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From the Secretariat



Bula Vinaka and Welcome to the Partnership Network Newsletter. Since reintroducing the Newsletter in the last quarter of 2007, we have sort to reinvent the publication in an effort to be more reader-friendly. The changes include a new layout and a new title. The Newsletter will now be known as PDRMPN "Footprints". The new title reflects the

collective 'steps' taken by the partners toward achieving the desired outcomes of the Regional DRM Framework for Action 2005-2015. In taking each step we leave behind 'footprints' as a record of where we have been, what we have done and with whom/for whom. Colleagues let us take these steps together as we strive toward a common goal, and let our footprints highlight our achievements.

Achievements

World Bank Initiative – Sustainable Management through Reduced Risk from Disasters and Climate Variability in the Pacific

A special meeting of the Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network was organised by the SOPAC Community Risk Programme for Suva-based Partner organisations and agencies. The purpose of the meeting was to provide Partner organisations with the opportunity to share in discussions on a World Bank Initiative entitled *'Sustainable Management through Reduced Risk from Disasters and Climate Variability in the Pacific'*.

The objective of the meeting was to provide all Suva-based Partners the opportunity to share information with the World Bank on a proposed approach to the identification of regional and national projects and activities in relation to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation which would be considered for funding under the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR). The meeting also provided Suva-based Partners with an opportunity to learn of the 2008 priorities of both the SOPAC Community Risk Programme and the Secretariat of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

The World Bank intends to finalise a Business Plan for GFDRR support to the Pacific by June 2008. The Pacific countries that will be targeted for direct support under the GFDRR are: Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Other Pacific countries will also benefit but through regional and sub-regional programmes that will be identified.

The specifics of the World Bank Initiative are:

1. **Regional Stock take and Gap Analysis** - The first component of the work is a regional stock take, identifying country and regional needs; who is doing what; possible synergies; key gaps; and comparative advantages.
2. **Country Assessment** - The second component is a set of country assessments in the selected countries to deepen the understanding of disaster risk reduction/climate change adaptation goals and activities, the gaps, opportunities and needs at the national level.
3. **Business Plan** - The initial regional and country assessments will be the basis for a detailed 3-year business plan that will identify key areas of engagement, particularly aiming to identify opportunities for actual on-the-ground investments in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction

The World Bank Initiative will commence in February.

Fore more information on this World Bank initiative please contact Mosese Sikivou, Manager CRP on e-mail: mosese@sopac.org



Above: World Bank Team (L-R): Marianne Grosclaude, Idah Pswarayi-Riddihough, John Norton, Alf Simpson, Graham Shorten.

UN/ISDR Reporting Requirements for Hyogo Framework for Action

A special meeting of the Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network (PDRMPN) was held on 27th March in Suva, Fiji. The purpose of the meeting was to allow the Partners to share with the UN / International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) on the reporting requirements in relation to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA).

The meeting featured the following sessions:

- ~ The Regional HFA Progress Review Framework for Asia/Pacific 08/09. This session introduced Partners to the Global and Regional HFA Progress Review Framework and provided opportunities for clarification including the rationale of the Global HFA Monitoring and Progress Review Framework, and an overview of the Regional HFA Progress Review Framework;
- ~ Adapting the Regional HFA Reporting Framework to the Pacific context. This session invited contributions from Partners on the Regional HFA Progress Review Framework with the intention of making it more applicable to the Pacific context. This included identifying recommendations of how the Regional HFA Reporting Framework might be adapted to the Pacific, and an overview of existing disaster risk reduction reporting arrangements, highlighting roles and responsibilities of Partners at the regional and national level;
- ~ The Role of Regional Partners in the 08/09 HFA Progress Review Process in the Pacific. This session helped identify the role and support to be provided by regional partners to the reporting process, both at the country and regional level, as well as in specific themes.

The meeting was coordinated by SOPAC and UN/ISDR, and facilitated by UN/ISDR's Angelika Planitz and Andrew Maskrey. SOPAC Director Cristelle Pratt chaired a number of sessions.

Emergency Operations Centres Training Validated in Cook Islands

On 17th January, Rarotonga experienced what locals described as a 'freak storm'. The storm was caused by a tropical depression in the area. The storm caused the grounding of a locally owned ship, the MV Maungaroo, on the western side breakwater of the Avatiu Harbour (Rarotonga's international sea port).

