness of the plan to occur in 2016 supported by BSRP.

• Develop and implement effective communications through a cyclone awareness documentary aired on Cook Islands TV during the 2014/2015 cyclone season. An additional three documentaries will be developed and aired over the next 24 months.

• Professional development through the support of three EMCI staff to undertake Certificate in Project Management with the University of the South Pacific to improve effective management and coordination of projects in the future.

R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

• Cook Islands Building Code which was reviewed and endorsed by cabinet in 2011 has not yet been implemented. The project is finalising a terms of reference and plan of implementation to engage a technical assistant to complete this work.
R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies (Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific).

- PIEMA has enabled partnership building for representatives from the Cook Islands with attendance at the 2015 Pacific Islands Fire & Emergency Services Association (PIFESA) annual meeting held in Adelaide, South Australia, the 2015 Australasian Fire & Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) Conference held in Adelaide, South Australia and the 2015 Urban Search and Rescue Study Tour to New Zealand.
- EMCI has worked closely with civil society organisations and non-government organisations. The Girls Guides Association has been brought on board in 2015 to carry out disability surveys with the Cook Islands National Disability Council. Red Cross have worked with EMCI team to carry out first aid training and they will continue to do this work for the 10 punas by the end of 2016. EMCI has also built strong relationships with Women’s Groups.

Looking ahead

- Design of a fit-for-purpose national emergency operations centre and EMCI building. BSRP will fund the design concept and the Government of the Cook Islands will seek donor support for construction.
- Launch of the results of the People with Disability (PWD) survey.
- Produce and air at least four more documentaries on disaster preparedness and local knowledge.
- Work with Women’s Groups to help women engage with social media so they are able to stay up-to-date on disaster messages in the future. This is being done by young students teaching their parents, aunts and uncles to be smartphone savvy.
- Undertake a national-level SREM to guide national emergency agencies towards a more integrated preparedness and response model utilising a common incident management approach.
- Completion of GeoPortal Surveys across the country by the end of 2016/2017.
FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Situated in the western Pacific Ocean, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) consists of 607 islands and 2.6 million km² of ocean. The country comprises the four separate states of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae, with a total population of 106,104 (2013 estimate).

The location of FSM makes the impact of typhoons (tropical cyclones) a prevalent issue. In early 2015 Super Typhoon Maysak struck the country, and many communities are still recovering from the devastation. The typhoon caused 4 deaths and 10 injuries, and many lost their access to food and water. Yap and Chuuk were most directly affected, and there was extensive impact on agriculture with 90% of the banana, breadfruit and taro crops destroyed. The expected damage bill is USD8.5 million.

Formerly a part of the US Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, FSM entered into a compact of free association with the US when it became independent in 1986. The compact provides for defence and economic assistance from the US as well as for assistance following disasters. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) is the US agency responsible for DRM support to FSM; it implements programmes through the International Organisation for Migration, which has a regional office in Pohnpei.

FSM is prone to natural and man-made hazards, and has had 15 presidential disaster declarations in the past 26 years. Hazards affecting individual states as well as those affecting all of FSM include: coastal erosion, rising sea level, storm surge and tsunami; dam failure; drought; earthquake; epidemic; flood; rain-induced landslide; tropical cyclone; wildfire; and man-made hazards (hazardous material incidents and terrorism).

FSM has a Multi-State Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan which was prepared in 2005 with the support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The plan is detailed and contains national and state-level mitigation plans for all identified hazards.

In 2009 a National Climate Change Policy was put in place which, amongst other things, focuses on adaptation at the national, state and community levels to reduce FSM’s vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change. The policy imperative is beginning to filter through into sector plans as they are reviewed.

Disaster risk reduction and planning are amongst the functions that are within the autonomy of the states, as accorded by the FSM constitution, and all states have disaster management plans. The issue of disaster mitigation is referred to in most of the state disaster management plans, with actions identified in the Multi-State Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Kosrae State Law No. 10-2 (2011) legislates that climate change and adaptation measures be taken into consideration for all development activities.
Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- DRM platform held with debriefing and lessons learnt on Typhoon Maysak response, and priorities established for future DRM activities.
- Development of joint state action plan on DRM and climate change to help mainstream this into other sectors and policies.
- Endorsement of 2016 action plan confirmed at national steering committee meeting in December 2015.
- MoU signed with Western Pacific Island Association on Fire Chiefs (WPIAFC) for structural support to fire services.

Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- Strengthening of EWS at the state level, to directly benefit 10,500 people, was mapped out but delayed due to non-availability of boat to transport the equipment and technician. This will now be completed in the first quarter of 2016.
- Preparation of hazard-specific plans completed for disasters such as tsunami. Due to changes in the operation of the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre, priority is now given to the development of a tsunami hazard support plan to ensure warnings can reach the entire 102,843 population in a timely manner. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre’s shifting of responsibility means the responsibility of issuing tsunami warnings now lies with the countries with only graphical products being provided.
- Review and update of disaster plans with draft disaster response plan completed. Adoption by the Disaster Task Force expected in 2016 due to changes in government.
- Support for Awak Elementary school coastal protection with the development of a seawall, to be completed with an official handover ceremony in January 2016.
- Support for PetroCorp to put in place emergency oil reserve storage capacity in safe locations – Pohnpei State Utility Corporation fuel tank has been refurbished to be a model from FSMPC own funds and 36,196 people of Pohnpei are assured of consistent availability of fuel. This work will now be replicated in other states commencing with Chuuk and then Yap and Kosrae.
- MoU signed between FSM, the Office of Environment and Emergency Management and the WPIAFC for structural support for fire departments.
- Donation of fire truck to Pohnpei Department of Public Safety from Idaho in the United States.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- Joint state action plans (JSAPs) for Kosrae and Yap states on DRM and CCA endorsed by legislatures. Pohnpei JSAP is being developed.
- Annual Disaster Risk Management Platform held in Colonia, Yap State for the second year in a row. This also included a detailed briefing and lessons learnt on Typhoon Maysak, with joint risk management networks established in all states and meeting monthly. This has strengthened relationships across the four states, increasing disaster preparedness and understanding of best response and recovery.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- 2015 International Day for Disaster Reduction celebrated at Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap.
- Typhoon awareness article published in FSM 2015 telephone directory.
- Emergency operations centre (EOC) training delivered at Yap (29 participants) and Chuuk (31 participants). Standard operating procedures for best practice of the EOC were created.
- Increased awareness of DRM and climate change in all states through the participation of schoolchildren in an annual oratory and essay competition.
R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

- Develop spatial data framework and centralised hazard database at national level – hardware, software and technical support with spatial data framework developed and circulated to GIS practitioners in 2015.
- Geospatial data collection, management and sharing increased and was more coordinated in 2015, and can now be easily accessed to support disaster mitigation, response and recovery.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- Kosrae Disaster Coordination Officer attended and participated in the Pacific Humanitarian Partnership meeting and Regional Steering Committee for the BSRP project in Suva, Fiji in October. This meeting was attended by all of the national disaster management teams across the Pacific region.

Training

- EOC training in Yap State (5–9 October): 29 attendees focused on standard operating procedures for the EOC and a guide for best practice in its operation.
- EOC training in Chuuk state (12–16 October): 31 attendees focused on standard operating procedures for the EOC and a guide for best practice in its operation.

Looking ahead

- Enhancement of EWS with installation of solar and battery to all HF and VHF bases in the islands during 2016.
- Strengthen EWS at the state level to be completed in the first quarter of 2016.
- Further work on the Tsunami Hazard Support Plan, especially the mapping of tsunami evacuation zones where communities can quickly move to when a warning is issued.
FIJI ISLANDS

A total of 333 islands make up the archipelago of the Fiji Islands, with a land area of 18,270 km² spread over 1,281,122 km² of exclusive economic zone. The country has a population of 858,038 (2014 estimate). Fiji has one of the most developed economies in the Pacific, with diverse forestry, fishing and agriculture sectors, and significant contributions from mining and tourism.

Fiji is exposed to both hydro-meteorological and geotechnical hazards. The country is in the cyclone region, averaging three events every two years with a severe event (category 3–4 cyclone) every three to four years. Indications to 2050 are for an increase in severe cyclone systems though the number per year may not vary. Rising sea level, extreme precipitation, storm surges and thunderstorms have caused devastating flood damage in recent years. About every 5 years, an El Niño southern oscillation (ENSO) event occurs and can result in severe droughts; an ENSO state was declared in the region in 2015.

Climate change impacts and disasters are felt nationwide, from the interior of the high islands to the maritime islands fringing the main islands. Heavy erosion, landslides and sediment transportation from the hills appear as damaging sedimentation in the coastal waters and reefs. Subsistence and cash crop farmers are being increasingly affected by floods and soil losses, while coastal dwellers are being affected by coastal erosion and losses in biodiversity.

31 per cent of the national population was classified as being poor\(^2\) in 2008/09, down from 35 per cent in 2002/03. While poverty in urban areas dropped dramatically from 28 to 18 per cent (a reduction of 34 per cent) over this period, poverty in rural areas increased by 6 per cent from 40 to 43 per cent. Moreover, children are disproportionally affected by poverty, with half of all families with two or more children living in poverty.

The Government has strongly decentralised institutions to manage disasters. A new Climate Change Policy is in place, and revision of the Disaster Management Act will be carried out in 2016. The national DRM arrangement is not fully implemented as yet, without legal authority over its new provisions.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- Fiji Climate Change Summit held in September.
- Awareness raising week of DRR events held in October, jointly with UNISDR and UNOCHA.
- MoU developed and signed by the Ministry of Finance and Strategic Planning to map community vulnerability to climate change across the country.
- Participatory development of the integrated vulnerability assessment (IVA) tool completed.
- Eighteen communities in Vanua Levu surveyed with the IVA tool.
- Action plans created for divisional EOCs to ensure they are effectively resourced.
- DRM Act and Plan review approved by Cabinet.

Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- Site visit to Vanua Levu to review the state of district EOCs with the view to providing future support to EOCs at the divisional and district level. An action plan is now in place to provide equipment to all four divisions in Fiji. A national EOC is planned but finding a location within Suva has proved a challenge after the building deemed suitable was given to another department. An alternative space is being sourced currently.
- A total of 220 water tanks was supplied to the drought-stricken Western Division along with two water cartage tanks for the NDMO and supporting equipment.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- A review of Fiji’s Disaster Risk Management Act and Plan was approved through the Fiji Cabinet in December 2015. A Terms of Reference for the review is approved and work will now commence in 2016.
- A concept paper for the joint strategy on climate change and DRR was developed by the Ministry of Finance and Strategic Planning and approved by the project’s steering committee. Developing the strategy was delayed due to other commitments but will now be underway in 2016.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- Thirty officers from the NDMO, police and military attended training on a common incident management system for Fiji. This training establishes the building blocks for a coordinated and integrated emergency service response system, critical to effective preparation, response and recovery processes. The training has already been applied to major fires and road accidents with a more coordinated approach ensuring the impact of these incidents is reduced. In early 2016 this will be further formalised into a strategic plan to develop a common incident management system.
- One participant (Fiji Fire Chief) attended the 2015 Pacific Islands Fire and Emergency Services Association (PIFESA) Annual Meeting and 2015 Australasian Fire and Emergency Association Conference (AFAC) in Adelaide, Australia.

R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

- The BSRP project funded two Vulnerability and Assessment Officers to be employed and based at the Climate Change Division to carry out vulnerability assessment work at a national and community level.
- Methodology for the vulnerability assessment work was reviewed by the Climate Change Division, i-Taukei Affairs, USP and SPC. Training was undertaken on how to use integrated vulnerability assessment (IVA) tools on Vanua Levu in Savusavu, Bua and Macuata. This training was carried out jointly by USP, PACTVET and UNWomen.
- Eighteen communities were assessed, with a pilot test in five communities leading to changes to the IVA tool to ensure key agencies and communities can understand and better engage with the tool. More communities will be surveyed throughout 2016 with the results being generated into easy-to-understand assessments of the community’s ability to respond to climate change. This is an innovative tool that will support future planning with clear evidence being collected through the in-depth process.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- The Fiji Climate Change Summit for 2015 was held in the Lomaiviti provincial council meeting hall, Levuka, on 8–10 September. Attended by 350 participants from communities, civil societies, regional and international organisations based in Fiji and government representatives, the summit brought together the key agencies working on DRM and CCA across the country. The main outcomes of the Fiji Climate Change Summit were as follows:
  - New partnerships were formed, in particular the current IVA work funded by the BSRP project was discussed and confirmed.
- There was active participation of youths during the summit and they pledged to continue to raise awareness on climate change in Fiji, and form partnerships with other regional countries and globally. During the COP21 in Paris, youths who had participated in the Levuka Summit organised rallies in Suva to provide support and voice their concerns to the COP21 meetings of a need for tangible outcomes that would help small island developing states.

- Participants learned about the impacts of climate change and gained understanding about the changes they are experiencing for example in terms of their cropping cycles, and the need to adapt accordingly.

Looking ahead

- More IVAs to be completed across Vanua Levu.
- EOCs to be fitted out and supported in the divisions.
- Review of the DRM Act and Plan.
- National EOC location, design and fit out to be completed.
- Continued coordination with key response agencies to strengthen institutional knowledge and best practice in DRM, DRR and CCA.
- Communications support and delivery of campaign work on disaster preparedness at community level.

Success story

*This is an edited version of a story that appeared on PACNEWS website on 21st December 2015.

More water for more people in drought

One hundred and fifty water tanks were installed in the most drought-affected areas in the Western Division of Fiji during December 2015, so that communities could access water for critical needs as drought conditions worsened in Fiji.

The tanks were installed in temporary roadside locations to ensure they could be rapidly filled up daily to alleviate the lack of water for many communities across the Nadi, Nadrong and Ba Districts, commonly known as the drought ‘red zone’.

Acting Principal Assistant Secretary for the National Disaster Management Office, Uraia Rainima said the team targeted the ‘red zone’ communities as they have been identified as the most at-risk due to lack of water.

“We installed the tanks in temporary locations so we can ensure more people from these severely affected areas can access water. We are trying to help as many people as possible as this drought worsens.

“The predictions show these conditions will go until at least March so we are working to ensure we can get clean and safe drinking water to as many people as possible across the country,” he said.
Kiribati is made up of 33 islands, divided among three island groups, with a total population of 103,500 (2013 estimate). The capital on Tarawa atoll has 47% of the population. With an average of 8,000 people per km², these islands are amongst the most densely populated areas on earth. Only 18% of the population is permanently employed. A household census of Betio and Bairiki villages in November 2009 found that per capita income for 70% of the residents was less than USD 1.75/day.

Worldwide, Kiribati is well known for its vocal stance against climate change. A sea-level rise of more than 7.5 cm since 1990 is slowly affecting the country’s landmass. The government has already purchased land in Fiji for residents who may be forced to leave due to the impacts of climate change.

Many of the risks to which Kiribati is exposed are related to climate change, including coastal erosion, inundation, increased salination, inadequate water supplies and waste disposal. The social and economic ramifications of these and many other hazards are multiplied when overlaid with the high levels of vulnerability of people due to the lack of infrastructure, low human development indicators, and high population growth rate.

