

Snapshots

DISASTER REDUCTION PROGRAMME

Snapshot 65

January 2011



The Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC) through the Disaster Reduction Programme is committed to working with officials and communities around the Pacific to strengthen the ability of countries to protect people as much as possible from the impact of natural and manmade disasters

SPC CPS
SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY
SECRETARIAT GÉNÉRAL DE LA COMMUNAUTÉ DU PACIFIQUE

Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC)

From the Managers Desk



Mosese Sikivou

We're back!

The Disaster Reduction Programme of the Applied Geoscience & Technology Division (new name for SOPAC) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community opened its doors for business on 4th January 2011.

We're busy...already!

A famous English proverb says: "Act only today for tomorrow is too late". This couldn't more appropriately capture the sense of urgency that permeates the air.

Over the course of 2011 we hope to be able to make progress in relation to Disaster Risk Management (DRM) National Action Plans or Mainstreaming programmes in all 14 Pacific ACP states. We also gear up for the 2011 sessions of the Pacific Platform for DRM and the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and are also excited by the prospect of completing the regional and national risk exposure databases; an initiative that commenced two years ago and that we have been working on with partners such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences New Zealand, Pacific Disaster Center and AIR Worldwide.

Our efforts with the Pacific Disaster Net will get a boost this year with a redesign project which will improve the user friendliness of the web portal and as well a Strategic Plan to guide its development for the future. We will also continue with the implementation of the EU EDF 9 B and C Envelope projects which support vulnerability reduction in 8 Pacific ACP states and 4 Pacific territories respectively.

In terms of securing the resources to support these kinds of initiatives (and more) we are presently engaged in discussions with the World Bank and as well the European Union and the ACP Secretariat on two separate envelopes of funding that will contribute to the strengthening of DRM capacity at regional and national level within the next few years. We also look to the ongoing support from our major Pacific donors – Australia and New Zealand.

So lot's and lots to do. In this issue however we provide coverage of the activities that we undertook towards the end of last year. There is an interesting piece on mainstreaming at the national level in Vanuatu that we commenced in December in connection with the implementation of the Vanuatu DRR & DM National Action Plan. In addition, we present some of the outcomes of the meetings around the Asia-Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction Project Portal held in Bangkok last December. We also discuss the review of the existing disaster plan and legislation for Tuvalu. The EU funded B- Envelope Project Update talks about the construction of a new National Emergency Operation Centre for the Federated States of Micronesia. We announce a workshop on Economic Impact of Disasters in the Pacific to be held in Vanuatu next month. And last but not least TAF/ OFDA provides a snapshot on the recently conducted Disaster Management Training in Samoa.

I hope you enjoy reading this first edition for 2011 and wish all of you the very best for a fruitful and productive year.

Mosese Sikivou

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DRR Project Portal Meetings in Bangkok December 2010

In December 2010, Jutta May (Adviser, Information and Database Management / PDN Team Leader) attended another series of meetings evolving around the Asia-Pacific DRR Project Portal (DRR PP), which was launched during the 4th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) in October in Incheon, Korea.

The DRR PP (<http://www.drrprojects.net>) is an online system to

- Improve regional planning and programming of DRR interventions in Asia and Pacific
- Identify areas of cooperation among regional and sub-regional organizations
- Add to the periodic progress reviews and reporting processes at regional and sub-regional levels
- Assist donors and decision-makers to channel resources and efforts that can meet their own policy and programmatic imperatives

One of the meetings was a Review Workshop which provided time to present and discuss the draft report as well as sharing ideas on the improvement of the 'Usage of existing tools, databases and indexes on hazard, vulnerability and risks at regional level in Asia and the Pacific'.

Another meeting around the DRR PP paid particular attention to the DRR Project Portal feature for 'Proposed Projects' and suggested to develop it further into a DRM Project Partnerships Marketplace (DPPM). The 'Partnerships Marketplace' shall support communication for planned and future projects online and offline – with partnership building and brokering meetings and venues. The online component is considered to use functionalities such as 'Interactive Knowledge Maps' and a Meeting Calendar whereas the offline component facilitates the opportunity for partners and donors to meet periodically on regional level to exchange information and discuss project ideas, proposals, concepts and plans with limited or broader audiences

The "7th Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting of the IAP Initiative on Regional Stocktaking and Mapping of DRR initiatives" covered reporting on the outcomes of former PSC meetings and action taken, further reporting on key decisions of the 'Review Workshop' and the 'Brainstorming-cum system concept design workshop'.

