

Snapshots

DISASTER REDUCTION PROGRAMME

Snapshot 74

January – February 2012



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

From the Managers Desk



Mosese Sikivou

This is our first edition for 2012. Although we'd have liked to get to all of our readers earlier in the year our Snapshots Editor was on a much deserved break. Well, Stephanie's back and raring to go! Her first task: to sort through a number of 'candidates' for this edition. There's been quite a lot happening.

One of our major commitments for 2012 is to work closely with SPREP and the UNISDR to lead the process of developing an integrated regional strategy for DRM and Climate Change by 2015. We've had a series of meetings with these partner organisations this year and we're almost ready to move forward and recruit an individual to lead the preparatory work. In addition, we have the biennial progress reviews of the Hyogo Framework for Action and Pacific DRR and DM Framework for Action which will undertaken at regional level and as well at national level in all 14 Pacific island countries between May and September.

As it has been every year since 2009 the Pacific Platform for DRM signifies a major commitment in the DRP calendar for 2012. This year's meeting will be held in Noumea, New Caledonia from 17th - 21st September. As we progress over the coming months we'll provide you accounts of our preparations.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Snapshots and as always if you have any queries or helpful suggestions just drop us a line.

Mosese Sikivou

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Nadi Building Survey

Joy Papao, Susan Vocea, Amrit Raj and Mereoni Ketewai from SOPAC's Disaster Reduction Programme were in Nadi from the 20th of February to the 4th of March 2012 to undertake a building and infrastructure survey in support of the Nadi Integrated Flood Management Project funded by the World Bank, GEF IWRM, and AusAID through its National Action Plan Facility.

The aim of the survey was to capture major infrastructure and a relevant sample of the built environment, with particular focus on tourist facilities, government and major commercial buildings and critical facilities.

The data from the survey will be used to assist in the LiDAR survey that is being undertaken in April as part of the Nadi project. It will also be an input to the upcoming work on flood modelling.

Overall a total of 3,577 points were surveyed of which 2808 were existing points and 769 were new points.



Traditional residence of the Tui Nawaka that was assessed during the survey at Nawaka Village.

Opening of Palau National Emergency Operation Centre

Construction has been completed on the new Emergency Operation Centre for the Government of Palau at a cost of about US\$480,000.00. Funding for the building was made available by the European Union through the Disaster Risk Reduction Project (EU EDF 9 B Envelope Project) implemented by SOPAC.

The President of the Republic of Palau, His Excellency Johnson Toribiong and SOPAC Director, Dr. Russell Howorth, unveiled the plaque officially opening the building. In his opening statement Dr. Russell Howorth stated that “ the new Emergency Operation Centre will strengthen the capacity of the National Emergency Management Office prepare for and respond to natural disasters. It is important that we build community resilience to reduce the loss of human life.” The project will also equip the new building with early warning communication equipment and improve the linkage with remote communities.

In expressing the gratitude of the Government and people of Palau for the state of the art building, President Toribiong said “ the new National Emergency Management Office is very important because it will be used to provide critical information to the public during emergencies. And we are very grateful to the European Union (EU), and SOPAC/SPC for this infrastructure. We look forward to continued cooperation between EU SOPAC/ SPC and Palau on future emergency preparedness projects.”

SOPAC has also assisted the Government in developing the National Disaster Risk Management Framework (DRM) for Palau that lays out updated DRM governance arrangements and continues to support Government efforts in implementing priorities under the new Framework. In the near future support will be extended to develop and implement a Joint DRM and Climate Change Adaptation National Action Plan. This new plan or JNAP as it is now commonly referred to across the region will be a very useful mechanism for Palau to use to guide future investments in DRM and CCA.

The EU made available a total of €600,000 to the Government of Palau for disaster management through the Disaster Risk Reduction Project.



Ground Breaking Ceremony for Construction of National Emergency Operation Centre

His Excellency President Manny Mori of the Federated States of Micronesia and Director of SOPAC, Dr. Russell Howorth, officiated in the ground breaking ceremony to mark the commencement of construction of the new national Emergency Operation Center (EOC) at Palikir, the capital of the Federated States of Micronesia.

The new Emergency Operation Centre is being constructed by APSCO construction at a cost of about US\$220,000 which will assist the Office of Environment and Emergency Management in disaster preparedness and coordination. The new EOC is funded by the European Union through the Disaster Risk Reduction project (EU EDF 9 B Envelope project) implemented by SOPAC.

In his opening statement Dr. Russell Howorth, stated that “the objective is to build community resilience to reduce the risks to natural or man-made hazards. This project will also supply early warning equipment to National and State Governments including other key stakeholders to improve communication which will save lives and better coordinate relief efforts. He also said that renovation of Disaster Coordination Centres in all the States has recently been completed and assured the Government of further support “to help develop and implement a Joint National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation”.