Below: MV Maungaroo wrecked, Avatiu Harbour western-side breakwater



Other impacts included the inundation and subsequent closure of the sea wall road at the end of the airport run way, the area in front of the courthouse was shut down as debris was being thrown onto the road, Trader Jacks the waterfront restaurant and bar received significant damage, and several homes along the northern coast line were also damaged.

The training conducted by SOPAC and The Asia Foundation/Office for US Foreign Disaster Assistance (TAF/OFDA) Emergency Operations Centres (EOC), was validated during the response effort as more Government organizations were better prepared and activated their organizational EOC. The Tourism Corporation activated their EOC and updated the Hotels/Motels. Te Aponga Uira (Rarotonga Electricity Authority) also activated their EOC. The Ministry of Education was ready to activate their new standard operating procedures (SOPs) for evacuation centres.

According to Emergency Management Cook Islands (EMCI), communication was a major issue during the response to the 2005 cyclones, however during this effort there was a huge improvement with communication and the overall response to the event. EMCI credits the effectiveness of the response to the EOC training which was conducted nationally in 2003 and 2007.

DRM National Action Plan for Samoa



Above: Flooding is a constant hazard in Apia, Samoa

At the invitation of the Government of Samoa SOPAC, together with the UNDP Pacific Centre, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), commenced the first engagement of a potential 4-month planning process to develop a Disaster Risk Management National Action Plan (NAP) for Samoa.

The first country engagement by this team of the Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network (PDRMPN) took place between February 25th and March 7th 2008. The engagement addressed two primary objectives. The first was to help confirm high level political support for the implementation of the DRM Regional Framework for Action 2005-2015 through national actions, to assess the existing country situation in terms of disaster risk reduction and disaster management, and to determine where and how a Samoa DRM NAP may strengthen existing initiatives and or gaps to promote sustainable development.

The full team representing PDRMPN were Dr. Langi Kavaliku, Mosese Sikivou, Netatua Pelesikoti from CRP/SOPAC, Seve Paenui from SPREP, Moortaza Jiwani and Herman Timmermans from UNDP Pacific Centre, and Richard Mendani from the PIFS. A second country engagement has tentatively been scheduled for March 26th to April 4th. The next countries scheduled for the NAP process is the Solomon Islands followed by the Cook Islands.

Navua Flood Early Warning Project, UNDP Pacific Centre



Above: Participants at the recent community based workshop in Navua

Since 2007 the UNDP Pacific Centre and implementing partners such as Fiji Red Cross Society, Fiji National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) and The Asia Foundation / Office for US Foreign Disaster Assistance (TAF/OFDA) have undertaken a pilot project in Navua. The purpose of the project is to strengthen local level risk management by building linkages between local government and risk sensitive community development. By focusing on the local level, the pilot project is a complementary initiative undertaken at the national level to mainstream disaster risk management (DRM) into development strategies through the implementation of the *Pacific Framework for Action 2005 – 2015 Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters*.

The practice of local level risk management, where communities, local government and external stakeholders collaborate to reduce risk, is something that UNDP has been promoting in recent years to compliment efforts at the national and community levels.

Below: Stephanie Zoll (UNDP PC), facilitating group work



At the request of communities, the Fiji Red Cross Society and UNDP Pacific Centre are currently running workshops on Community Based First Aid & Disaster Preparedness in the greater Navua area.

The Purpose of the workshop is threefold:

- Provide members of communities with knowledge and skills to prevent, be prepared and respond to life threatening situations, such as disasters, in order to reduce suffering and death;
- Raise awareness of the Navua project; and,
- Provide participants with a grounded understanding of the basic principles of DRM and the linkages between development practices and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

To compliment SOPAC's effort to install a flood warning system, a series of meetings were held last year in order to develop a comprehensive Flood Response Plan. This plan is currently being finalized. The UNDP Pacific Centre and implementing partners are further focusing on the development of Community Disaster Plans that will tie into the provincial level plan.