Future promotion of the DRR Project Portal was discussed, the populating of projects on country level and the upcoming Phase II of the project on Regional Stocktaking and Mapping of DRR intervention in Asia and the Pacific.

The presentations for the above meetings are uploaded in Pacific Disaster Net (<http://www.pacificdisaster.net>). Please see bottom left in the Navigation tab - under Meeting/Conferences 2010 - Regional Stocktaking (10/12).



Participants of the DRR Project Portal meetings in Bangkok.

Mainstreaming DRM with the Ministry of Finance in Vanuatu

In October 2009 SOPAC delivered a presentation at the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting detailing some of the potential economic and development impacts of disasters in the Pacific Island Countries. Following this a request was made by the Director of Finance, Benjamin Shing, from the Government of Vanuatu for a SOPAC mission to Vanuatu to make a similar presentation to the officials of the Ministry of Finance & Economic Management (MFEM). The Director of Finance expressed a wish that MFEM ramp up its efforts in relation to the examination of disaster risk considerations within the context of national planning and budgeting. This provided the Disaster Risk Programme (DRP) Policy & Planning Team an opportunity to progress Theme 2 of the Vanuatu Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) & Disaster Management (DM) National Action Plan (NAP), this being the Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in National macroeconomic and fiscal policy and budgetary processes.

The workshop to progress work on Theme 2 of the NAP was held on the 14th and 15th December 2010 with participants from MFEM, the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu and the Vanuatu NAP Task Force. The Workshop served the two purposes, first presenting to MFEM and the other participants on the economic impact of disasters as requested by the Director of MFEM. Second, the participants were asked to develop strategies and key actions to progress the Mainstreaming Theme of the Vanuatu NAP.

During the workshop the participants conducted a SWOT analysis to identify the various Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing MFEM in progressing DRM Mainstreaming into the national planning and budgetary processes. Through the SWOT analysis the participants then focussed on developing strategies that would become part of the Theme 2 strategies of the NAP Implementation Programme 2011-2013.



Job Essau (Director Vanuatu NDMO) facilitates group discussion at the workshop.



Mosese Sikivou (Deputy Director DRP) conducts a SWOT analysis with participants.



Group work at the workshop in Vanuatu.

The workshop received a large amount of media coverage including radio coverage and 3 full page articles relating to DRM in the Vanuatu Times. Quoting from the Director of Finance's opening speech they reported that "Vanuatu, and in particular the MFEM...is keen to work with SOPAC to explore options to better support DRR & DM to reduce future impacts of disasters" (Vanuatu Times 17th-23rd December 2010).

Immediately following the workshop a meeting was held with the Director of Finance, Benjamin Shing, who reiterated his ongoing support for the mainstreaming work taking place in Vanuatu. The Director stated that he is willing to act as a high level advocate/champion for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) to appear more prominently at the sectoral policy level within the Vanuatu Government system. He also offered to assist SOPAC in its efforts to galvanise support and leadership for mainstreaming from other Ministry's of Finance across the Pacific region. The Director believes that "disasters are an issue for everyone and should be borne in mind during the planning process and not just post disaster". The Director has requested that the good work following the workshop continue and that SOPAC commence a follow up visit as soon as is practicable in 2011.

Review of Tuvalu Disaster Risk Management Arrangements

A review of the existing disaster plan and legislation for Tuvalu has culminated in the acceptance in principle of new DRM governance arrangements by the National Disaster Committee (NDC) at a special meeting held on 17th of January, 2011. The NDC also endorsed a set of priorities for implementation to help give full effect to the new governance arrangements and set the course for Tuvalu in terms of a DRM National Action Plan.

The draft governance arrangements will be finalised remotely by SOPAC in conjunction with other key partners before being submitted to Cabinet for approval.

The draft arrangements have been developed after four country engagements and consultation by a SOPAC team which commenced work in February 2010.

The January 2011 visit by the SOPAC and the discussions which took place in relation to the draft arrangements were carried out with a backdrop being the current drought situation which Tuvalu is facing. The experience with the dry conditions helped to lend urgency to the need to finalise arrangements. The NDC is particularly keen to have the final arrangements tabled in Cabinet and to commence implementation of various DRM priorities.

The SOPAC/SPC support for the review is being coordinated by the SOPAC DRP and is comprised of Moses Sikivou, Deputy Director DRP, Tony Madigan - DRM Consultant, Mark Reid - DRM Consultant and Noa Tokavou, DRP Disaster Management Adviser.