Early in 2015, Tropical Cyclone Pam caused extensive damage to parts of the country. The cyclone reached category 5 status on 12 March, and struck the low-lying atolls of Kiribati on 13 March as winds peaked at 250 km/h accompanied by destructive waves and floods. A preliminary damage assessment done by the Kiribati Government found the southernmost islands of the Gilbert group (Tamana and Arorae) to be the most affected by the cyclone. BSRP is working with the Kiribati Agriculture Department to undertake assessments of damage caused to the agriculture sector and to provide disaster relief for the agriculture sector on the most affected islands.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- Inception of a strategic roadmap for emergency management (SREM), including setting up partnerships with US military and Kiribati government agencies that respond to disaster, to create a coordinated team to better prepare for, respond to and recover from future disasters.
- Resilience building of the agriculture sector against pest and disease disaster by training staff to understand pest risk, particularly relating to increases in importation of goods and people.
- Post-disaster relief for the agriculture sector after Tropical Cyclone Pam.
- Review of the country’s school curriculum to incorporate DRM and CCA.
Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- The process to develop an SREM, supporting increased coordination between emergency service agencies began in May/June, with coordination assistance from the US military and SPC. Planning has begun with the Kiribati Emergency Committee (NERC) to move this forward in 2016.
- The Kiribati Fire Service’s relationship with the South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS) was increased in 2015, with a formalised twinning arrangement to be developed in 2016. The CFS team along with the BSRP team completed initial training analysis with the Kiribati police and fire services, including fire operations initial review and truck inspections, with anticipation that the country’s fire fleet will be upgraded with assistance from the CFS.
- Funds to procure HF radios and undertake network cabling and maintenance for the establishment of communications for the Abaiang Health Centre and islets of Nuotaea and Ribona was progressed in 2015 and will be completed in February 2016. This will ensure these islets can communicate emergency messages to Abaiang which has been a considerable challenge.

Challenges

A key challenge is the in-country support and capacity for the BSRP project. The NDMO is staffed with only one person, and their workload as Disaster Management Officer for the country means limited ability to carry out new work. Furthermore, the Disaster Management Officer and focal point for the project is currently on study leave in New Zealand. To ensure progress a coordinator will be hired for the project in early 2016. A mobile emergency operating centre/response vehicle will also be provided, to support emergency response by the DMO.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs confirmed their support for establishment of DRM committees for all Island Councils, working with the NDMO. This will help increase resilience across the entire country, increasing understanding of DRM and disaster preparedness at the island and community level.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- Support for the agricultural sector in Kiribati was provided through working with the national Biosecurity Department in monitoring, surveillance and awareness of pests and diseases. A survey on plant pests and diseases affecting agricultural crops and an animal disease survey (poultry and pigs) was conducted on the islands of Tarawa and Abaiang which helped update the Kiribati Pest List Database (PLD). Hands-on training in plant and animal pest disease surveying, pest and diseases recognition, sampling and processing was provided through SPC’s Land Resources Division. This training is critical in preparing the country for disease and pest outbreaks which is crucial to food supply and increasing community resilience.
- A review of the Kiribati primary school curriculum was undertaken to integrate DRM and CCA along with sustainable development concepts. This was supported by workshops with the Kiribati National Expert Group for CC and DRM (KNEG) with printing of the reviewed curriculum materials for year 4 students. These were shipped from Fiji to Kiribati.

R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

- Following discussions with the Land Management Division in Kiribati, the BSRP project confirmed support for a coastal hazard assessment. This is designed to inform land zoning for land regulation and policy as well as to inform communities through hazard mapping. This is expected to be completed in 2016.
R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- Partnership building has been a focus for the BSRP project in Kiribati in 2015. The Kiribati Commissioner of Police and representatives from the Kiribati police and fire services were provided with funding support to attend the Pacific Island Fire & Emergency Services Annual Meeting and Australasian Fire Authorities Council Conference. This provided the opportunity for discussions on progressing twinning arrangements with the South Australian CFS.

**Training**

A training course on plant pest surveying and poultry blood sampling was carried out in Tarawa and Abaiang islands (28 September to 10 October). Outcomes were improved understanding of effective risk assessments, expanded pest lists, and ownership by local biosecurity officers. Import limits were also set on mango and ginger from Fiji. The training is helping increase biosecurity and the country’s ability to respond to outbreaks of animal and plant pests and disease, which increases the resilience of its agriculture sector and food supply chain.

**Looking ahead**

- A significant amount of preparatory work took place in 2015 with key outcomes being progressed and expected to be achieved in 2016. The establishment of Island Disaster Committees will be a priority, through coordinated efforts with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the NDMO. Training will be conducted for each of the island groups on DRM and emergency management.
- The twinning arrangement with the South Australian Country Fire Service will be formalised, with training and provision of equipment to occur in 2016. Training and procurement of equipment will also be supported by the BSRP project.
- A national coordinator to be hired and based at the NDMO by March 2016.

**Success story**

**Protecting Kiribati from biosecurity risks**

The increased movement due to the global economy, with goods being shipped around the world and people travelling more frequently, increases the biosecurity risk that pests pose to countries like Kiribati. Fruit flies, yellow crazy ants and the African snail are examples of pests that could impact the country’s biodiversity and economy. International obligations set out by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) create very high standards which require countries to ensure pest risk analysis is conducted, along with staff development, creation and updating of a pest list database, and sharing of information in regards to pest and disease concerns. These obligations, along with the need to protect the country from the accidental importation of diseases and pests in the shipments of produce and goods, are critical to Kiribati.

The BSRP project supported a training course on Tarawa and Abaiang Islands during October, on identifying and monitoring of plant pests. As part of this training pest and disease databases were updated with specimens sent to the United Kingdom for further analysis. The course built practical understanding of survey techniques, methodology and surveillance along with the establishment of rules for the importation of ginger and mangoes from Fiji. This training is helping to improve the resilience of the agriculture sector by protecting existing local markets, whilst building the capacity of biosecurity staff and inspectors to understand and manage threats when shipments arrive from around the world.
The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) is in the northern Pacific and consists of 29 low-lying coral atolls with 1,156 individual islands and islets. The Marshall Islands became a republic in 1986. The country has a population of approximately 72,000 people (2015) with 30,000 living in Majuro, the country’s capital.

The Marshall Islands’ hazards and vulnerabilities are linked to both physical and social characteristics of its islands and people, in addition to ongoing unsustainable development practices. Key drivers of the country’s vulnerability include rapid population growth and over-population in urban centres; environmental degradation and unsustainable development; localised pollution including contamination of water supply and waste management issues; climate change impacts including sea-level rise; limited resources (food, water and fuel); and limited economic potential due to its size and location.


The country’s JNAP was developed in 2010–2011. The JNAP links in with existing strategies, both national and donor led, as well as linking strongly with the National Climate Change Policy which was endorsed in 2011.

**Key achievements**

- 217 water tanks each with 1,000 gallon capacities were delivered and installed to households on remote islands vulnerable to drought. A total of 5,296 people on 13 islands in the northern Marshall Islands now have access to safe drinking water during drought periods.
- A staff member was recruited to help implement the JNAP.

**Detailed outcomes**

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- A total of 5,296 people on 13 islands have been provided with access to safe drinking water, with an additional 217,000 gallons of water available that can sustain the population for at least a week if there is no rain. This was achieved through the supply to households on outer islands of 217 × 1,000 gallon polythene water tanks.
- A vehicle was procured for the NDMO to improve its ability to respond in a timely manner during disaster.
R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- One of the key activities in the Marshall Islands in 2015 was to support and help fund the JNAP, to coordinate and monitor implementation, and to update existing disaster planning to ensure coordination occurs across the entire country. A coordinator was recruited to ensure effective implementation of the JNAP.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- Participation in the Regional Steering Committee held in Suva, Fiji on 30 October 2015 was key to this objective, which was held with UNDP’s Pacific Humanitarian Partnership (PHP) meeting.
- Participants were also included in PIEMA which is designed to support countries in achieving their national priorities for DRM in a coordinated way.
- The third annual National Steering Committee to determine RMI’s 2016 workplan is expected to be endorsed in early January 2016.

Training

A training course on ‘Post-disaster needs assessment’ was held from 23 to 27 November. The 20 participants learned how to carry out assessments, increasing national capacity to deal with disasters.

Looking ahead

- Implementation of JNAP to continue.
- Increased mainstreaming of DRR and CCA planned for 2016.
NAURU

The coral island atoll of Nauru has a population of 14,000 people and sits very close to the equator in the eastern Pacific Ocean. The country has a 20 km² land area with an exclusive economic zone of 308,502 km². Nauru’s economy is based primarily on phosphate mining, but the global economic crisis seriously impacted this industry in 2009. The country is now heavily dependent upon the sale of fishing licences and foreign aid from countries like Australia.

In terms of hazard risk, Nauru’s position close to the equator means it is outside the area of frequent occurrence of cyclones. It is also within a very quiet area for seismic activity with a very small chance of earthquake impacts in the next 50 years. Nauru’s country risk profile by the World Bank found that “Nauru is expected to incur, on average, less than 2 thousand USD per year in losses due to earthquakes and tropical cyclones. In the next 50 years, Nauru has a 50% chance of experiencing no economic losses and no casualties, and a 10% chance of experiencing a loss exceeding 0.2 million USD and no casualties.”

However, the impacts of climate variability, sea-level rise and warming, drought conditions during El Niño and out-of-season torrential rains during La Niña are increasing. Rising sea levels are causing costal erosion and salinity of groundwater. Long droughts are affecting fruit trees, coconut and breadfruit trees leading to low yields. Sedimentation and sea warming are badly affecting the health of corals and leading to losses in biodiversity. Mining activities on 70% of the island severely restrict agricultural activities. Land tenure is also sensitive and contentious. The country is becoming heavily reliant on importation of food to supply its population.

In recent years the Nauru Government enacted DRM legislation and drafted a national DRM plan. The DRM Act stipulates DRM to encompass natural, manmade and technological hazards.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- National emergency service complex approved by Cabinet, and tender for the construction published on the SPC website, attracting five bids.

Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- Construction of national emergency service complex approved by Cabinet. The complex will include the weather office, the national EOC and the national emergency services headquarters. Tenders for the construction have been received and the contractor will be selected in January 2016 by the National Steering Committee for the BSRP project.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- The review of the national DRM Act to reflect the establishment of a national emergency service is in the process of being completed. The World Humanitarian Response System and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is being included within this process, with the review sitting at the Ministry of Justice and expected to be finalised by July 2016.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- Nauru participated at the Regional Steering Committee and PIEMA, and the Disaster Managers Meeting in 2015.
- Work with Nauru to ensure the National Steering Committee meets to review progress of implementation and endorse the work plan moving forward. Year two will be reviewed in January 2016 and a year three workplan will then be designed and endorsed.

Challenges and looking ahead

Significant changes within government made the creation of the national emergency services department difficult, but this has now been achieved and a tender process has been published to build the new complex. The design and construction will be issues in early 2016 with design expected to take two months and construction expected to begin in 2016.
The world’s smallest independent nation, the raised atoll of Niue has a population of 1,190 people (2014 estimate). Niue has approximately 259 km² of land and an EEZ of 390,000 km². The capital is Alofi, which is located on the western side of the island. A total of 14 villages are scattered across the island, and a 64 km circuit road passes through all the villages. Niue’s coastline is rocky and rugged, with steep cliffs, caves, deep chasms and blowholes. Niue is also home to one of the world’s largest coral reefs.

Niue is a self-governing state in free association with New Zealand.

Being a coral atoll, Niue’s soils are marginal, and intensive agriculture is difficult due to shallow soil, low nutrient content and poor soil structure. Taro, cassava, sweetpotato and yams are commonly grown, while livestock such as chickens, pigs and a small number of cattle support subsistence livelihoods.

Niue is vulnerable to climate risks such as tropical cyclones and droughts; geological risks such as earthquakes and tsunamis; and human-induced risks such as disease outbreaks and contamination of the water supply. Niue’s risk profile is inherently linked to its isolation. Traditional coping strategies have tended to make way for an increased reliance on external support, as New Zealand fulfils its obligations to provide support to Niue in times of disaster. Climate change is likely to exacerbate most of Niue’s risks.

Niue has no surface water and relies upon groundwater resources and rain catchments. Groundwater is recharged via rainfall infiltration and rainfall currently exceeds the rate of extraction. However, Niue’s porous soil means that its underground freshwater is vulnerable to contamination from both human causes (e.g. agricultural chemicals) and natural sources (e.g. seawater). Waste management is an additional source of risk of contamination. Inadequate waste management in the livestock sector also poses a threat to water quality. Deforestation poses a risk to the stability of Niue’s shallow soils.

**Project snapshot 2015**

**Key achievements**

- Niue was the first Pacific Island country to develop and launch a strategic roadmap for emergency management (SREM) to create a joint and coordinated approach to disaster preparedness and response.
- A fire truck was purchased and deployed to ensure communities can be protected from fire even if a flight is landing (regulations require fire trucks to be at the airport for aviation reasons which slowed response times to other areas of the island).
- Radio-telephone units were purchased for NDMO and police to better communicate before, during and after disaster.

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*2014, Central Intelligence Agency: World Factbook.*
Detailed outcomes

R1 – Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

• An EOC for Niue and the first of its kind in the Pacific will begin construction in 2016. The EOC will bring together the NDMO and the fire and police services into one complex, helping increase coordination before, during and after disaster. Partners including the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management of New Zealand and BECA, New Zealand are partnering with the BSRP project to provide NZD500,000 for the new EOC.

• Maintenance of 14 generators was undertaken, with one being completely unserviceable and only seven being completely reliable.

• Purchase of 25 radios for the NDMO, and to also be used by fire, police and support services. These radios are compatible with the Tsunami siren system. More will be purchased to ensure there is an adequate number of radios for communications across the multiple agencies.

• A national drought policy is being progressed by Niue’s Department of Environment with focus on El Niño, poor water practice and brush fire hazards.

Challenges

• The EOC has been difficult to progress due to funding arrangements across different donors and partners. Partners include: Niue Government, the BSRP project, the EU, PIEMA, the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management of New Zealand, and the Australian Federal Police.

• The national drought policy has faced some challenges to progress, i.e. a lack of understanding of the procurement process and other competing priorities.

R2 – Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

• The BSRP project funded the position of national disaster management officer for the next 2 years (2016–2017), with the Niue Government possibly absorbing the position into their civil service. This position is important as it establishes a dedicated focal point for DRM activities in Niue which previously was shared between the SOG, COP and Director Works. A total of NZD75,000 has been allocated to this activity.

• DRR is to be built into the Niue building code in line with best practice. A Terms of Reference (ToR) has been created for a suitable engineer to undertake a survey of government buildings in Niue in 2016.

R3 – Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

• Developed and implemented effective communications for cyclone season with a documentary aired during the 2014/2015 cyclone season. Three more documentaries are planned over the next 24 months that focus on disaster preparedness.

R4 – Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

• To strengthen community preparedness, community consultations were held during 2015 with implementation being planned for 2016. Planned activities include the training of community disaster committees, developing community disaster plans and risk reduction action plans as well as the formation of volunteer community emergency response teams. This activity also includes a risk mitigation component with regards to hazards such as large tress falling on property or across critical infrastructure.
R5 – Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- Niue has been one of the most effective countries in strengthening its coordination efforts and its partnership with PIEMA. In 2015, a third fire truck was purchased to ensure domestic and structural fires can be attended to immediately. This is the first truck that is dedicated to domestic fire (the other two need to be at the airport for civil aviation requirements).

- A major achievement under the PIEMA partnership has been the development of the first SREM in the Pacific region, jointly developed with Niue emergency services agencies and partners PIEMA, the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management of New Zealand (MCDEM) and the New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS). The BSRP project funded the process, which now gives Niue a direction for emergency management with an action plan being developed for implementation. The SREM was launched at SPC’s Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) which was held in Niue in November.

- The Niue Government in partnership with the BSRP project and PIEMA also hosted urban search and rescue training (Category 1) for the Niue fire service and Niue police. Facilitated by NZFS, 18 personnel were trained (15 male, 3 female) which will increase the capacity of the local fire and police service. Attendees from Niue also took part in the PIFESA annual meeting in Adelaide, the USAR study tour of New Zealand and the AFAC conference in Adelaide. These provided good opportunities for partnership building and understanding best practice in the region.