Mr. Andrew Yatilman, Director, Office of Environment & Emergency Management, after thanking the President and other dignitaries to the ceremony, expressed his appreciation for the project highlighting the direct benefits to the country.

The European Union provides a total of €1.4 million to the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia in the area of disaster management through this project.



SOPAC Director signs Letter of Agreement with Fiji Government to strengthen Disaster Risk Management

The Director of the SOPAC Division Dr Russell Howorth and Mr Inia Seruiratu the Permanent Secretary for Provincial Development and Disaster Management signed a Letter of Agreement (LOA) to implement key priorities to strengthen disaster risk management in Fiji on 7th February, 2012.

This agreement is part of the overall effort to develop a Joint National Action Plan on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (JNAP). It was agreed between the two parties last year that the JNAP process would follow a two-pronged approach. The implementation of the priorities in the LOA is 'Phase 1' of the JNAP process.

The priorities include:

- Ongoing support for the Fiji Disaster Information Management Systems Project through the provision of training for Divisional Offices in the new Initial Damage Assessment format which the Fiji National Disaster Management Office has developed
- Ongoing implementation of the Nadi Integrated Flood Management Project which will amongst other things produce high resolution imagery to support the implementation of flood mitigation measures in the future
- Development of the National and selected Local Tsunami Response Plans
- Support for the implementation of the Suva Tsunami Response Plan
- Conduct of a feasibility study to examine the potential merger of the NDMO and National Fire Authority
- Support for the implementation of the Lami Tsunami Preparedness and Response System
- Provide GIS Training to NDMO

Funding support for this initiative is being provided under the AusAID National Action Plan Facility which is managed by SOPAC for 14 Pacific Island countries.

Suva schools participate in Tsunami Evacuation Drill

The Fiji Ministry of Education in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) jointly supported schools to develop Tsunami Emergency Evacuation plans (EEP) in line with the UNISDR campaign on “Safer Schools”. With support from partners such as SOPAC a Suva tsunami evacuation map was developed and the schools were required to test their EEP, using the Evacuation Zones indicated on the map. On Thursday 10th November, 2011 26 schools participated in the Tsunami Evacuation Drill with approximately 12,000 students and school staff.

Schools located along the coasts of the Suva peninsula include: Suva Grammar, Veiuto Primary, Draiba Primary, Fiji National University Catering School, Fiji Government Centre for Training and Development, Stellar Marist Primary, Cathedral Secondary, MGM Primary, MGM Secondary, Champgnet Primary, Marcellin Primary, Ratu Sukuna Memorial Secondary, Suva Christian, St Agnes Primary, Laucala Bay Secondary, DAV College, SSM Primary, International Primary, International Secondary, Nadera Rishikul Primary, Rishikul Primary, Rishikul College, Nasinu Secondary, John Wesley Primary, John Wesley Secondary, Vishnu Deo Primary and Suva Christian School.



Suva Grammar School students participate in tsunami drill.

The drill was based on the scenario that an earthquake had occurred in the Tonga trench and issued a tsunami wave with one hour of wave travel time to reach Suva.

Mr Iosefo Volau, Director Asset Monitoring Unit of the Ministry of Education and the exercise controller was satisfied with the overall performance of the schools, especially those that were able to reach their respective evacuation areas well before the expected time of arrival of the tsunami wave. He was thankful to partners present at the evacuation sites such as NDMO, Police, Mineral Resource Department, St John, Fiji Red Cross Society, National Fire Authority, Ministry of Health, Save the Children, SOPAC and PCIDRR.

Mr Filipe Bole, Minister of Education in addressing students at the Raghwan Park, one of the evacuation sites, reminded students to cooperate with their teachers and know their evacuation routes to ensure no one is injured should a tsunami hit the Suva peninsula. Further he encouraged students to take the tsunami evacuation message home and encourage their parents to identify their evacuation sites and conduct drills as well.

Tonga Ministry of Health staff complete internship on mosquito surveillance and control

In support of the implementation of the 2010 Tonga Joint National Action Plan on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, SOPAC Division, in collaboration with the SPC Public Health Division and the Noumea based Pasteur Institute supported two staff from the Tonga Ministry of Health to undergo a two week internship on mosquito surveillance and control from December 5th – 16th, 2011 at the Pasteur Institute.

The trainees, Ms Akata Faamoe and Mr. Uatesoni Tuangalu are from the Environmental Health Division of the Ministry of Health and are stationed at Vaiola Hospital, Nukualofa. The two were selected at a workshop on basic entomology held in Nukualofa in June, 2011.