Tuvalu National Disaster Committee meeting on January 17th at Funafuti.



Sumeo and Tony Madigan meeting the Tuvalu Red Cross.

New National Emergency Operation Centre for the Federated States of Micronesia

A new National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) will be built for the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) at the National Capital in Palikir. This is made possible through funding from the European Union through the B-Envelope Project by the Disaster Risk Reduction Project of the Applied Geoscience & Technical Division (SOPAC), Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

The Project Manager, Mr. George Beck, recently returned from a visit to Pohnpei where he met with Government officials who are in the process of finalising the tender dossier and identifying a suitable site for the NEOC at Palikir. He stated that while it has taken some time to reach consensus on a site for the new NEOC, he is now looking forward to the launch of tenders in late January with construction expected to start around March 2011. The new NEOC will include a conference and communication room, office space, kitchen facilities and will be equipped with appropriate technologies which will help the Office of Environment and Emergency Management to strengthen coordination and management of operations in the event of a disaster.

The B-Envelope project is also involved in renovating the State Disaster Management Offices in Yap, Chuuk, Kosrae and Pohnpei. Renovation work in each State started in December 2010 and is expected to be completed around May 2011. In addition, communication equipment will be supplied to each State to strengthen their capacity to provide early warning and disseminate information. The Project Manager further stated that approximately €1.2 million is allocated to strengthen disaster management in FSM through infrastructure upgrade and early warning systems.



Workshop on the Economic Impact of Disasters in the Pacific

Assessing damage caused by natural disasters in the Pacific – a prerequisite for recovery and rehabilitation efforts – is a major development challenge. To support Pacific island countries assess the economic impact of disasters, the Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) has organized a training workshop on the economic assessment of disasters in the Pacific.

The workshop will be delivered on 22nd- 25th March 2011 at the Melanesian Hotel in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

The purpose of the training is to increase awareness of the economic dimensions of disasters to support disaster mainstreaming in national planning. Part of this will be to expose Pacific island agencies to an internationally recognized framework to promote consistent valuation of disasters, and to enable agencies to share detailed examples and experiences of valuation in recent years.

The training will be facilitated by representatives from SOPAC, UN-ESCAP, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR) and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC). UN-ISDR and UN-ECLAC are funding the training through the World Bank's Global Fund for Disaster Risk Reduction (GFDRR).

For further information please contact Paula Holland (paulah@sopac.org)



Disaster Management Training for Samoa

The Samoa-Australia Police Partnership project, supported by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) identified Disaster Management training as a priority for mid to senior level police officers. AFP worked with The Asia Foundation (TAF) for the delivery of a series of courses developed under the Pacific Disaster Risk Management (Training) Program (PDRMP). Since 2004 PDRMP training has been implemented regionally and nationally in collaboration with the Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) through the Disaster Reduction Programme, formerly the Community Risk Programme.

Following a scoping visit to Samoa three PDRMP training courses were identified and then delivered for 18 participants over a 2-week period from 29th November to 10th December 2010. The courses delivered were Introduction to Disaster Management (IDM), Emergency Operations Centres (EOC), and Exercise Management (ExMan). TAF's Director coordinated a team of Pacific trainers to deliver the disaster management focused programme in coordination with the Samoa-Australia Police Partnership program and the Disaster Management Office (DMO).

Facilitators were drawn from Fiji, Australia and Samoa including the Director PDRMP, SOPAC's Disaster Management Advisor, AFP, and PDRMP instructors from Samoa and Fiji. Participants were principally from the Samoan Police, with participation from other response agencies including Fire and Emergency Services, Samoa DMO, Samoa Red Cross Society, the Ministry of Health and a representative from the Nauru National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO). Given the success of the training, AFP has expressed interest in supporting further training sessions in 2011.



Participants from Police, Fire & Emergency Services, and Department of Health at the Samoa disaster management training.

Upcoming Events

- 1 – 4 February: Multi Stakeholder Progress Review Workshop, Samoa
- 31 January – 11 February: DRM Mainstreaming mission in the Cook Islands.
- 14 – 18 February: Vanuatu NAP mission
- 7 – 11 February: Mainstreaming mission and AusAID DRM Programme meeting
- 15 – 25 February: Multi beam survey, Tonga
- 15 – 18 February: OCT Programming visit, PDN country mission, New Caledonia
- 21 – 23 February: OCT Programming visit, Tahiti
- 22 – 23 February: ACP-EU NDF Steering Committee Meeting, Belgium



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