In the coming months Fiji Red Cross Society, UNDP Pacific Centre and TAF/OFDA will begin to conduct a Vulnerability & Capacity Assessment (VCA) in targeted Communities in the Navua area. The assessment will use a number of methodologies including direct and indirect observation, focus groups, one-to-one interviews, and mapping (similar to Geographic Information System [GIS] mapping).

The overall aim of VCA will seek to empower all sectors of the community to identify projects that address their development priorities and reduce their vulnerability to disaster risk. This activity will also be focused upon the development of gender specific case studies on traditional/local knowledge and roles held by men and women in areas such as DRM, environment and natural resource management, and agriculture and how these influence a community's vulnerability to risk. The VCA will also contribute to building a body of knowledge regarding gender, Adaptation to Climate Change (ACC) and DRR in the region.

Samoa Welcomes the Pacific Islands Fire Service Association



Above: PIFSA Executives Isaac Silas, Tony Hill and Nga Jessie pictured with their partner representatives Jill Edwards (AFAC) and Alan Mearns (SOPAC)

The Government of Samoa recently hosted the third annual planning meeting of the Executive Committee of the Pacific Islands Fire Service Association (PIFSA).

The meeting, held at the Headquarters of the Samoa Fire and Emergency Service in Apia, was officially opened by the Associate Minister for Police, Prison Services and Fire the Hon. Papalii Sam Petaia. In his opening address, the Associate Minister confirmed the Government's support and involvement with the PIFSA. He said the Government recognised the importance of the partnership that had been established between the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) and the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC).

The meeting allowed the Executive Committee of the PIFSA to finalise its governance arrangements, check progress of its strategic plan and develop its programme for the next annual general meeting to be held in conjunction with the annual AFAC Conference, scheduled for Adelaide, South Australia in September.

The current membership of PIFSA includes Samoa, Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Nauru. These countries are committed to work in partnership with SOPAC and AFAC to strengthen national fire safety and emergency response capacities in support of the Pacific Plan and the Pacific Regional Framework for Action 2005 – 2015 for building safer and more resilient nations and communities. The current members are also encouraging other Pacific island countries to join this important alliance in order to share information and strengthen national capacities through mutual collaboration and cooperation.



Above: New recruits in Apia include for the first time a number of female fire fighters

The Chief Fire Officer of Papua New Guinea Isaac Silas is the current PIFSA President. He is supported by the Samoa Fire Commissioner, Seve Tony Hill and the Chief Fire Officer the Cook Islands Nga Jessie, who hold the positions of Executive Directors.

Mr Silas commended the Government of Samoa for providing a model of change for the region through their recent initiatives to review and update their national disaster management arrangements and redefining and expanding the role of the fire service.

Under the leadership of Fire Commissioner Seve Tony Hill and his team, a number of these key initiatives are underway in Samoa including a gradual expansion of the service to all communities in both Upolo and Savai'i and the recruitment of a number of female fire fighters.

Recognizing the Role of Gender in Mainstreaming DRM and ACC in the Pacific Region

On the 20 -21 February over 30 practitioners from the fields of natural resource management, agriculture, marine resources, environment and energy, traditional knowledge, disaster risk management (DRM) and adaptation to climate change (ACC) were brought together by UNDP Pacific Centre and AusAID at a *Forum on the Gendered Dimensions of Adaptation to Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management* to explore and share issues relevant to gender in the areas of DRM and ACC and to identify gaps in practice and research, best practices, and lessons learned, and to initiate an ongoing dialogue among stakeholders.

Impetus for the workshop came from recognition that while there is much good work going on in the fields of gender and DRM and ACC in the Pacific, understandings of why gender is a relevant consideration to practitioners involved in programming and research in these areas remains relatively limited. In addition, the workshop sought to highlight the benefits that can be derived from cross fertilization and cooperation between these fields and Natural Resource Management.

While it is well known that men and women of Pacific Island Communities have managed natural resources for generations by drawing on their intimate knowledge of their surrounding environments and have demonstrated an enormous amount of resilience in the face of a range of disasters, the impacts of globalization, development, rural urban migration and climate change are having profound effects upon the small and fragile ecosystems of Pacific Island Countries. This in turn, has fundamentally altered the usefulness and applicability of some of the local and traditional knowledge that has facilitated natural resource management and disaster preparedness across the Pacific for so many generations.