Looking ahead

- Traditional knowledge of how to prepare for a disaster is abundant in Niue. The BSRP project is working with Taonga Niue to produce documentaries and posters/booklets on traditional knowledge in Niue in the context of DRM and CCA to be completed in 2016.

- Community DRM programmes will begin across at least 7 of the 14 villages in 2015. The national disaster management team will lead the project, with support from other response agencies.

- Review of DRM legislation and DRM plan was to be a BSRP activity, however this will now be undertaken by the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (MCDEM) in New Zealand under new funding provided by the New Zealand Government. The BSRP project will support this activity as a key partner by providing technical assistance and training during 2016.

Success story

Innovation for emergency services: a first for the Pacific region

A ground-breaking way to address how Pacific Island countries prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters was launched by the European Union Ambassador for the Pacific, His Excellency Andrew Jacobs, and the Premier of Niue, the Hon. Toke Talagi in November.

Niue is the first Pacific Island country to commit to the Strategic Roadmap for Emergency Management which will ensure its emergency services work together to build a solid foundation for a prosperous future for the people of Niue.

The Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA) worked closely with Niue’s Government to create the roadmap as part of the Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific project. This €19.6 million project is implemented by the Pacific Community and supported by the European Union.

To support the coordination of emergency services within Niue the roadmap was launched with a new fire truck and a ground-breaking at the site for its new Emergency Operations Centre which will begin construction in 2016.

Ambassador Jacobs said he was honoured to launch the roadmap and to formally handover the new fire truck, funded through the BSRP project.

“Niue’s government is showing strong leadership and forward thinking. The European Union is committed to support Niue’s and our Pacific partners and friends’ innovative efforts to build their resilience,” Ambassador Jacobs said.

The roadmap and coordination strategy is being developed across 14 more Pacific Island countries that are part of the BSRP project to ensure innovative and efficient solutions to disaster preparedness and response are brought together to build and support the rich culture and people of the Pacific region.

“In a first for the Pacific, Niue’s Joint Emergency Operations Centre will house the Police Station, National Disaster Management Office and Niue Fire Rescue Service,” the Premier of Niue and Minister for Central Agencies and Premier, the Hon. Toke Talagi, said.
“This is highly beneficial to the entire country as our emergency services are coordinated and we are better equipped to share resources, prepare communities and respond to disasters when they inevitably strike,” Premier Talagi said.

At present, only two airport crash firetrucks exist in Alofi so this support will help protect the people of Niue into the future when they’re affected by disaster, the Premier said.

The new centre will include Niue’s Rescue Coordination Centre, a staging area for emergency vehicles and equipment, as well as relief and rehabilitation supplies, and a backup Activation Centre for the Niue Tsunami Early Warning System.

Speaking at the event, the Director of SPC’s Geoscience Division, Professor Mike Petterson, congratulated the Government of Niue on setting the benchmark for other Pacific countries and territories.

“We celebrate our strengths and resilience in responding to the unique challenges we face in our region and the launch of the first Strategic Roadmap for Emergency Management is a true testament to the Niue Government, its National Disaster Management Office, the European Union and the Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific project to create innovative and collaborative relationships that strengthen the resilience of Niue,” Prof. Petterson said.

Participating in the ground-breaking were Premier Talagi, Ambassador Jacobs, New Zealand High Commissioner to Niue Ross Ardern, the Assistant Secretary, Pacific Regional Branch, of Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Alice Cawte and Prof. Petterson of SPC.
PALAU

The republic of Palau is a small, independent island nation located in the northern Pacific, and is under a compact of free association with the US. Palau’s population is approximately 20,956 (2011 estimate). The country has shown recent economic growth rates of 8%, reflecting increased tourism within the country along with related industries in communications, wholesale and retail trade, and financial intermediation. Tourism is predicted to continue to increase for the coming years.

Hazards that have had the greatest impact on Palau in the past are typhoons (tropical cyclones) and storm surges. Storm surges and the resultant saltwater inundation of taro fields and water tables are a pressing concern and appear to be linked to climate change and sea-level rise. The majority of the population lives along the coast, which is also where most critical infrastructure is located. The main hospital is located very close to the sea, and the causeway connecting it to the mainland is vulnerable to storm surge and/or tsunami. Technological hazards, such as the bridge collapse in 1997 and the fire that gutted the main power plant in 2011, are additional concerns.

In late 2012, Typhoon Bopha struck Palau and affected hundreds of people, destroying 70 homes and displacing 131 people. Soon after in 2013, Super Typhoon Haiyan impacted the islands again, especially the northern-most state of Kayangel, destroying 39 homes and some parts of Babeldaob Island. The impact of these cyclones is still being felt by communities in Palau.

Palau has a national DRM framework developed in 2010 which promotes a multi-hazard approach to managing hazards and vulnerability. Palau consists of 16 states and each state is currently in the process of developing its own DRM plan. Many of the key agencies and sectors have emergency plans in place. Palau does not have a national climate change policy or plan and is relatively unprepared for climate change.

Despite the existence of DRM policies and plans, Palau is relatively poorly prepared for reducing hazard risk and coping with disasters. This is in part due to its historical reliance on the US for disaster response and humanitarian support. Awareness is however growing (particularly at political and operational levels) of the need to invest in preparedness and risk reduction. Recent technological disasters have also helped to improve awareness of the linkages between poorly planned development and hazard risk. Palau is heavily dependent on marine-based tourism and the need to protect this industry is understood.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- Thirteen water tanks were supplied to four schools to ensure 1,089 students have access to clean and safe drinking water during drought conditions.
- The national emergency management office was renovated with a training room and a sleeping room added, to ensure disasters can be monitored and responded to 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- A review of the DRM framework was carried out to incorporate lessons learnt from the two recent typhoons.
- A sector-wide vulnerability assessment was carried out, supporting development of a JNAP.
• Awareness and information materials were developed on various hazards, to improve disaster preparedness.
• Mapping of sewer and water lines was completed and maps are available at the EOC.
• Mapping of 53 tsunami evacuation zones in 14 states was completed, and maps are available at the EOC.
• Refurbishment of the national emergency office boat, including two new outboard engines, to enhance access to the outer islands.
• Initial damage assessment forms were standardised and used for training.

Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- To help ensure the national emergency management office (emergency operations centre, EOC) is typhoon proofed, renovations were completed, with a training room and sleeping room added and all furniture included. This ensures 24/7 capacity during disaster.
- Initial damage assessment (IDA) forms were standardised, following inconsistent forms being used after Palau’s most recent typhoons. The new IDA is now available to the EOC with training on the form completed with the staff in September 2015.
- Further support for the EOC’s ability to respond quickly during disaster included the refurbishment of its boat and outboard engine. This will allow transportation of relief supplies to outer islands, as well as rapid post-disaster assessment and outreach programmes for outer islands.
- Water tanks were provided to four schools with a total of 13 being installed to ensure water supply is not affected during dry weather conditions such as were prevalent in the region during 2015.
- The scoping and design of an AM radio tower to replace the damaged tower which was struck during Typhoon Bopha in 2012 was completed.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- A sector-wide vulnerability assessment was carried out that identified the priorities which are now incorporated into the Climate Change Policy Framework (CCPF) for Palau.
- The DRM framework was reviewed between August and December 2015 to incorporate lessons learnt from Typhoons Bopha and Haiyan, with a draft now with the National Emergency Committee for consideration, which also incorporates the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Humanitarian Response System.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- The national EOC worked with project officers and the communications officer in the BSRP project to develop awareness and information materials for various hazards, such as typhoons, tsunamis and El Niño, in English and Palauan. Materials were developed, printed and distributed to schools and state offices during 2015 to increase awareness of hazards and risks in the country. The materials were also showcased on 13 October, the International Day for Disaster Reduction.
- Training was carried out for state and hamlet representatives in initial damage assessment (IDA) to ensure state officials are able to conduct IDAs immediately after disaster, in a consistent manner. Damage and loss assessment training was also delivered to 22 participants. In the past assessments only considered the cost of damage and not the impacts on economic flow and society, which has been rectified with this training, ensuring thorough assessment in the future.

R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

- Strengthening the sharing of data with Palau’s GIS technical agency (PALARIS) through the development of national spatial data framework – spatial data framework is included in the Executive Order that created PALARIS. Two
officials were supported to attend training on GIS for DRM - GIS can now be used to support disaster mitigation and response.

- Complete mapping of sewer and water lines was completed with all water lines in 14 states mapped and sewer lines in two states. The maps are available at the national EOC and provide valuable information for DRM.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- Palau was represented at the 1st PIEMA meeting and at the Regional Steering Committee meeting (October 2015). Attending these meetings will help Palau develop its 2016 workplan and ensure it is endorsed by the National Steering Committee in January 2016.

Training

- Initial damage assessment (16–18 September): a total of 16 participants trained in a standard process for damage assessment. This will create consistency and clarity in times of disaster.

- Post-disaster needs assessment (13–17 September): 22 attendees were trained in detailed PDNA assessments, supporting effective recovery planning and mitigation.

Looking ahead

Relocation of emergency communication VHF repeaters onto the Department of Justice towers is in progress.

- Hazard support plan to be developed and implemented. Tsunami plan developed and adopted by the National Emergency Committee. Tsunami plan is used to guide issuance of tsunami advisory and warning as well as mapping of tsunami evacuation zones.

- AM radio tower to be built to replace the AM radio tower that was damaged during typhoon Bopha in 2012. Once completed the national EOC will be able to communicate with islands through HF radio.
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The most populous country in the Pacific region, Papua New Guinea (PNG) has a population of approximately 7.3 million people (2011 estimate), and a total of 600 islands with 462,840 km² of landmass. PNG has more than 820 different languages and is home to one of the most diverse cultures in the world.

The Oceanic nation occupies the eastern half of the island of New Guinea and is located in the ‘Pacific Ring of Fire’. The country has high exposure to hazards such as volcanoes, earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, tropical cyclones, flooding and coastal erosion. PNG ranks in the top six countries for the percentage of population exposed to earthquake hazard and has the highest percentage of population exposed to severe volcanic risk. Landslide hazard is also particularly high in PNG5.


In line with this risk, PNG has scaled up its DRM efforts in recent years. A Disaster Management Act was created in 1984 but was not implemented effectively, however renewed focus on this area has resulted in work being directed toward DRM, DRR and CCA. The country’s 2050 National Plan aims at attaining sustainable development through DRM and CCA6.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- Rapid deployment units procured for seismic early warning following major earthquakes.
- Pilot project on Manu Island for Traditional Knowledge understanding of disaster risk management and community engagement in five communities.
- National coordinator secured for the project.

Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- Supplier selected and contracted to provide ‘rapid deployment units’ for field assessments following major earthquakes. Consisting of seismometers, accelerometers, data loggers with GPS and memory and power supply, the six units will be maintained as standby kits for deployment as needed. The units complement the seismic network established under previous projects and will provide vital early warning information for seismic activity improving disaster recovery after earthquake events.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- National coordinator for BSRP in PNG was contracted and based at the National Disaster Centre (NDC) in July 2015, and will continue until project completion in 2018. To support this role office equipment such as laptop, digital camera and office supplies were procured.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- Documentation of community traditional knowledge for disaster risk preparedness and planning was approved by the National Steering Committee in July 2015 for implementation by the PNG Red Cross in the pilot province of Manus. The activity will document and utilise traditional DRM knowledge in the development of emergency planning and procedures to ensure communities can withstand the first 24–48 hours following an event before relief arrives. The activity is underway, with PGK 100,000 allocated.
- BSRP supported the printing of the PNG Department of Education's Education in Emergencies and Disaster Risk Management Policy. Printing was done in PNG for distribution to all schools in PNG.

R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

- Building on EDF9 Natural Disaster Facility support, a landslide hazard management programme was developed for vulnerable sections of the Okuk highway in the Highlands region of PNG. The EDF10 component will focus on data collection in both dry and wet seasons, soil sample testing and awareness programmes for communities in the project area. BSRP is funding field site visits, data collection and testing and reporting on the findings to the PNG Government and local communities to the amount of PGK250,000. Work will begin in Feb 2016; the last part of 2015 was spent confirming the workplan and timing of activities.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- Twinning arrangements were confirmed with Queensland Fire & Emergency Services and Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMs), to support the PNG fire service. USAR training is confirmed for 2016 and was facilitated by attendance of representatives at the 2015 AFAC conference.

Looking ahead

Nearly all of the allocated funding from SPC has been pinned down against an activity by the national agencies. Only one activity was discarded and another critical one from the Works Department for Building Codes was not utilised thus this funding remains. Two activities from the National Disaster Committee to do with revised Act for the NDC to be mandated as a Commission is still yet to be passed by Parliament.

Priority activities to be implemented in 2016 include:

- Landslide hazard monitoring and assessment;
- Roll out of the Queensland Fire & Emergency Services and PNGFS training in USAR, AIIMS and other capacity building initiatives; and
- Outfitting of the national disaster centre for the national EOC.
Success story
Earthquake equipment to protect PNG communities

The ability to respond to earthquakes quickly and measure aftershocks has been ramped up in Papua New Guinea after the procurement of rapid deployment units to measure seismic activity. These mobile networks can be deployed swiftly when needed to provide critical warnings following major earthquakes thus informing appropriate evacuation areas and procedures.

The need for this equipment was a priority for the Department of Mineral Policy & Geohazards Management and was facilitated through the Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific project.

The establishment and maintenance of such seismic networks in PNG not only boosts national resilience but also contributes to growing a stronger seismic community in the southwest Pacific region and in particular the Melanesian sub-region of the Pacific.
TIMOR-LESTE

Timor-Leste is one of the most populated countries in the BSRP project, with a population of more than 1.2 million people. One of the newest countries in the world, Timor-Leste became independent from Indonesia in May 2002. Its land mass includes the eastern half of the island of Timor, the Oecussi (Ambeno) region on the northwest portion of the island of Timor, and the islands of Palau Atauro and Palau Jaco.

Timor-Leste has 13 administrative districts, namely Aileu, Ainaro, Baucau, Bobonaro, Covalima, Manufahi, Oecussi, Dili, Ermera, Lautem, Liquiçá, Manatuto and Viqueque. The country is further subdivided into 65 sub-districts, 442 sucos (villages), and 2,225 aldeias (hamlets).

In terms of population distribution, the three most populated districts are Díli, Baucau and Ermera which are home to about 43% of the population. Díli district alone has about 234,331 people (an increase of 33.3% since 2004). The three least populated districts are Manatuto, Aileu and Manufahi (with 13% of the population). The average household size is 5.8 and the proportion of the population living in rural areas is about 70.4%.

Timor-Leste’s topography is dominated by a massive central mountainous backbone that rises to 3,000 meters and is dissected by deep valleys. On the northern side the mountains extend almost to the coast, but on the southern part the mountains taper off some distance from the coast, which provides areas of coastal plain. Up to 44% of the area has a slope of 40%.

Timor-Leste’s climate is affected by the West Pacific monsoon, which is driven by large differences in temperature between the land and the ocean.

According to the Pacific Climate Change Science Program (PCCSP) report, temperatures have warmed in Timor-Leste and will continue to warm with more very hot days in the future. Rainfall data for Dili Airport show a clear decreasing trend in annual and dry season rainfall since 1952, however there are data gaps. Rainfall patterns are projected to change over this century with more extreme rainfall days but little change in drought frequency. By the end of this century projections suggest decreasing numbers of tropical cyclones. Sea level near Timor-Leste has risen and will continue to rise throughout this century. Ocean acidification has been increasing in Timor-Leste’s waters, and will continue to increase and threaten coral reef ecosystems.

