

Private Sector Engagement Helps Keep Communities Safe

Through a number of private sector engagements, Pacific governments and the private sector are working together to help save lives, boost the livelihoods of people, and benefit national economies in a region facing regular tropical cyclones, tsunamis, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

These partnerships between government and private sector are resulting in a wide range of initiatives to help build people's resilience to the impacts of climate change and disasters. These include SMS quizzes to raise public awareness about climate change and disasters, community training for disaster-resilient construction, and establishing new community-operated Food Banks. Partners in these projects are being assisted by the Pacific Risk Resilience Programme (PRRP).

The consequences of climate change and disasters are experienced by all sectors of society; private and public. All sectors therefore benefit from, and have a role to play in, responding to climate change and disaster risk management (CCDRM). This includes ensuring such risks are integrated into routine planning, budgeting and implementation of development activities. Private sector engagements that successfully harness the

combined resources of the public and private sectors can create cost-efficiencies and greater impact for public CCDRM initiatives, and also support innovative change in risk governance processes.

PRRP encourages partnerships between government, commercial enterprises and other entities as part of its focus on strengthening the ways national, sub-national and community structures and systems work together to better manage the impacts of climate change and disasters. The success of integrating CCDRM into development planning hinges on strong partnerships and relationships at all levels.

Engaging the private sector

PRRP is assisting to broker partnerships between government and the private sector. For example, to reduce risks to communities through the delivery of cost-effective services and improved accessibility to CCDRM activities, and to encourage engagement in self-regulation to either gain a competitive advantage as a 'first-mover'¹ or to reduce the incentives for Government to regulate therefore retaining market flexibility.

PRRP adopts a three-phase process to broker durable partnerships between the public and private sector, with a focus on delivering cost-effective services for CCDRM.

Phase 1: Piloting - identify parties well placed to work together, facilitate their union and, where required, provide funding to trial the relationship.

Phase 2: Researching - commit to monitor, evaluate and adapt pilot projects. Undertake targeted research to determine whether pilot projects met PRRP's private sector engagement criteria, and to understand the factors that have contributed to this success or failure.

Phase 3: Developing platforms - through the piloting and research process, establish platforms that define good-practice approaches and procedures for enabling CCDRM partnerships between private and public sector in Pacific Island communities.



Private sector businesses in Tonga are assisting Mu'a residents to build risk-resilient community halls. (Photo: MORDIT T)

¹ First-movers are initiators or the first to enter a new market or technology whereas Early Adopters are an early customer of a given company, product, or technology.

Communities can become more resilient to climate change and disasters if routine government, community and other planning takes these risks into account. This risk governance approach is delivered through a partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and international non-government organisation Live & Learn Environmental Education (LLEE), and supported by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). PRRP is being delivered in four countries: Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Private sector engagement pilots

Following are some examples of PRRP supported partnerships between the public and private sectors that are being piloted.

Banking on food security

In Fiji, PRRP is working with Awesome Adventures' volunteer programme, Vinaka Fiji, to help communities in the Yasawa Islands develop their own Food Banks to use in disasters, or as a way of earning funds for use during future disasters. The Food Banks will help ensure that these communities have a ready supply of food and water, available before, during, and after disasters.

Two-way texting campaigns

An innovative approach to awareness-raising and information-sharing on disasters has been supported by PRRP in Vanuatu and Tonga through the use of mobile phone SMS texting.

In Vanuatu two successful disaster-awareness text message quizzes were undertaken through a partnership between the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), Department of Education and Digicel Vanuatu. The first quiz on climate awareness in October 2014 received 30,000 entries. The second quiz in January 2015 coincided with cyclone season and attracted more than 122,000 entries. A third SMS campaign was initiated in the immediate aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Pam, at the request of the government's NDMO and Food Security and Agriculture Cluster. More than 160,000 public-awareness SMS texts were sent to assess post-disaster food security

and encourage people to start planting again plus save any damaged crops, and look after their livestock.

Multi-purpose community halls

The building and refurbishment of disaster-resilient community halls on Tonga's 'Eua Island was the result of a partnership, supported by PRRP, between the Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovation Tonga Trust (MORDI TT) and several business partners. Nukualofa-based engineering company ITS Pacific, with support from supplier Pacific Timber and Hardware (PTH), worked alongside and trained community members in the design and construction of international standard, cyclone-proof, multi-purpose community halls that double as evacuation centres.

Encouraging risk-resilient infrastructure

PRRP is also helping to link private sector construction and engineering firms in the Solomon Islands, that integrate climate change and disaster risks into their design and processes, with government agencies. PRRP is helping facilitate dialogue between the Ministry of Infrastructure Development and local private sector construction and engineering firms through the Solomon Islands Built Environment Practitioners Association.



Signing the public private partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the SMS Quiz are Digicel's Ronan McGrane, National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) Director Leveni 'Aho and Tonga Meteorological Office's Ofa Fa'anunu. (Photo : NEMO)

For more information contact:

Pacific Risk Resilience Programme (PRRP), UNDP Pacific Centre by

Mail: Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji

Email: prrp@undp.org

Phone: (+679) 330 0399

UNDP website: www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/ourwork/crisispreventionandrecovery/in_depth/PRRP/