In his opening speech at the Forum Mr Garry Wiseman, the Manager of the UNDP Pacific Centre acknowledged that

'When talking about the gendered dimensions of disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change it is essential to recognize that environmental and climatic changes and the associated increase in disaster events in the region present different challenges to and impact upon the men and women of Pacific Island Communities differently. It is also equally essential to recognize that the men and women of Pacific Island countries hold different knowledge and are able to make unique contributions to building the resilience of their communities to these environmental and climatic changes, precisely because of the highly specialized and multifaceted roles they hold within their communities.'

The workshop was highly interactive and participatory with participants at the forum providing input into sessions by sharing their experiences through presentations, group work and discussion. The sessions at the workshop highlighted many of the challenges and successes experienced in integrating gender into different fields that have direct implications for communities in terms of their ability to adapt and respond to disasters and climate change including meteorology; energy; fisheries; agriculture; traditional knowledge; ACC and; DRM.

Throughout the course of the workshop participants identified a number of priority gaps and needs as well as areas for future collaboration on programming and research on gender, DRM and ACC including: Understanding and researching the differential impacts of CC and disaster upon social structure in terms of gender; Relating technological information to community in meaningful ways and localizing translations of warning and weather information that relate to the lives of men and women; Culturally appropriate gender training; Sharing Pacific research in gender knowledge; The recruitment of female technicians in meteorology; increased synergies and cooperation between the fields of DRM, ACC and Natural resource Management; the develop of indicators for integration of gender into DRM and ACC initiative and; the integration of ACC and DRM into school curriculum.

As a result of the workshop various stakeholders are in the process of discussing how to move forward on the development of a joint strategy for further programming and research on Gender DRM and ACC that addresses some of these identified priorities. Overall the outcomes of the workshop highlighted that a holistic approach to mainstreaming DRM and ACC in the Pacific Region demands a focus on the development of gender responsive strategies that not only meet the specific needs of men and women but recognize the different knowledge and skills that the integration of gender can bring to the table.

Presentations made by participants at the workshop, the workshop report and analysis and other background documentation can be located on the Pacific Centre's website at [http://regionalcentrepacific.undp.org/fj/HTML%20docs/Workshops%](http://regionalcentrepacific.undp.org/fj/HTML%20docs/Workshops%20and%20Seminars/Forum%20on%20Gendered%20dimension%20on%20DRM.html)

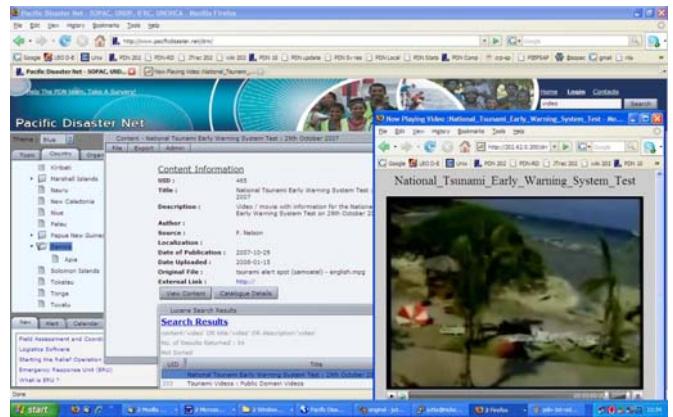
[20and%20Seminars/Forum%20on%20Gendered%20dimension%20on%20DRM.html](http://regionalcentrepacific.undp.org/fj/HTML%20docs/Workshops%20and%20Seminars/Forum%20on%20Gendered%20dimension%20on%20DRM.html)

Further information on the Forum and additional resources on DRM, ACC and Gender can also be obtained by contacting the CPR team at the Pacific Centre on +679 3300399.

First Video in Pacific Disaster Net

The Pacific Disaster Net (PDN), an online interactive disaster risk management information web portal, has recently taken another step towards being a modern and useful information system for the region.

In January, during its (PDN) test and development phase, the first video was uploaded into PDN. Samoa's National Tsunami Early Warning System test movie was converted and compressed to a significantly smaller size making it easily accessible.



Upcoming Events

- ~ Disaster Risk Reduction Course, Barbados;
- ~ National Action Plan, Solomon Islands and Cook Islands;
- ~ And other highlight