As with many other countries in the region, Timor-Leste is prone to disasters triggered by natural hazards. The main hazards are hydro-meteorological. Heavy seasonal rain is normally marked by flash flooding and landslides that can destroy fragile road networks, isolate communities and disrupt economic activities. Storms with strong winds occur very frequently and are problematic for the flimsy constructions that characterise the houses of the rural communities. On the other hand, a long dry season can cause drought, provoking wildfires and food scarcity which have affected districts and villages in different parts of the country. However, these recurrent hazards are mostly localised and involve a relatively small number.
of families per event. Threats from geological hazards also exist, although these are rare events. However, earthquakes and possibly tsunamis are challenges that need to be considered because of the potential they have to cause significant damage.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- 24/7 power supply was connected to Timor-Leste’s National Disaster Management Directorate (NDMD) which will ensure disaster response can be monitored constantly by the NDMD team.
- A pilot project on DRM and CCA at community level was implemented.

Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- The new DRM Policy, developed and drafted by Timor-Leste with support from the BSRP project, states the need to operate its national disaster operations centre 24/7. This has not been possible due to lack of power, with the previous generator being moved to Oecusse in 2013. A replacement generator was found at the Ministry of Social Solidarity compound in Caicoli and approved for transfer to the national disaster operations centre. Necessary equipment such as computers and air-conditioning can now be run, ensuring 24/7 emergency coverage and support for Timor-Leste.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- Technical support under twinning arrangements that provide assistance from other emergency agencies is planned to support the national disaster management teams under the BSRP project. The Northern Territory Fire and Emergency Services in Australia are ready to sign an MoU with Timor-Leste but prior commitments by ministers have delayed the signing; this will be further developed in 2016.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- A study tour group comprising government representatives, civil society organisations and other key partners visited the Bali Province of Indonesia, to witness best practice strategies with particular attention to end-to-end EWS for tsunami hazards. The topographical and geographical similarities between Timor-Leste and Indonesia made this trip effective and helped create a best practice model for Timor-Leste. More details and outcomes of the study tour are described below, in the success story.

R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

- Activity outlines have been created to help focus on priorities for Timor-Leste’s DRM with clear project outcomes. Weather stations will be created in data sparse regions of the country, and capacity will be built to access, analyse and act upon risk information available.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- The MoU developed with the Northern Territory Fire and Emergency Service will be signed and implemented in 2016, with key preparatory work for this being carried out in 2015.
Training

- Best practice study tour in Bali, 17–21 August.

Looking ahead

- Preparation for community engagement in the municipality of Covalima and Vique-que.
- Signing of MoU with Northern Territory Fire and Emergency Service.
- Increased access to useable weather information expected in 2016 along with increased capacity building of agencies to engage with this information.
- EWS development for Timor-Leste.
- Collaboration with the media will be strengthened.
- A pilot project on DRM and CCA at community level will be implemented.
- Lifesaving kits for first responders are to be provided.

Success story

Best practice study tour in Bali, Indonesia

Timor-Leste is in need of significant support to increase its disaster risk management, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies. To address this, a study tour group comprising government representatives, civil society organisations and other key partners visited the Bali Province of Indonesia, to witness best practice strategies with particular attention to end-to-end EWS for tsunami hazards. The topographical and geographical similarities between Timor-Leste and Indonesia made this trip effective and helped create a best practice model for Timor-Leste.

The key areas observed by the team included effective crisis management practice, community outreach, hotel certification, tsunami sirens, search and rescue (SAR) services and the municipal emergency operations centre including fire and ambulance services. As a result of the tour a plan was enacted to help implement an end-to-end EWS for tsunami along with other key activities to ensure capacity building in Timor-Leste. A key priority was an end-to-end EWS that could be deployed in the Dili urban waterfront, along with upgrading the communication capacity of the national disaster operations centre (NDOC) and the Viquique and Suai evacuation centre.

Outcomes of study tour were as follows.

- Short term (0–6 months): Upgrade national disaster operations centre including communications infrastructure; uniforms and identification cards for all staff; working group reinforced with action plan on EWS to be created; identification of basic needs and protocol established for disaster management and disaster risk reduction; establish need for MoU with key stakeholders from Australia, Indonesia and Timor-Leste for best practice; develop advocacy tools for community engagement along with website and social media for the meteorological and NDMD sites.
- Medium term (1–2 years): Corporate social responsibility plan for businesses (helicopter, radio, hotels); integrate disaster management into Suko PNDS (National Village Development Programme); develop an awareness campaign using posters, comics, signboards, videos, and animations; get high internet connectivity with a focus on fibre optic; assist new search and rescue agency to develop standard operating procedures and other key procedures; disaster certification development for local business and private sector; evacuation centres developed in key strategic locations; end-to-end tsunami EWS for Dili urban area.
- Long-term (3–5 years): Develop standard operating procedures for police, national disaster management district and bombeiros.
Comprised of two large volcanic islands (Upolu and Savai'i) and several smaller islands with a total land area of approximately 2,935 km², Samoa lies in the southwest Pacific with an exclusive economic zone of 120,000 km² of ocean. The population of Samoa is 187,820 (2011 census) with approximately 76% of the population living on Upolu island. The country’s capital of Apia is a port city located on Upolu and has a population of 36,000 people. Samoa’s main source of income is from agriculture and fisheries followed by tourism and remittances from families overseas. GDP per capita is roughly USD3,000.

Both islands are mountainous and 70% of the population live in low-lying coastal areas. The country is exposed to a number of natural and technological hazards. Some of these hazards are seasonal, such as tropical cyclones, floods and droughts. Others are ever-present threats such as earthquake, volcanic eruption, tsunami, epidemics, industrial hazards and exotic plant or animal diseases. Samoa’s country risk profile developed as part of the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative indicated that Samoa is expected to incur on average USD10 million per year in losses due to earthquakes and tropical cyclones in the next 50 years. There is a 50% chance that losses of USD130 million and casualties of more than 325 people will be experienced in the next 50 years.

Recently, Samoa has been affected by tropical cyclones, flooding, fires, oil spills and a highly destructive tsunami which devastated the south coast of Upolu in 2009. The latter catastrophe affected more than 5,000 people with a death toll of 143 and the total cost of damage and losses, at USD124 million, was equivalent to more than 22% of Samoa’s GDP.

Eight people lost their lives during Cyclone Ofa (1990), with 195,000 people affected and the cost to the economy USD200 million. Thirteen people lost their lives during Cyclone Val (1991), 88,000 people were affected, and the cost was USD278 million. In 2012, Tropical Cyclone Evan made landfall resulting in the loss of 12 lives, the destruction of 700 houses and damage to almost 1,000. The total cost of damage and loss following Evan was estimated to be USD203.9 million. These tropical cyclones and the 2009 tsunami emphasise Samoa’s vulnerability as a small island state with a concentration of settlements and infrastructure in the coastal zone.

Apart from the hazards mentioned above, Samoa is also dealing with climate change and sea-level rise, environmental degradation, pollution, coastal erosion, water quality and resource management. All are important environmental issues which if not managed properly will increase disaster risks in Samoa.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- A response and community outreach vehicle was purchased, which has multiple uses due to retrofitting and accessories. Communities throughout the country will benefit from access to information when the vehicle is used for pulling the ‘outreach materials trailer’; and during disaster response when the vehicle will enable the NDMO staff to get out into the field for assessments and on-site coordination.

- Tsunami signs installed: 78 signs were produced and installed in locations in and around Apia to advise people of evacuation routes, safe locations and to provide information about tsunamis and what to do should one occur.
Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- A review of the emergency radio network (ERN) was carried out in May to understand the technical capacity of the network and users’ experience of the ERN, to determine how the system can best be expanded and improved. A number of practical recommendations were made to ensure that this vital system remains useful in the long term to the people of Samoa.
- To help increase the use of the ERN, 28 radio sets and accessories were purchased for the NDMO, which will improve communications across the network during emergencies, within the NDMO and externally with key agencies such as the health service, fire, police, Red Cross, and water authority. Maintenance and spare parts were also provided to improve the system.
- A community outreach and emergency response vehicle was provided to the NDMO – a modified Ford Ranger adapted to tow an ‘information trailer’ for community outreach and consultations. Emergency response equipment comprising a flood snorkel, bull bar with winch, emergency lights, emergency tool kit, siren and public address system with a HF radio linked to the ERN was installed.
- ToRs for the new national EOC and search-and-rescue training facility were developed and a contractor was selected to design and supervise their construction in Apia. A contract for this work is currently being finalised; support for these activities will be a partnership between the Samoan Government, the BSRP project, SPC and the World Bank.

Challenges

- Responsibility for the management and maintenance of the ERN needs clarity. The review conducted in May makes several practical recommendations to improve the resilience, accessibility and management of the ERN; approval for this work is being sought from the ERN user group and Samoa’s national steering committee for the BSRP. The BSRP project and the New Zealand Government are prepared to provide support as soon as approval is given.
- Preparation of the ToRs for the building of the EOC took an extended length of time due to the need for consultation with multiple agencies.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- A DRM policy and legislation review is underway by a team of consultants. This team will provide recommendations to update the DRM Act and develop a CCA/DRM mainstreaming guideline for sector plans. In-country consultations for this work commenced in September.

Challenges

- Delays with payment of invoices by SPC Finance have contributed to dissatisfaction from some of the consultants on the team. Two team members have withdrawn from the work and a replacement was required in order for the work to continue, which caused delays. A contract amendment is currently being sought and will be progressed in 2016.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- Five days of training in post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA) methodology was delivered to 15 participants predominantly from the tourism sector in Samoa. The training was hosted by the Samoa Tourism Authority and supported by NZAid’s Tourism Cyclone Recovery Programme and the BSRP project. Tourism is one of the biggest contributors to Samoa’s GDP and is also one of the sectors most severely affected by disaster, for example 25% of the total cost of the 2009 tsunami was borne by the tourism sector.
- Two representatives, one from the Samoan Fire and Emergency Services Authority (SFESA) and one from the NDMO, were supported by the BSRP to attend USAR training in New Zealand.
- Options are being explored to support improvements for in-country fire Investigation capacity via the existing twinning arrangement with the Melbourne Fire Authority.
R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

- Tsunami evacuation route and information signs were developed and installed. The signs were produced using BSRP funds. Sites for the signs were informed and selected as a result of training for in-country personnel, provided by GNS Science9 specialists last year. This training was also conducted using BSRP funding.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- Two representatives of the Meteorological Department (Geophysics Section) and NDMO were supported to attend the Pacific Tsunami Warning System (PTWS) meeting in Hawaii to learn how to use the new tsunami warning products produced by the PTWS.

Training

- PDNA training was held from 19 to 23 October. This training was innovative in that it worked with Samoa’s tourism industry, one of the biggest industries in the country. The tourism sector is significantly impacted by disaster, so to support the industry and the overall economy of Samoa this training helped participants to calculate the real cost of disaster on the sector whilst better informing the development of effective recovery strategies.

Looking ahead

- Construction of the NEOC and SAR training facility: The consultants who are currently being contracted will prepare ToRs for the companies that will carry out the construction projects. Contracting for the companies will be the next step.
- A review of the current risk outreach materials prepared by the NDMO will be carried out. Activities will include: identify dates for in-country consultations, prepare training materials, train data collectors, design a system for assessing the data and use this to inform future design of awareness materials.
- In-country fire investigation capacity will be improved. Activities will include: identify a SFESA focal point, arrange and fund training and secondments with Melbourne Fire Authority, support finalisation of the SAR training facility, design suitable SAR training programmes using the new facility.
- Hazard and risk mapping of selected sites will be carried out. Activities will include: liaise between NDMO and GSD specialists to design research and secondment/capacity-building activities to enable critical data to be collected, analysed and applied in terms of high risk sites/communities.

Success story

The deadly tsunami that hit Samoa and killed 143 people in 2009 after an 8.3 magnitude quake led to villages being decimated with cars and people swept out to sea. This devastation and loss of life highlighted the challenges facing emergency services in Samoa, especially in terms of coordinating search and rescue operations and providing warnings to people at risk.

As a result of this event, the Samoan Government created the emergency radio network (ERN). The system allows the hospital, the Red Cross, the police, the fire service, the NDMO and other key emergency services to immediately communicate with each other. They also do not have to invest in separate systems.

Efficient and effective communication saves lives, money and resources. By reducing the time it takes to communicate during emergencies the response becomes more effective.

The BSRP project has contributed by supporting a review of the system, and providing recommendations for improvement which include undertaking maintenance and providing spare parts to ensure it is ready if disaster strikes.

This system is critical as it allows for communication in real-time during a disaster, and also ensures that when the tsunami early warning system is activated the siren is broadcast through the network. The ERN is critical for the protection of the lives and livelihoods of the people of Samoa and we will continue to develop and support this work throughout 2016.

9 Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences Limited, in 2006 was re-branded to become GNS Science.
SOLOMON ISLANDS

The archipelago of the Solomon Islands is made up of 992 islands of which approximately 300 are populated. The southern Pacific country’s land mass is 28,000 km² with an estimated ocean area of more than 1.3 million km². The total population, based on 2015 estimates, is 622,469 and is predominantly Melanesian (94.5%) with around 3% Polynesians along with Micronesian and European/Chinese groups accounting for the remaining 2.5%.

Economically, the country is within the bottom quartile of nations due to a per capita GDP below USD2,000 per annum. However, Solomon Islanders enjoy a high degree of subsistence security, are generally not malnourished, and have a life expectancy of 63 years.

The country is divided into nine provinces: Guadalcanal, Central, Western, Isabel, Malaita, Makira, Temotu, Choiseul and RenBel (Rennel and Bellona Islands). The capital city, Honiara (estimated population 73,000 in 2014), is located on the island of Guadalcanal.

In terms of risk, Solomon Islands is exposed to a wide range of hazards due to being surrounded by ocean and also being located on the ‘Pacific Ring of Fire.’ Solomon Islands currently has eight active volcanoes, and is also directly at risk of tropical storms, saltwater intrusion, flood events, storm surges, sea-level rise, land erosion, tsunami and earthquakes. Over the past 30 years there have been seven major natural hazard events: two large earthquakes, two tsunamis (in 2007 and 2013) and four tropical cyclones, which have directly impacted well over 100,000 people and caused approximately 170 deaths. In addition, the period of civil unrest in 1998–2003 displaced an estimated 35,000 people, resulted in 200 deaths and had a cost of SBD250 million in humanitarian relief and property losses.

There are a number of issues to consider in terms of underlying factors that increase vulnerability. First and foremost is the inequality that exists between men and women in terms of natural resource management, decision-making and the freedom to make choices about their own lives. This inequality limits the extent to which women are consulted and subsequently involved in DRM activities and the extent to which their roles and responsibilities are considered in efforts to build resilience. This resonates with the lack of engagement of young people, a significant omission in a country with over a third of the population under the age of 15. Rapid urbanisation and growing informal squatter settlements have led to a large, highly vulnerable population in Honiara. Informal settlements have limited access to basic services and receive little or no support to improve drainage systems which results in flooding and remains an ongoing challenge. As is the case in other Melanesian countries, the issues of land entitlement continue to pose large and very complicated challenges for Solomon Islands and result in most informal settlements being created in areas that are prone to natural hazards.

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Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- Technical working group established to review and streamline assessment processes for more effective collection of usable data post-disaster.
- Document preparation commenced to support construction of a joint national warning and emergency operations Centre.
- A review is underway of radio messaging content to more effectively inform the public of hazards and risks.
- ToRs and questionnaires have been developed to support community-based DRM activities in two provinces, Makira and Isabel.

Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- The first meeting of the technical working group (TWG) tasked to review post-disaster assessment processes in Solomon Islands was held in July. The project provided funds and technical support, and leveraged additional technical support from UNOCHA, to facilitate the initial workshop. The in-depth 3-day meeting enabled a clear roadmap to be developed for the TWG and a second meeting of this group took place in September to clarify specific activities. The Solomon Islands NDMO is now leading a review of the initial damage assessment and detailed sector assessment forms for use during future disaster response events. Options for investing in software and hardware to enable swift data collection are also being explored to ensure effective use of collected data.
- Preparation is also underway for the construction of a joint national warning centre and emergency operations centre at the current NDMO site on Vavaya Ridge. A contract has been developed for geotechnical site surveys and for design and supervision of the new structure. Co-financing from the Solomon Island Government and the World Bank has been negotiated to support the actual construction.

Challenges

- Ensuring consistent meetings of the TWG group has been challenge. This activity is supported by a range of stakeholders at national, regional and international levels. Focal points have now been established and sub-groups within the working group are helping ensure this work is moving with minimal delay.
- Feedback from the government has been sporadic in terms of technical inputs to the specific contracts, and the tasks that the project will be called upon to support have not remained consistent. However, the work is moving and there is support for the overall outcome which will be significantly progressed in 2016.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- The project provided financial and technical support for a week of in-country training for 36 national disaster management officers, meteorology service and seismology department staff on revised regional tsunami warning products. The event also provided the opportunity to carry out a tsunami simulation exercise and to initiate a review of the content of radio messaging in an effort to improve community understanding of tsunami warning messages. A TWG was formed at this meeting to progress the radio messaging work for tsunamis and other hazards that affect the country. This work will continue in 2016 to ensure that disaster messages are effectively communicated in real-time to increase community understanding of disasters.
- Four NDMO staff members and one local DRM consultant have been supported to study a post-graduate certificate in DRM through distance learning with the Fiji National University (FNU) – which is the first course of its kind in the Pacific informed by detailed local understanding.

Challenges

- The TWG’s ability to meet and progress this work has been affected by both El Niño weather conditions and by Cyclone Pam in March 2015.
• There have been communication challenges between FNU, the students and SPC in regards to fee payments and results being released and shared. This led to delays for the students enrolling for the course modules, but it has been rectified.

R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

• The project has worked with the NDMO and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to prepare ToRs and community questionnaires to help identify suitable sites for community-based flood EWS in Makira and Isabel provinces. This work will be implemented by the NDMO in partnership with JICA and SPC. Getting all relevant stakeholders to share information to progress the work has been a challenge.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

• One representative from the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (Fire Service Section) was supported to attend the 2015 PIFESA annual meeting and 2015 AFAC conference in Adelaide, Australia as part of the PIEMA partnership. Discussions at these meetings also progressed the twinning arrangements between Solomon Islands and the Fire Rescue Service of New South Wales.

• One representative of the Solomon Islands Government was supported to participate in the World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan.

• Two representatives of the Solomon Islands Government were supported to participate in the Pacific Tsunami Warning System meeting in Hawaii.

Training

• Workshop held from 21 to 25 September, with a total of 36 attendees trained on using revised regional tsunami warning products. Review of radio messaging content initiated to more effectively share information on tsunamis and other hazards that affect the country.

Looking ahead

• Improvement of post-disaster assessments. Activities will include: workshops/meetings to finalise the standardised post-disaster assessment forms; training on use of the new forms; Identification of data analysis needs; capacity building and support.

• Construction of the national joint emergency operations and warning centre. Activities will include: select a company to carry out the design and supervision work and prepare the bidding documents for the construction phase; contract companies to carry out ground work (geotechnical survey, demolition of existing structure); formalisation of the co-financing arrangements.

• Initiate community-based risk management activities in Makira and Isabel. Activities will include: liaise with technical and partner agencies; develop letter of agreement with Solomon Islands Government to release funds; and ensure monitoring and reporting completed.

• Improve risk messaging content and community understanding. Activities will include: support TWG to work with media and communications representatives to review content of radio messaging; use focus groups and general public two-way communication to ensure effective content development of messages.
Success story
Learning from past disasters to be better prepared

Solomon Islands has been hit by storm surges, flooding, earthquakes, the tail of Tropical Cyclone Pam and a tsunami that killed 12 people in the last 3 years. Learning from each disaster and better preparing for the next one has become critical in Solomon Islands, and the government along with key partners have recognised the need to improve post-disaster assessment processes.

An effective and efficient assessment process is the best way to address information needs post-disaster. In order to help streamline and generate best-practice collection of this critical information, with the support of the BSRP project, a team of experienced Solomon Islanders from various organisations has been established to review the existing process, identify challenges and make clear recommendations on how to improve and standardise the system.

Director of the Solomon Islands National Disaster Management Office, Mr Loti Yates, said “It is critical for the country to have accurate and timely information about the needs of affected communities following a disaster so that the right decisions can be made and the right support can be provided.”

EU Ambassador to Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, Leonidas Tezapsidis, said “Better training, planning and decision-making for natural disasters can only reduce vulnerabilities to natural calamities in the Pacific region. The EU promotes the participation of both women and men in such activities. Climate change actions in development programmes increase community resilience to natural hazards. I am happy therefore that the EU supports the BSRP project in partnership with the Pacific Community and national stakeholders.”

The technical working group is now standardising post-disaster assessment forms and identifying data analysis needs in order to progress this work in 2016 across agencies with key roles in disaster response.
TONGA

The Kingdom of Tonga is made up of 176 islands with a population of 103,036 people (2011 census) on 36 inhabited islands. The Tonga archipelago has a combined land area of 747 km² and an EEZ of 649 km². Tonga has about 17,500 households, of which 77% are rural.

Tonga is exposed to both hydro-meteorological and geological hazards. It is in the cyclone region, averaging three events every two years with severe (category 3–4) cyclones every three to four years. In recent years two cyclones have had impacts on many of the islands of Tonga, with Cyclone Ian causing widespread damage in January 2014 followed by Cyclone Ula which caused minimal damage in early January 2016.

Increasing sea-level rise, extreme precipitation, storm surges, whirlwinds and thunderstorms are causing record flood damages, landslides in the hilly terrains and coastal erosion. Tonga has active terrestrial volcanoes and a seabed region of high submarine volcanic activity. It was also hit recently by regional tsunamis.

Tonga is a low-income country with remittances from overseas very important to many; 22% live below the national poverty line. During the financial year 2009–2010, remittances declined from 30% of GDP with estimates that the real value has fallen 50% due to inflation. The continuing global economic downturn will further reduce remittances and push more people into hardship and poverty.

Tonga places great importance in integrating disaster risk consideration into sustainable development. The national DRM institutions and their capacity need strengthening. There are weaknesses in the current national emergency management office (NEMO) staffing and organisational structure, resulting in critical shortcomings in NEMO’s role to coordinate government and non-government DRM programmes and their implementation.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- Two emergency vehicles were procured for NEMO in Nuku'alofa and Va‘vau, increasing mobility before, during and after disaster.
- A technical assistant was contracted to assist the Tonga National Council of Churches/Act for Peace Tonga to develop a national framework for community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM). The first consultation on the national CBDRM framework was held in June.

Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- As part of a national EWS for key focal points to access global early warnings, mobile communications with full national network access were established for nine key staff of NEMO and the meteorological office with BSRP project
build safety and resilience in the pacific project

activity report 2015 49

support. This increases access to critical information for key staff to ensure rapid dissemination to community level in times of disaster.

- Contract evaluation was completed for design and supervision of construction of a joint NEMO and meteorological office building to take place in 2016. ToRs were completed for design and supervision with World Bank funding with the contract expected to be awarded early in 2016.
- Two emergency vehicles were procured and delivered to NEMO for use on Tongatapu and Va’vau.

Challenge

A key issue has been the delays in disbursement of funds from SPC to Tonga for the implementation of activities already confirmed under various letters of agreement with partners in Tonga.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- A national coordinator was contracted for the project in August. This role is designed to assist implementation on the ground in Tonga and hopefully overcome some of the procurement challenges that exist.

R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

- A technical assistant was contracted to assist the Tonga National Council of Churches/Act for Peace Tonga to develop a national framework for community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM). The first consultation on the national CBDRM framework was held in June and included review of a draft gap analysis and framework document by SPC, NEMO and stakeholders. The final national consultation will take place in early 2016 when the document is expected to be finalised and endorsed.
- Working with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, agroforestry training was carried out for Tongatapu and Ha’apai islands as part of BSRP support to the Tonga JNAP climate change adaptation component in the area of food security and resilience.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- The project funded one participant from Tonga Fire & Rescue Service to attend the 2015 PIFESA annual meeting and 2015 AFAC conference in Adelaide, Australia as part of the PIEMA partnership. Discussions at these meetings also progressed the twinning arrangements between Tonga and the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service.

Looking ahead

- Completion of design of the new national joint meteorological and emergency management office and its construction.
- CBDRM framework to be in partnership with the Tonga National Council of Churches/Act for Peace Tonga. The final national consultation will take place in early 2016 when the document is expected to be finalised and endorsed.
- Computer equipment for GIS/national tsunami and hazard archive to be set up at the new NEMO centre.
Success story

Poetry slamming down traditional knowledge

A poetry slam and performances by kindergarten children in Tonga was the focus of the International Day of Disaster Reduction in October this year. Under this year’s theme of ‘Knowledge for life’, the event focused on the knowledge that exists with elders of communities in how they responded to disasters in the past. To help merge the two, community elders and town officers were invited to the poetry slam and traditional knowledge was the subject for the day.

Kindergarten children from the tsunami red zone participated by performing what they knew about various hazards that happen within the Kingdom. The performances were enjoyed by their elders from their communities. The event thus shared the knowledge of young and old, bringing textbook knowledge and traditional knowledge together.

The event was hosted by the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) with guests including the Honourable Prime Minister Akilisi Pohiva; the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications (MEIDECC) Siaosi Sovaleni; the Australian High Commissioner; the New Zealand High Commissioner; the Japanese Ambassador; the Chinese Ambassador; the Director of MET; the Director of NEMO; civil society organisations; parents and guardians and several disabled members of the Tongan society.
TUVALU

The Polynesian island nation of Tuvalu sits half way between Australia and Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean. Tuvalu’s 10,837 people (2012 census) are spread across three islands and six atolls. The country has a total land area of 26 km², and the low-lying islands are highly vulnerable to cyclones and tsunamis. The area of Fogafale, on Funafuti, where nearly half of the country’s population is concentrated, is on average less than 100 m wide, making it extremely susceptible.

Tuvalu is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change and rising sea levels. Tuvalu’s hazard risk became reality in 2015 when a storm surge hit the country, caused by one of the most intense cyclones in the southern Pacific region in recorded history. Tropical Cyclone Pam forced the declaration of a state of emergency in Tuvalu with 45% of the country’s population being displaced.

Tuvalu’s economy is small, fragmented and highly vulnerable to external economic influences. This has led to a heavy reliance on outside development assistance and a degree of complacency in fiscal and financial management. The economy is unusual in that a substantial amount of both government revenues and private incomes are generated from overseas. There are very little exports and semi-subsistence farming and fishing are the primary economic activities. Fewer than 1,000 tourists, on average, visit Tuvalu annually.

Tuvalu has developed a comprehensive strategic plan based upon the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2001–2015, the Climate Change Policy 2012, the National Adaption Plan of Action and the National Disaster Risk Management Plan; these have formed the platform for the development of the Tuvalu National Strategic Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk reduction 2012–2016.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- Island leaders and representatives of the eight islands of Tuvalu presented their needs and experiences following Tropical Cyclone Pam (lessons learnt workshop).
- A fire truck was secured through the Country Fire Authority (Victoria, Australia) with training and equipment provided.
- International operations compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization as a result of Fire truck being secured.
- DRM concepts and preparedness were provided by NDMO to 74 women from communities on Funafuti on International Women’s Day.
Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- Addressing a specific priority under the Tropical Cyclone Pam Recovery and Vulnerability Reduction Plan, BSRP supported the NDMO through procurement of office equipment (laptops and projector) as well as eight laptops – one for each Island Committee of Tuvalu – to increase communications capability in disaster.
- To improve emergency coordination internally and across agencies in time of disasters, BSRP supported procurement of HF radio sets and mobile scan-suite radios.
- As part of PIEMA arrangements and support through BSRP, the Tuvalu police received a consignment of spare parts and tyres for two fire trucks being used for airport operations and domestic fires.
- Through PIEMA, a fire truck from the Country Fire Authority, Victoria, Australia has been procured through BSRP funds and shipped to Tuvalu to boost the fire services capacity as well as airport safety operations as per ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organisation) regulations. The truck will be shipped from Victoria to Tuvalu in February 2016.

Challenges

- A major challenge to BSRP implementation was the impact of Tropical Cyclone Pam in March of this year. Following National Steering Committee confirmation of the 2015 work plan in February 2015, project progress significantly stalled due to the unavailability of in-country support due to their involvement in the relief and recovery efforts following Tropical Cyclone Pam.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- A lessons learnt workshop was held following Tropical Cyclone Pam, with representation from all islands of Tuvalu. Participants at the workshop, which was held on 9 November, included high chiefs, fale kaupule and representatives of community groups including women and youth along with government representatives. It was hosted by the Government of Tuvalu in partnership with SPC and supported by the EU and USAID.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- BSRP supported the collection of traditional knowledge in DRM and early warning for disasters amongst communities in Tuvalu. Individual interviews were conducted with community members from Funafuti, Nui, Niutao, Nanumea, Nukufetau on the International Day for Disaster Reduction as part of disaster awareness activities. Interviews have been transcribed and translated into English with video footage to be compiled into a short documentary in 2016.
- BSRP funding support was provided to the Gender Affairs Department of the Tuvalu Government for the conduct of a disaster awareness raising event as part of the International Women’s Day celebrations in March. This allowed for more than 70 women to share experiences on past disasters, traditional first aid knowledge and to receive a presentation from the NDMO on disaster preparedness and precautions.

R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- BSRP funded one participant from the Tuvalu police force to attend the 2015 PIFESA annual meeting and the 2015 AFAC conference in Adelaide, Australia as part of the PIEMA partnership. Discussions at these meetings also progressed the twinning arrangements between Tuvalu and a joint support venture between the National Fire Authority of Fiji and the Country Fire Authority of Victoria.
- BSRP supported the Office of the Prime Minister in securing technical assistance to develop Tuvalu’s Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to be submitted to UNFCCC prior to COP21 in Paris in December.
Looking ahead

- Basic firefighting training will be run in 2016 with Country Fire Authority volunteers with an aim to establish a volunteer firefighter team in Tuvalu.
- A weather observation centre will be completed for Nanumea Island, which has been deemed unsuitable for Tuvalu Meteorological Services.
- Supply shelters for immediate disaster relief will be constructed on Nanumaga and Nui islands, potentially benefiting 1,200 people by providing tents, first aid kits and food rations.
- A mobile EOC is expected to be procured, outfitted and shipped to Tuvalu to support 5,000 people on Funafuti in 2016.
- Prioritisation of key findings from lessons learnt workshop will be done to create an action plan for responding to future disaster.
- The traditional knowledge video will be finalised and released.

Success story

Tuvalu learns from Tropical Cyclone Pam for the future

Tropical Cyclone Pam devastated areas of Tuvalu as its winds ripped through the island nation in March. The impact on the island communities was considerable and recovery and rehabilitation continues especially in areas that were severely affected. Up to 45% of the population was displaced during the disaster with 90% of agriculture being decimated on the island of Nui.

To help understand the impacts, learn from the disaster and improve disaster response for these communities in the future, a lessons learnt workshop was hosted by the Government of Tuvalu in partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC) and supported by the EU and USAID. High chiefs, fale kaupule and representatives of communities including women and youth were included in this workshop to ensure a broad range of stories were collected.

The workshop allowed capture of the main issues surrounding the disaster and response. The needs of the islands were identified across seven areas:

1. **Improved communications**: Early warnings, improved technology to ensure real-time updates, more timely dissemination of information across an improved island network, FM radio installation on islands.