In describing her internship experience, Ms Akata said “ I have never been exposed to routine mosquito surveillance work and the internship had provided that opportunity and I am confident that I can now go back to Tonga and start identifying mosquito species which has never been being carried out there consistently. The mosquito species were only identified by consultants who usually come on short term basis but now I am confident doing this in the long term.”

The identification of mosquito species is crucial since each carry virus for different mosquito borne diseases such as dengue fever, malaria, filariasis and many others. Mosquito borne diseases are quite common after disasters such as those caused by cyclones due to associated heavy rain fall. The rainfall fills up breeding grounds.

The knowledge gained from the internship will also enable Akata and Uatesoni to determine when to commence the introduction of control measures such as clean up campaigns to destroy breeding grounds or to use pesticides to destroy mature mosquitoes.

Akata and Uatesoni are expected to lead the establishment of the mosquito surveillance laboratory at Vaiola hospital and later at Ha’apai, Eua and Vava’u.



Mr. Laurent of the Pasteur Institute shows Uatesoni and Akata how to set up adult mosquito trap

Smart Tool Kit Workshop

The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community organised a workshop on “Use of the Smart Toolkit for Monitoring & Evaluation” at the Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi, Fiji from the 13 – 17 February 2012. The objective of the workshop was to empower 15 information professionals drawn primarily from regional, governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations to evaluate their information projects, products and services through the use of the Smart Toolkit and related resources.

The workshop was facilitated by CTA. SOPAC was represented at the workshop by Tagaloa Cooper (Ocean Islands Programme), Tiy Chung (Water and Sanitation Programme) and Fane Ravula (Disaster Reduction Programme).

The workshop exposed the participants to the fundamental theory and practice of monitoring and evaluation through short presentations, discussions, video sessions, brainstorming and group exercises.

The participants learned to effectively apply the process and tools for monitoring and evaluation of information products and services in the project cycle with planning, implementation, follow up with impact assessment and learning from it while identifying pitfalls and characteristics in their institutions.



Participants group photo.



Fane Ravula introduces Pacific Disaster Net (PDN) at the Knowledge Fair session.



Five representatives from the Pacific attend Training for Trainers on Damage Loss and Need assessments in Vienna

Assessing damage caused by natural disasters in the Pacific – a prerequisite for recovery and rehabilitation efforts – is a major challenge. To support Pacific island countries assess the economic impact of disasters, SOPAC selected four staff members and one from SPREP to attend a Training of Trainers on Damage and Loss Assessments, Post Disaster Needs Assessment and Human Recovery Needs Assessment (PDNA) held by World Bank GFDRR, United Nations Development Group with assistance from the EU-Joint Research Centre based in Brussels in Vienna, Austria.

This five day Training of Trainers was intended to build the capacity of GFDRR partner organizations and regional institutions in conducting PDNA and in providing training in post disaster assessment for their member countries. During the training, participants were introduced to the methodology for assessing damages and losses. The participants were then informed as to how these assessments can then be used to determine the needs for recovery and reconstruction, and ensuring the improved resilience of communities and countries following recovery. The training also familiarized participants with the role and relevance of partnerships between UN, EU, WB and donor agencies in supporting disaster prone countries to reduce the risk of future disasters.

This activity will be used to inform the design of a post disaster damage, loss and needs assessment framework for the Pacific Region. It is intended that once the course has been designed and funding attained that a group of experts across the Pacific will be trained who can then conduct post disaster assessments in the region and train their country counterparts.



Upcoming Events

- 5–9 March: Emergency Operations Centre and Initial Damage Assessment Training, Yap, Federated States of Micronesia
- 12–23 March: GIS for Disaster Risk Management training for Fiji Government representatives, Suva, Fiji
- 22 March: 2011-13 HFA and RFA Progress Review Process Regional Preparatory Workshop, Suva, Fiji
- 22–23 March: Initial Damage Assessment Training, Palau
- 26–30 March: Emergency Operations Centre Training, Palau
- 26–27 March: SOPAC/ GIZ mission to meet with Vanuatu NDMO and Metrological and Geohazards Department, Port Vila, Vanuatu
- 29 March – 5 April: "Water Quality Monitoring & Training", Tuvalu
- 29–31 March: PCRAFI Planning mission, Sydney, Australia
- 2–5 April: Introduction to Disaster Management and Initial Damage Assessment Training, Solomon Island College of Higher Education, Solomon Islands
- 25 April – 1 May: Emergency Operations Centre Training, Nauru
- 14–18 May: Emergency Operations Centre Training, Vanuatu
- 21 May: Initial Damage Assessment Training, Vanuatu



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