2. **Assessments**: Detailed damage and needs assessment survey forms to be developed to improve reporting responses from islands during disaster to ensure assessments can be completed as quickly as possible.

3. **Planning/preparedness**: Increased training for risk reduction responses and operation procedures and drills with emergency staff; evacuation areas identified for community; emergency kit checklists; improved infrastructure of homes to make them cyclone resistant; school curriculum to include understanding of sea level rise; emergency plans and disaster drills.

4. **Governance/DRM arrangements**: Disaster risk plans to be developed and implemented for all islands; review of Island Disaster Committee roles and responsibilities; allocate budget for Island Disaster Committee’s monthly meetings.

5. **Recovery**: Immediate recovery needs to badly damaged areas; development of compensation policy and responses to be implemented; heavy duty machinery to assist with cleaning of islands; mental health training (psychosocial support – provide first responders with training to support and treat victims of disaster); increased agroforestry programme (i.e. more intercropping to ensure a variety of crops used to increase food security during disaster).

6. **Relief**: Proper storage and transport of relief supplies to islands; ensure that any foodstuffs taken to islands are fresh and edible.

7. **Infrastructure**: Health centres to relocate especially those which are close to the coastal areas; improve electricity pillars on the islands; improve seawall constructions on the islands.
Vanuatu has a population of 272,264 people (2015 estimate) spread across 80 inhabited islands with approximately 75% of the population based in rural settings. This broad spread of islands and population creates access difficulties particularly in response to disaster and delivery of relief and first aid to outer islands.

Vanuatu is exposed to a range of hazards due to both being surrounded by ocean and being located on the ‘Pacific Ring of Fire’. In 2015, Vanuatu’s disaster risk was made very clear as Tropical Cyclone Pam smashed into the country in March. This category 5 cyclone was the most intense to cross land in Vanuatu in recorded history and caused devastating damage. However, cyclones are only one of the hazards affecting the country. Others include floods, droughts, volcanoes, earthquakes, tsunamis and landslides. With climate change affecting the country, it is expected that the intensity of weather events is likely to increase in the future.

Historically, Vanuatu has demonstrated resilience to natural hazards and an ability to rebuild its subsistence economy and societies, using traditional knowledge and external disaster relief and other development assistance. However, the capacity of Vanuatu to effectively deal with the impacts of major disasters remains fragile, particularly as traditional knowledge is increasingly threatened. The possibility of achieving sustainable development, including the reduction of poverty, is recognised as being threatened due to the impact of hazards on vulnerable communities and economies.

Vanuatu was an early mover among its Pacific peers in establishing both a national action plan for disaster risk reduction and disaster management (NAP), and a national adaptation programme for action on climate change (NAPA). Since their instigation, recognition of the strong links between DRM and CCA has grown. This recognition has led to development of the National Advisory Board on DRR and CCA (NAB) with a joint DRR and CCA national governance mandate. Disaster response and preparedness arrangements continue to be led by the NDMO.

Project snapshot 2015

Key achievements

- A partnership between Vanuatu and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Fire Service was established.
- A draft strategic roadmap for emergency management (SREM) was developed.
- Tropical Cyclone Pam lessons learnt workshop was convened.
- Training was completed in shelter cluster coordination and evacuation centre management.
Detailed outcomes

R1 - Effective preparedness, response and recovery: responds to the need for national and regional response plans, end-to-end EWS, emergency and evacuation centres, access to safe drinking water to mitigate against drought.

- Two fire trucks have been secured from the ACT Emergency Services Authority (ACTESA) to Vanuatu and will be sent to Port Villa once appropriate shipping methods have been established. This will double the fire service fleet in Port Villa and will constitute a significant upgrade in terms of quality and technical equipment.
- Practical support was provided to the NDMO team following Tropical Cyclone Pam with an experienced emergency manager from the BSRP project team sent to Vanuatu for the first month post-cyclone.

Challenges

- The fire trucks from Australia cannot be shipped until the MoU outlining the twinning arrangement between Vanuatu and ACTESA has been signed. The signing of this document has been significantly delayed due to a number of people being shifted in and out of relevant positions throughout the year. This is a common feature of the political landscape in Vanuatu.
- Developing specifications and gathering sufficient quotes to satisfy SPC procurement requirements takes time, particularly for in-country actors working in a post-disaster context.

R2 - Strengthened institutional arrangements for DRM and CCA: responds to the need for JNAPs as well as to the integration of DRM and CCA into national and sector strategies, planning and budgetary processes.

- A ToR has been prepared for a consultant to develop a National Fire Act and Fire Regulations. This work will dovetail with a review of the National Disaster Management Act and will require close collaboration between SPC, the NDMO and a World Bank project that is currently active in Vanuatu.
- A draft SREM has been prepared and shared with in-country stakeholders. The proposal is to revisit this document in the post-TC Pam context and in light of the twinning arrangement established with ACT.

Challenges

- Ensuring that multiple actors and stakeholders work together on priorities has been difficult due to the number of stakeholders involved and the response and recovery work necessary post-TC Pam. It is hoped that this will be alleviated in 2016 through the recruitment of an in-country coordinator for the BSRP.

R3 - Improved knowledge, information, public awareness, training and education: the emphasis is on building awareness of risks and risk exposure through the provision of hazard and risk information through regional and local databases, strengthening human and technical capacity in a range of priority areas, production of knowledge products and related awareness.

- Training was completed in shelter cluster coordination and evacuation centre management. The need for this training was highlighted during the Tropical Cyclone Pam lessons learnt workshop. The training was a joint initiative between the Vanuatu Government, the International Federation of the Red Cross, the International Office for Migration and SPC through the BSRP project.
- The project has also supported efforts to engage an information management officer for the NAB Secretariat with feedback provided on the job description by SPC. Recruitment is expected in 2016.

R4 - Improved understanding of natural hazards and the reduction of underlying risks: addresses gaps in baseline scientific, technical, social and economic understanding of hazard impact and addresses underlying risks created by changing social, economic and environmental conditions and resources.

- Specifications have been developed for a drilling rig to enable the Vanuatu Government to identify sites that would be suitable for community water supplies and for bore holes to be established in highly vulnerable communities. This delivery has been a challenge with the direction of the activity changing multiple times. The lengthy and varied discussions around this have slowed down implementation significantly, however with a new interest in groundwater (as opposed to rainwater as was originally intended) it is generally agreed that we are on the right track. SPC GSD’s Water Programme is now supporting this activity with technical backstopping and is leveraging funds to provide technical assistance through additional partners.
R5 - Enhanced partnerships in DRM and climate change: responds to the need for an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change, strengthening of PIEMA, enhanced hazard risk management, enhanced information management, facilitation of financing and integration of DRR into the work programmes of CROP agencies.

- A two-day workshop to understand the lessons following Tropical Cyclone Pam was hosted by the Government of Vanuatu on 24–25 June. This event involved 150 participants from national, regional and international stakeholder organisations and was enabled with technical, facilitation and financial support from the project. The report of the event has been prepared in consultation with the Government of Vanuatu. A ‘text only’ version of this document was shared with members of the Pacific Humanitarian Partnership prior to annual meetings in October and the contents shaped much of the discussion during the ‘Week of Events’. The report is now in the final stages of editing and layout and will soon be printed and publicly shared to expand understanding of how best to respond to disaster and what was learned in the process.

- Two representatives from the Vanuatu Mobile Force (Fire Detachment) were supported to attend the 2015 PIFESA annual meeting and 2015 AFAC conference in Adelaide, Australia as part of the PIEMA partnership. Discussions at these meeting also progressed the new partnership between Vanuatu and the ACTESA. An MoU outlining the terms for the partnership has been finalised, endorsed by the Vanuatu Office for the Attorney General and signed by key stakeholders for emergency management in Vanuatu. This has now been shared with ACTESA for agreement and signing.

- Two representatives of the Vanuatu Government (one from NDMO, one advisor to the Minister for Climate Change) were supported to participate in the World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan.

Training

- Shelter cluster coordination and evacuation centre management: This training took place from 7 to 11 September with 18 participants from the Government of Vanuatu’s Public Works Department, Department of Local Authority and National Disaster Management Office, provincial government officers and municipal council staff. The purpose of the training was to raise awareness of shelter and settlement operations and functions of shelter cluster coordination and also to provide the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively manage evacuation centres. Guidelines for the management of evacuation centres were informed by this training event and are nearing finalisation.

Looking ahead

- Strengthen provincial-level preparedness and response capacity: provision of training (EOC training, ECM training, gender training) and equipment for provincial emergency operations centres (three boats with engines for Penama, Malampa and Torba provinces, and two vehicles for Sanma and Tafea provinces).

- Commence construction preparation for three provincial EOCs: contract a firm to design and oversee construction of EOCs in Penama, Sanma and Melampa.

- Upgrade fire service equipment/truck: Purchase a flat-bed truck to support water cartage and heavy loads for emergency response; organise shipping and cover associated costs for the two donated fire trucks from ACTESA.

- Develop fire regulations and mechanisms to monitor and enforce them. A consultant will be hired to support this work.

- Strengthen the ability of the national AM/FM radio networks to reach all areas of the country. A number of options are being explored under this activity and require more time and investigation. Suggestions are: (1) provide equipment to radio stations to transmit their signals further; (2) provide training to radio announcers and review radio messaging content to ensure that warning/weather information messages are understood by communities; (3) purchase solar and wind-up radios for key stakeholders (CDCs, area councils, chiefs, women’s/youth groups) to enable them to access warning/weather information messages; (4) a combination that includes some of the above activities.

- Support the Vanuatu Government to identify suitable sites for establishing resilient groundwater systems in water-scarce communities. Given the current El Niño situation, the Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources is keen to increase capacity to identify suitable community sites for accessing groundwater. Specifically, they would like to buy a drilling rig and access expertise from SPC’s GSD (Water Programme) in regards to where to drill, training of local staff, identifying sites that would be suitable for community water supply and supporting bore holes to be established in highly vulnerable communities.
Success story

Lessons from Cyclone Pam build a more resilient Vanuatu

Understanding the impact that disaster has from community level to the highest level of government has helped Vanuatu to learn from the largest cyclone to hit the country in recorded history and direct future efforts to improve disaster risk management.

Tropical Cyclone Pam was the most intense in the southern hemisphere in 2015 and regarded as one of the worst disasters in the history of Vanuatu. Fifteen people died as the super cyclone moved over the country and slowed down, increasing the impact of its 250 km/h winds.

As a result, the BSRP project, in coordination with the Vanuatu Government, hosted a lessons learnt workshop involving 150 participants from affected communities; national, regional and international stakeholder groups; and civil society organisations and partners. This workshop enabled participants to hear the real experiences from community level, from those who lived through the cyclone, and understand how the national disaster management team prepared for and responded to it.

Recommendations were compiled in the outcome document which is now being used to inform the Government of Vanuatu’s recovery planning along with shaping future priorities for Vanuatu under the BSRP project. This document also informed detailed discussions at the Pacific Humanitarian Partnership meeting in October which was attended by hundreds of representatives from DRM and response agencies across the Pacific region. These recommendations also led to further support for the Vanuatu Government with the German Development Bank (KFW) committing its support to help strengthen Vanuatu’s resilience to future disaster.
OUTCOME STATEMENT

ACP-EU Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) Project

Regional Steering Committee Meeting
Suva, Fiji, 30th October 2015
ACP-EU Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific project BSRP

Representatives of National Disaster Management Offices from the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Timor-Leste, referred to herein as Pacific Island Countries, alongside the European Union, the Project Management Unit, civil society organisations including private sector, regional organisations and bilateral partners, attending the ACP-EU Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) project 2nd Annual Regional Steering Committee in Suva, Fiji on 30th October 2015 have worked collectively to generate this outcome statement to guide the next 12 months of our project.

The ACP-EU BSRP project implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) held its 2nd Regional Steering Committee (RSC) meeting on Friday October 30th at the Holiday Inn, Suva. The RSC meeting was the final day of a ‘Week of Events’ around disaster management and resilience in the Pacific held in partnership with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).

This was the first time a collaborative ‘Week of Events’ such as this had been held, providing an opportunity for multiple agencies to host their respective regional discussions back-to-back, in an effort to reduce the travel burden on Pacific Island country and territory representatives, civil society and non-government representatives and disaster experts from throughout the region.

The first two days of the ‘Week of Events’ consisted of the UNISDR Pacific Regional Disaster Resilience Meeting, Oct 26-27, which focused on the challenges faced when strengthening disaster and climate resilience in the Pacific Island region in the context of sustainable development, with in-depth discussions on the operationalisation of the Sendai Framework and strengthening the region in response to disaster risks and climate change. An outcome statement outlining future direction was endorsed by the conference attendees of this meeting.

The Pacific Humanitarian Partnership Meeting was convened by UNOCHA, on Oct 28-29, focused on operationalising from ground level a better way to prepare for and respond to disasters in the region while building crucial partnerships that are action-orientated to focus on sustainable development, disaster risk and climate change. Strengthened partnerships among National Disaster Management Offices in the Pacific, the Pacific Humanitarian Team and a wider group of humanitarian actors enabled discussions around how best to prepare for the oncoming El Niño and tropical cyclone season. Lessons were drawn from the impact of Tropical Cyclones Pam and Maysak that affected multiple countries simultaneously in order to help countries prepare for the potentially difficult season ahead.

The ACP-EU Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific project’s Regional Steering Committee took place on October 30. The sessions held during the previous four days helped to provide context to the RSC discussions, informed those involved in implementing the BSRP project of seasonal outlooks across each country and served to strengthen the partnerships needed to work collaboratively before, during and after disasters.

Outcome Statement

The Regional Steering Committee Meeting attendees were provided with an overview of (i) the detailed draft Results Orientated Monitoring (ROM) Review, (ii) presentations from selected countries, (iii) project expenditure to-date, (iv) the implications of the D+3 clause and actions required to manage this, (v) the Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA) and (vi) an understanding of communication and visibility support moving into 2016.
Session 1 - Opening

Chair of 2nd RSC for BSRP nominated and confirmed as Fiji NDMO Director, Mr Akapusi Tuifagalele.

The meeting acknowledged the opening statement from the SPC GSD Disaster Reduction Programme Manager delivered by Taito Nakalevu, BSRP Programme Manager.

The EU Representative, Mr Jesus Lavinia, in his word of welcome reiterated the role of the RSC in guiding the direction of the BSRP and invited participants to actively participate in discussions to address project challenges moving forward. He also reiterated key messages conveyed by EU Ambassador for the Pacific, H.E. Andrew Jacobs, in particular EU's indefectible support to build Pacific countries’ resilience to disasters and climate-related adverse impacts.

Session 2 - Country Presentations

The RSC acknowledged progress, achievements and challenges raised by BSRP implementing countries noting that a recurring challenge related to procurement processes that would be discussed in more detail in the later meeting sessions. Shifting of country priorities was noted as an additional challenge to project implementation.

Session 3 – Project Finance

SPC GSD Finance presented on the results of the 2015 Audit for the project implementation period 6th September 2014 to 30th June 2015.

The RSC acknowledged that expenditure of regional activities and operational costs met the threshold for budget allocation with the exception of national activities.

The meeting acknowledged the adaptations that have been introduced to attempt to address the bottlenecks with regards to project finances and, especially, the very low expenditure of the project which is partially attributed to natural disasters in the implementation period and procurement issues discussed.

Session 4 - Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA)

The RSC endorsed SA2020 following review of the document and group discussions regarding SA2020 key regional activities (KRAs) and commended the work done in the development of the Niue SREM.

Session 5 - Communications

The RSC meeting participants acknowledged the importance and value of communications in encouraging behavioural change.

The EU further expressed the need for showcasing success stories from BSRP to clearly demonstrate the impact of EU funds in improving the resilience of Pacific nations.

Session 6 - Results Orientated Monitoring Review (ROM)

The draft results of the Results Oriented Monitoring Mission 2015 were presented by SPC with particular emphasis on the red light highlighted on project efficiency and very low financial expenditure.

The recommendations of the ROM were accepted by the meeting as a means to progress project implementation with agreement on the need to implement several of these recommendations including the contracting of National Coordinators and Review of the Project Logframe.

In terms of the recommendations on the reallocation of funds, the meeting agreed that the reallocation would be carried out post July 2016 after review of country commitments (see session 7 (4) below).
Session 7 - Contract Deadlines and Way Forward

The meeting acknowledged the deadline for the D+3 requirements as being September 6th 2016 for all contracts to be finalised for implementation of project activities.

1. The meeting approved the following milestones to be achieved toward the D+3 deadline:
   2. February – June: finalisation of contracts for implementation
   3. July 2016: review of country commitments to identify surpluses that could be reallocated to regional level activities that directly address national priorities such as Initial Damage Assessments (IDA), Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA) etc.

The EU expressed its concerns about low expenditures level and the need to address this through careful planning and encouraged SPC and countries in signing all necessary contracts before the D+3 deadline. It also reiterated its commitment to the EU-Pacific partnership and flexibility to support the attainment of objectives.

Session 8 - Outcomes / Closing

EU Closing Statement:

Congratulated participants for their participation over the last week, and hailed the good collaboration with other development partners in putting together the three meetings. Thanked countries for their attendance and their implementation of the BSRP. Thanked SPC and the ACP-EU-SPC BSRP Team. Reiterated that the PMU is there to work with countries, provide advice so use them as much as possible. Further, there will always be support available from the EU Delegation in Suva. There is hope and a way forward to achieve the project outcomes within specified timelines.

SPC Closing Statement:

Thanked the Fiji NDMO for chairing the session, SPC values collaboration and work with countries. Also expressed appreciation for the support provided by the EU in guiding the implementation of the programme. SPC is optimistic that the project can achieve outcomes within timeframe and SPC will do its utmost to meet the project’s D+3 deadline.

Loti Vote of Thanks – “It takes two to tango”. Listening to all the challenges, the outcome is that both sides have contributed to delays. He urged countries to work toward achieving their outcomes and goals. Countries will adhere to the advice received at the RSC and that of the European Union. He also thanked the country focal points for the work carried out.

Chair:

Chair thanked the EU delegation, SPC, observers and the countries for the opportunity given to Fiji to Chair the proceedings and he declared the meeting officially closed @ 5:15pm.
## Agenda Item Notes – Raw Copy All

### Session 1 – Snapshot and Review of Disaster Week

**Moderator:** NDMO Cook Islands

**Session:** Prayer

Greetings and Welcome for EU, SPC and donor partners

**Nomination of the Chair**

- Nomination: NDMO for Fiji, seconded by Timor-Leste

**NDMO Fiji, Chair: Tuifagalele**

- Greeted everyone and welcomes everyone, including EU, SPC and Country delegates...
- Noted 1st meeting started last year
- 1st agenda item, looking at meeting report last yr., but changes to asking EU and SPC to give their statements

**SPC Statement: Taito Nakalevu:**

- Apologies for Paul Taylor’s absence
- Welcome everyone summarising the project as diverse and complex
- Meeting started in 2014, progress now in its 2nd year. States it has been good; this meeting is to discuss issues
- Look at Result oriented review, review current expenditure, look at communication and project visibility.
- To resolve issues that require attention

**EU Statement**

- Greets everyone and reiterates EU Ambassador’s speech on Day 1 meeting with UNISDR
- Reiterates importance of 3 key meetings – Sendai, SDGs and COP21, as outcomes of these meetings are relevant for the Pacific
- Highlights commitments in Sendai, SDGs and COP21
- Stresses the need to do better when doing implementation on building resilience and climate change and looking forward to discussions
- $40 million for 15 countries
- Translating agreements into action in the countries
- Mainstreaming DRM and CC global and regional level
- Today’s meeting is to show how everyone has joined forces - different countries and partners with SPC as implementing agency
- Stresses the need to build resilience and help in the climate change adaptation fight
- Noted meeting is for discussing progress with project and raising issues
- Noted external evaluation last month and concerns raised on rhythm of implementation
- Raised the need to use available funds for last year of project
- Calls for countries to express exactly how they feel and their challenges
- Anticipates more discussions on the table

**Chair:**

- Thanks EU
- Agenda agreed and endorsed
- Requests SPC to present first Steering Committee meeting report of 2014
**Session 2 – Country Presentations**

**Marshall Islands:** Director NDMO

- Achievements (reading slide)
- Water tanks distributed to 13 outer islands
- Worked with local Governments to provide technical demonstrations. 1st demonstration was done by Public Works Ministry. Local Government then continued with attachments and putting things in place.
- Slide 2 Accessories (reading from slide)
- Slide 3 (reading from slide)
- Slide 4 Challenges: 1. Coordination and delivery of water tanks to Outer Islands 2. No purpose? Built EOC to manage response
- Need assistance from colleagues for use of the funding and if we can share and contribute to our needs
- Funding needed to fund JNAP activities
- Asked other countries to contribute funds for the implementation of their project, in case they can’t spend it
- Acknowledges SPC, and funding from EU

**FSM:** Nea William

- Apology for FSM’s Director for absence
- Achievement slide1 (reading from slide)
- Outer islands are not powered by generator…each state’s network is linked to the National EOC
- Pohnpeii Station looks after Kosrae area…no Met office in Kosrae
- Slide 2…reading from slide
- Slide 3…reading from slide
- Slide 4…reading from slide
- Challenges: varies from states to state. There’s a need to get state priorities implemented. It is included in the NIP
- Coordination in the 4 states is quite difficult but there’s a willingness to help each other as a nation
- JRM?? Network in each of the state to maximise outputs and avoid duplication

**Palau,** Coordinator, National Emergency Management Office

- Slide 1…picture
- Slide 2 Achievements…(reading from slide)
- There was a super typhoon and we couldn’t have one team to operate
- Equipment knocked down by super typhoon
- Provision of water tanks for schools as well
- IEC materials distributed to schools and all communities
- Awareness campaign conducted with NGO and partners
- NIMS and ICS will be used for operations in emergency…
- Slide 5… State reps are our communities. All communities know where shelters are

**Challenges:**

- Limited capacity to implement
- Finance for project and activities delayed
- Limited resources on island. Resources requested from outside
- Distance, hard getting to project sites
Fiji: Fiji NDMO
- When renovation started for NEOC, we invested $40K, after negotiation Government gave it to another ministry
- DRM Act/plan need for revision is paramount. The draft cabinet paper sat with Solicitor General’s office
- For DRM/CCA Department of national planning are involved in a 5 yr. development plan and 20 yr. development
- Database is an issue…….NGO umbrella programs given funds
- National DRM/CC platform used funds
- Only spent 6% is low but we can deliver
- 80% coordination needed
- Improve coordination. Early January we should be starting. Need a periodical review to check on progress
- Exit strategy needs to be done

Cook Islands: on behalf Coordinator
- In catch up mode to implement program
- Currently reviewing JNAP
- NEOC is in the Police station
- In process of reviewing all DRM plans
- Can logon to our EMCI website. Currently collecting data from each island
- Teacher’s resource on our website
- There’s a team in each island
- Building codes to strengthen homes, to make it more resilient from impacts of cyclones
- Organised 3 quarterly meetings with all key stakeholder
- Work with different partners, learning with different NGOs and partners to implement the project it’s not stagnant
- Group activities together to roll it out better
- Need for a clear guidance on procurement processes
- Need for training on procurement processes
- Need a standard reporting template for all of implementing partners to use

Samoa NDMO
- Slide 1 - Introduction
- Slide 2: (reading from slide)
- Waiting for report from SPC...
- Supported PDNA for tourism sector
- Need to finalise NEOC plan and meet World Bank deadline

Issues:
- Procurement is time consuming and affect implementation
- Suggestion for a dedicated procurement person to provide support
- Need MoU from national committee and between the Government and BSRP as an instrument for waving duty
- Communication from project team takes a while
- Planning implementation of activities, funding agreement must be signed next year
- Procurement issue to be dealt with

Loti Yates, Solomon Islands
- Slide 1 Introduction
- Slide 3 Activities and implementation (reading from slide)
- No problem with airline ticketing from procurement
- April to October busy with flooding
- TC Pam hit and were tied up from March to May
- Cyclone Raquel occurred
- Implementation disrupted by controlled by natural hazards
- Working on other things
- Strengthen partnership for implementation especially when NDMO is tied up with other activities or when NDMO is side-tracked to operational matters, others can help
- Absorptive capacity
- Need to recruit a Project Coordinator and cut down on number of activities

**Tonga: Director NDMO**

- Slide 1 Introduction
- Procurement: vehicles radio, sirens and PA systems have not been procured
- Engagement of Project Coordinator is helpful in managing activities
- Commemorated World Disaster Risk Day with support of Government, Politicians, etc. and was successful in terms of support
- Reforestation activities conducted
- Commitment to Government to attend higher level meeting was possible with project support
- Need for an Administrative Assistant
- For training component, visited key players, schools, communities promoting awareness programmes, planning for Tsunami trainings
- Looking at El Niño and the need to promote awareness on radio, TV, newspaper, etc.
- Need to work with other partners in coordinating assistance and coordinated properly
- WB component in coordination with NZ, SPC, partners, addressing issues
- Communication – need to establish a proper communication channel during procurement. Can be time consuming
- Credibility of SPC and Tonga NDMO may be questioned e.g. it took 3 months for vehicle procurement process to be completed
- Procedures for procurement need to improved
- Need training on procurement
- Visibility so that EU and SPC can appreciate the work done

**Vanuatu NDMO**

- Slide 1: introduction
- Less than 5% implementation of activities due to TC Pam
- Slide funded activities (reading from slide)
- Slide 3 Way forward
- Need for a National Project Coordinator to implement project
- SPC regional coordinator to prepare contract

**Q&A Session**

**Issue**: 6 countries have not implemented much of their activities

**Timor-Leste**

- Lack of expenditure
- Procurement process and understanding
- 2 weeks, low implementation but November–December is earmarked for implementation. Can be a challenge because of the upcoming holiday season
- Optimistic that implementation can properly start January–June, 2016
- Elections in East Timor

**Question**: If project ended in 2017 and there are balances would it be extended another year? EU response:

- From presentations, serious rhythm issues highlighted and procurement.
- Cannot talk about it now…activities are finalised.
- Aware of events but impossible talk about extension now
- Suggestion to prioritise and plan, then propose solution for SPC and countries to implement project
- EU/SPC project but signed with framework within EU/ACP secretariat which requires a number of steps…

**Chair**: Suggested for countries to work within the project timeline
Question from PNG: With diversity of project partners and need for procurement, could there be a standard template?

Chair: Use Steering Committee to give guide for implementation

Project Manager for EU/ACP:
- ACP EU has a Cotonou partnership agreement therefore part of funding of 90 M comes from intra ACP partner money
- There are other sister projects thus difficult to discuss extension
- Umbrella also covers other projects
- For extension there’s a need to convince other projects in the region to do the same thing
- Acknowledges Mosese Sikivou for his contribution to the 90 million dollar project

Taito, SPC:
- Highlighted 2 things – Procurement and slow movement of funds
- Lack of understanding on procurement process
- Notes presence of procurement colleagues and finance and geoscience colleagues at SPC
- Procurement is a whole process
- SPC is evolving our policies…
- Coordinators to clarify issues and the need to progress

Loti Yates: We recruit Project Managers but we are using SPC staff to support procurement of project. Why not recruit 1 specific person for the project, but still following SPC guidelines?

Taito, SPC:
- The idea has been floating for quite a while, if the procurement is with PMU it still will follow the system of SPC and still have to follow the process
- Discussed with EU

EU: Announcement of a specific session dedicated to recommendations on the improvement of the project

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**Session 3 – Pacific Islands Emergency Management Alliance (PIEMA)**

- PEMA – alliance with NDMOs, Pacific Islands chiefs of police, Pacific Islands fire and emergency services
- Idea aimed at Emergency Management area, incident management, coordinating, interoperability between agencies, NDMO is in coordination
- Lighter side: Emergency handles well, we can overcome disaster
- Logo is the Coconut tree – roots and foundation – Trust/leadership/teamwork (Interoperability) – Need for a good foundation – Partnership slide (reading from slide)
- Last 8 months. Interagency operability and partnership, ambulance services, partnership
- Roll out search and rescue in the Pacific
- 2014/2015 slide – conferences work on their annual plan on Emergency management, meet other players in the game, PIEMA was endorsed to observe in the PICP conference?
- Operationalising the search and rescue agenda
- Palau – how NIM process is integrated
- North Pacific aligned to US system
- Specialist training slide – Basic search and rescue
- Common incident management system
- Strategic Roadmap for Emergency Management
- Study tours (reading from slide)
- Should have something as a first responder
- Everyone wants to use technology
- Int’l conference slide (reading from slide)
- Exercise Facilitation: Table top decision making. When to deploy assessment team, etc.
- Search and rescue – how to look holistically at search and rescue in the Pacific
- Resources sources slide (reading from slide)
- Trucks and assets…Trying to standardise vehicles across countries
Support in disaster response – TC Pam looked at Drones and how it was coordinated and how can we bring empowerment to assessments and make it easier
Part 2 strategic agenda (reading from slide)
NDMOs…operationalised in country through strategic roadmap on emergency management
Have common language and protocols, coordinating together with partners
When we have to deal with disaster?
In emergency management, what does that result in?
Key regional activities slide (reading from slide)
Working with donors to come with a proposal

Group discussion on KRAs

Group: KRA1
- Have some standard within national areas of response plans, each type of hazards
- Standard for developing SOPs for respective hazards and need to share that nationally with key players and then set it up to regional level so operability can work

Group KRA2
- Target leadership although relationship strengthening is good

Group KRA3
- Fire and “life?” that is for countries that have building codes but maybe there a need to strengthen and develop building codes for those with no building codes and if there is a committee for fire service
- Last line second column work force comprises gender, volunteer…should read “work force that accommodate” – relevance to countries with building codes

Group KRA4
- Have communication mechanism included to information knowledge management back to partners and those involved

Way forward for PIEMA Slide
- EMSR looks at coordination, interoperability, information management
- Looking at national level emergency management
- SREM is a guide form national level
- Words are high level but it can be dealt with in your strategic roadmap at national level
- Activities in silos
- Airport crash exercise, need more on mass evacuation, and communication system

Recommendations
- Endorse PIEMA strategic agenda 2020
- We need to take lead of the management and lead on the strategic roadmap
- Support an SREM in each country
- Support PIEMA and capacity building

Question: SREM, excellent idea, wanted to encourage to walk the talk, some countries like Nauru Tuvalu, Kiribati were omitted in some exercises by SPC….lets adopt the concept. Don’t leave anybody behind?

Question: NZ: SREM beneficial for Niue

Question: Strategic plan for Vanuatu is still sitting

Anthony Blake:
- For Nauru, etc., walk the talk issue, don’t have a path for everyone e.g. training. Goes back to national priorities. Talk to SPC for further information and assistance
- For Vanuatu, need to sign MOU, and ACT for emergency service agency and fires services in Vanuatu. TC Pam held up progress

Recommendation
- Endorse the PIEMA strategic agenda 2020….Palau nominating, 2nded by Nauru and Marshall Islands. Agreed and endorsed 1st recommendation.
Session 4 – Communications

(Suzanne)

Session 4:

Communications and visibility

- Ppt from Lisa Kingsberry, new communications officer
- Communications is ultimately about encouraging behaviour change. Can be broken down into simple steps
- Public awareness campaigns – very useful to have a baseline test on understanding of messaging and then retest late to see how useful the messages were for positive behaviour change
- The value of key messaging to media about project activities
- Social media – access to smart phones has increased by 120%. Lisa can support work to enable NDMOs to be the most credible source for information

Questions:

Timor-Leste – Can you provide any guidelines to national actors regarding messaging and visibility?

- SPC and EU branding and consistent messaging is helpful in case people need more info they know who to go to. Working on developing some key message guidance/templates that incorporates visibility guidelines. Also looking at developing a story template and can provide support for finalising these.

EU – communication is important to showcase the work you have been doing. The holders of the funds are 18k miles away so it’s important for securing future $ to share what we are doing here and why it’s important to keep providing support.

Chair closed at 12:30 for lunch to reconvene at 1:30.

Session 5 – Results Orientated Monitoring Review (ROM) and Project Finance

ROM

- EU provided a brief explanation re ‘what is the ROM?’
- Identified that low expenditure is the critical issue – all other areas are ok
- Regional budget spent on Regional Roadmap
- Delays due to slow start up and shifting priorities have caused delays
- Need to increase pace of implementation – current organisational structure is insufficient
- Need for a capacity assessment of NDMOs in all 15 countries and consider sustainability
- Recommendations from the ROM Reviewer; purpose of sharing them here is to solicit feedback from NDMOs and partners. Help to direct the PMU and provide feedback to the ROM reviewers

Reflections from Tai on the ROM

- SPC always looks to the countries for feedback on this. Not something that we can do unilaterally
- PMU could look to recruit a Finance Officer and additional admin officer. Suggestion to have National Coordinators; some countries are keen to do this
- Logframe is currently being updated – needs to be updated based on all countries priorities being fixed/locked in

EU – the ROM is advice; not a legally binding document. The Reviewer did not visit all countries or speak to all relevant stakeholders. Has made some useful recommendations and we must consider how to respond to this.

The point of aligning the meeting this week is to help the countries identify how this project might help them to address some of their most pressing issues. Not especially keen to see more regional activities in lieu of National activities.

Nauru – Would the additional salaries come from BSRP or another source of funds?

- Regarding recommendation 3 (additional staffing) can take on a finance officer and an additional admin officer (for the North) using existing salary savings. Engineer positions, Deputy Team Leader positions etc. would require additional funds to be sourced

Nauru – For those countries which have low implementation – they have plans in place which will use the allocated funds.

EU – it is a judgement call by the countries whether they decide to stick to activities that may not happen and risk using the funds OR change their priorities OR ask Government to intervene. What can we realistically do with the project based on the D+3 constraint?
Tonga – restructuring. Does this mean additional funds or needing to call on country allocations?

- We are trying as much as possible to use funds at the National level. The ROM makes his judgement based on what has been spent up to this point – at Regional level the funds have been expended; at National level this is not so. The PMU will meet over the weekend to strategise how we are going to address the D+3 condition. At some point we will need to make a judgement call in order to avoid funds being lost; these could include regional activities that countries will benefit from. We will need the RSC to be flexible on this and provide their feedback to guide us moving forward.

D+3 Session

All contracts necessary to implement the project must be signed by Sept 2016. This clause is intended to speed up implementation and avoid lots of contracts being signed in the last year.

OCHA – where are the bottlenecks? Offer to help with suggestions based on feedback from the meetings this week.

Tai – Lock in your priorities. The PMU will look at how it allocates its resources to be D+3 compliant. Jan 2016 – all proc plans will go to SPC procurement team. From Jan – June the focus is on procurement; implementation can continue through partner agencies or national counterparts but the PMU will be focussing on procurement at this time.

In July 2016 the PMU will review commitments country by country and the countries will be advised of uncommitted funds. We don’t want to do unilateral decisions but if funds cannot be committed by July we will need to look at reprogramming to regional activities (e.g. PIEMA, IDA work with OCHA, comms plans etc.)

Vanuatu - What if contract rates (e.g. construction projects) change?

- 3 levels of contingency – reserves can be used near the end to cover force majeure, can embed contingencies into LoAs with countries, individual contract variations. E.g. of TC Pam – should be factored into the contracts we sign. We need to have a buffer budget (contingency).

Cooks – Despite what the numbers suggest, we have worked very hard to come up with our plans and priorities. It's up to the PMU to look at how it works to become more efficient.

Timor-Leste – We need to identify the solutions. What is the problem?

- EU – procurement is clearly a problem based on the feedback from countries. Also, there appears to be a lack of prioritisation – the procurement planning exercise seems to be a good idea.

- EU – if you are working on a year by year basis, this is not going to help with the D+3 context. It is necessary to be flexible/creative about how we move forward.

- Tai – not locking in priorities, procurement, in-country processes etc…lots of things slow down implementation. The countries also cause delays – making decisions, responding to requests for info, sending emails after one month etc…all of these things contribute to the delays. We must apply the procurement policies in order to satisfy future audits.

PNG – it took 3 months for the in-country coordinator’s salary to be sent by SPC. Worried about timelines etc.

- ECHO – partnership with IFRC previously; could we utilise these National Societies as a means of spending the funds?

- Vanuatu – what is the possibility of revisiting the National priorities based on TC Pam and El Niño?

- Chair – the NSC must endorse any changes and SPC will accept this.

SPC Procurement – we have heard your issues and take them on board. We asked about procurement plans when the project started. Were told that the project will need to be flexible and responsive to needs due to the nature of the project (DRM). Our policies have tried to be responsive but the lack of a procurement plan makes this difficult for us. Requests just started to come; many of the activities would have required a detailed capacity assessment. Some activities have been facilitated through contracts, others through LoAs. Explained example of the Tonga vehicle procurement. The payment was made after 3 days. We use donor funds – they require us to have and apply procedures which are checked by regular audits. The policy has been revised and we are recruiting 2 new officers. The plan must reflect the processes that are required in order to procure.

Feedback from the ROM

On the issue of National Coordinators – some already have them, others may not feel the need for them. It seems to be an NSC decision.

- The request is that for the time being we will try to implement according to the identified priorities but that by July next year we may need to consider regional activities. Proposal to have next RSC around this date to enable all NDMOs to discuss what the regional activities may be.

EU – we would like to piggy back the meeting again; could we suggest this date to OCHA and partners.
## Session 6 – Contract Deadlines and Way Forward

### D+3 Session
- All contracts necessary to implement the project must be signed by Sept 2016. This clause is intended to speed up implementation and avoid lots of contracts being signed in the last year.
- **OCHA** – where are the bottlenecks? Offer to help with suggestions based on feedback from the meetings this week.
- **Tai** – Lock in your priorities. The PMU will look at how it allocates its resources to be D+3 compliant. Jan 2016 – all proc plans will go to SPC procurement team. From Jan – June the focus is on procurement; implementation can continue through partner agencies or national counterparts but the PMU will be focussing on procurement at this time.
  - In July 2016 the PMU will review commitments country by country and the countries will be advised of uncommitted funds. We don’t want to do unilateral decisions but if funds cannot be committed by July we will need to look at reprogramming to regional activities (e.g. PIEMA, IDA work with OCHA, Comms Plans etc)

### Vanuatu - What if contract rates (e.g. construction projects) change?
- 3 levels of contingency - reserves can be used near the end to cover force majeure, can embed contingencies into LoA’s with countries, individual contract variations. E.g. of TC Pam – should be factored into the contracts we sign. We need to have a buffer budget (contingency).

### Cooks – Despite what the numbers suggest, we have worked very hard to come up with our plans and priorities. It’s up to the PMU to look at how it works to become more efficient.

### Timor – We need to identify the solutions. What is the problem?
- **EU** – procurement is clearly a problem based on the feedback from countries. Also, there appears to be a lack of prioritisation – the procurement planning exercise seems to be a good idea.
- **EU** – if you are working on a year by year basis, this is not going to help with the D+3 context. It is necessary to be flexible/creative about how we move forward.
- **Tai** – not locking in priorities, procurement, in-country processes etc…lots of things slow down implementation. The countries also cause delays – making decisions, responding to requests for info, sending emails after one month etc…all of these things contribute to the delays. We must apply the procurement policies in order to satisfy future audits.

### PNG – it took 3 months for the in-country coordinators salary to be sent by SPC. Worried about timelines etc
- **ECHO** – partnership with IFRC previously; could we utilise these National Societies as a means of spending the funds?
- **Vanuatu** – what is the possibility of revisiting the National priorities based on TC Pam and El Nino.
- **Chair** – the NSC must endorse any changes and SPC will accept this.
- **SPC Procurement** – we have heard your issues and take them onboard. We asked about procurement plans when the project started. Were told that the project will need to be flexible and responsive to needs due to the nature of the project (DRM). Our policies have tried to be responsive but the lack of a procurement plan makes this difficult for us. Requests just started to come; many of the activities would have required a detailed capacity assessment. Some activities have been facilitated through contracts others through LoA’s. Explained example of the Tonga vehicle procurement. The payment was made after 3 days. We use donor funds – they require us to have and apply procedures which are checked by regular audits. The policy has been revised and we are recruiting 2 new officers. The plan must reflect the processes that are required in order to procure.

### Feedback from the ROM
- On the issue of National Coordinators – some already have them, others may not feel the need for them. It seems to be an NSC decision.
- The request is that for the time being we will try to implement according to the identified priorities but that by July next year we may need to consider regional activities. Proposal to have next RSC around this date to enable all NDMO’s to discuss what the regional activities may be.
- **EU** – we would like to piggy back the meeting again; could we suggest this date to OCHA and partners.

## Session 7 – Outcome Statement

Please see final Outcome Statement (pages...

### Financial Progress

#### EDF 10 ACP-EU Natural Disaster Facility

**Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Period 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Period</th>
<th>Total Income</th>
<th>FJD</th>
<th>EUR</th>
<th>RESTATED</th>
<th>FJD</th>
<th>EUR</th>
<th>RESTATED</th>
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#### Expenditure

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<tr>
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<th>FJD</th>
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<th>FJD</th>
<th>EUR</th>
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<td>73,686,654</td>
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### Income

- Funds received from EU: FJD 12,259,396, EUR 4,892,725
- Other income: FJD 21,012, EUR 8,602
- Foreign exchange differences: FJD -504,536, EUR -224,872

### Expenditure

- Project Management Unit: FJD 22,759,398, EUR 15,431,443
- Senior Advisor/Project Manager (Band 12), SPC Fiji: FJD -904,536, EUR -47,633
- Advisory (Band 10), SPC Fiji: FJD 21,012, EUR -19,001
- Media & Communications Officer (Band 8) SPC Fiji: FJD 4,880,725, EUR 6,570
- Operational Costs and Administration: FJD 3,978, EUR 4,475
- Facilities: FJD 3,978, EUR 4,475
- Equipment: FJD 3,978, EUR 4,475
- Publications: FJD 3,978, EUR 4,475
## Consummables

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<th>2017</th>
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<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
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## Implementation of National Activities (NA)

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<td>180,680</td>
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<td>205,788</td>
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<td>82,354</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>537,903</td>
<td>220,214</td>
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<td>2,533,026</td>
<td>1,029,460</td>
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<td>Reports &amp; Publications</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>52,354</td>
<td>21,435</td>
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<td>Technical Assistance</td>
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## Implementation of Regional Activities (RA)

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<th>2020</th>
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## Project Travel

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<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
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<td>364,114</td>
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<td>607,286</td>
<td>248,614</td>
<td>971,400</td>
<td>393,926</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>364,114</td>
<td>145,312</td>
<td>607,286</td>
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<td>971,400</td>
<td>393,926</td>
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## Communications & Visibility

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## Provision for contingencies

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<th>2020</th>
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## Total Implementation Activities

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<th>2018</th>
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## Total Direct Costs

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<th>2018</th>
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<td></td>
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## In-direct Costs (7% of Direct Costs)

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<td>356,444</td>
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## Total Expenditures

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## Surplus of funds before commitments

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9,241,593</td>
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<td>10,156,323</td>
<td>4,725,428</td>
<td>19,397,916</td>
<td>8,390,241</td>
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The above Statement of Income and Expenditure is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

1 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Set out below is a summary of accounting policies applied in the preparation of the Statement of Income and Expenditure

(a) Basis of Accounting
The special purpose financial statements represent the financial operations the Project, “ACP – EU Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific,” for the period 6 September 2013 to 30 June 2015. The books of the Project have been kept in accordance with the SPC financial policies and procedures. The special purpose financial statements have been prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting and in compliance with the Contract No. ACP/TPS/FED/2013/327-152 signed on 6 September 2013.

(b) Recognition of Income and Expenditure
Income is recognised at the time of receipt of funds. Expenditure is recognised when incurred.

(c) Foreign Currency Translation
The reporting currency for the Project is in EURO. The Secretariat maintains all its accounting records in Fiji Dollars (FJD). The Project maintains a EURO bank account and a FJD bank account. Funds are received in the EURO bank account and is recorded in FJD at the day's rate in the SPC books. The transactions are converted back to Euro at the end of the financial year at the weighted average rate ([2015: 0.4094] [2014: 0.3991]) at which funds had been received.

2 RESTATEMENT OF PRIOR YEAR BALANCES

The balances as at 31 December 2014 were restated based on the outcome of the audit performed on 30 June 2015. These included the prior allocation of costs to be accounted in the correct budget line and also to include additional expenditures incurred as at that date.

3 PROJECT TRAVEL

This represents staff travel costs within the National Activities and Regional Activities budget lines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>EUR</td>
<td>FJD</td>
<td>EUR</td>
<td>FJD</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project travel cost</td>
<td>248,614</td>
<td>607,286</td>
<td>145,312</td>
<td>364,114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 IN-DIRECT COST

In-direct cost is set at an approved percentage of 7% of total direct cost incurred.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EUR</td>
<td>FJD</td>
<td>EUR</td>
<td>FJD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total direct cost</td>
<td>2,084,679</td>
<td>5,092,055</td>
<td>937,421</td>
<td>2,348,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect cost: 7% of direct cost</td>
<td>145,928</td>
<td>356,444</td>
<td>65,619</td>
<td>164,419</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 COMMITMENTS

Commitments represents:

(a) Disbursements made to beneficiaries
These relate disbursements made to various pilot projects which are currently being commissioned by the Governments of the beneficiaries. As of 31 December 2015, the balance of funds which have been disbursed and yet to be acquitted is EUR 712,403 (FJD 1,740,115) and this relates to the following countries
Cook Islands  | 4,346 | 10,616  
Tuvalu      | 15,366 | 37,534  
Federated States of Micronesia | 576,889 | 1,409,109  
Tonga       | 14,828 | 36,220  
Palau       | 74,352 | 181,613  
Marshall Islands | 15,362 | 37,523  
Fiji        | 11,259 | 27,500  

712,402 | 1,740,115

(b) Expenditures incurred
These relates to direct expenditures to which purchase orders or contracts have been made with respective vendors but goods or services is yet to be rendered.

Expenditures commitments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EUR</td>
<td>470,348</td>
<td>1,151,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FJD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6 SURPLUS OF FUNDS AFTER COMMITMENTS**

Surplus of funds after commitments as at 31 December 2015 is derived as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EUR</th>
<th>FJD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Surplus of funds before commitments</td>
<td>8,390,241</td>
<td>19,397,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: Commitments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disbursements made to beneficiaries</td>
<td>712,402</td>
<td>1,740,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditures incurred</td>
<td>470,348</td>
<td>1,151,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,182,750</td>
<td>2,891,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Surplus of funds after commitments</td>
<td>7,207,491</td>
<td>16,506,263</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In December 2015, the second disbursement was received from the EU Delegation after additional funds were requested in October 2015.
Further information:
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Disaster Reduction Programme
Geoscience Division
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