



USAID
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THE COASTAL
COMMUNITY
ADAPTATION PROJECT

C-CAP NEWSLETTER

*Helping Pacific
Island Communities
Adapt to a
Changing Climate*
January 2015

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Gender & Climate Change: *Addressing the Needs of the Most Vulnerable*

It is well established that climate change affects nations in different ways—some experience rising temperatures and increased drought conditions while others face extreme weather events and floods. For many reasons—geography, topography, economy—Pacific Island nations are more vulnerable to climate-related events than larger, more developed nations. And, within these more vulnerable island nations, women face greater impacts from climate change than their male counterparts. Understanding and addressing gender-related climate issues is an important component in developing climate adaptation strategies that respond to the disparate impacts on women.

In Pacific village communities, women generally shoulder the greater responsibility for household activities such as food production and preparation, gathering fresh water and fuel for household use, and making traditional handicrafts. They are also more likely to be primary caregivers for the sick, children, the elderly, and those with disabilities. Some of the most devastating impacts of climate change affect



SIGN ON THE LINE: C-CAP ensures that community agreements include the signature of women’s group representatives, in Buariki, Kiribati. *Photo by C-CAP*

these activities most—drought makes water collection more difficult, if not impossible, and kills indigenous trees and plants used for community gardens and weaving handicrafts; flooding also washes away community gardens, and forces evacuation of vulnerable members of the community; increased

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intensity of storms destroys medical facilities and hospitals where sick infants and the elderly are treated. In some instances, the need to go further from home for collection of fresh water puts women and girls at greater risk of sexual violence.

While women are more negatively affected by climate change, they are often traditionally less likely to have input into decisions regarding the community response to such impacts. While some communities have matrilineal leadership models, decision-making in many traditional communities is often still in the hands of predominantly male village leaders, councils and heads of households. However, there is a growing understanding that for climate change adaptation projects to be successful, the needs of all community members, especially women and the more vulnerable

members must be accounted for and become an integral part of the adaptation strategies.

From its inception, USAID/C-CAP has designed the community-based risk assessment process to actively bring all segments of the community together and to seek input from all groups to come up with climate change risk analysis and adaptation planning tailored to the community's needs. C-CAP has completed risk and asset mapping activities in 77 communities in nine countries thus far, and in all of these, women have taken active roles in identifying the areas that are most affected by the impacts of climate change. To ensure that women feel comfortable in speaking freely, they often meet as a group apart from the men, but later come together with the community as a whole to present their findings. Often, it is the women's insight that informs the decision

on which adaptation project takes priority.

In Fiji, the village of Vunisavisavi identified coastline erosion as one of the greatest risks to the community, and came up with several options to address this, but it was the proposal put forth by the women's group to move households further away from the coast that was ultimately accepted as the adaptation method for the village. In Kiribati, the women of Buariki identified increased incidence of waterborne diseases like diarrhea in infants and the elderly as their greatest risk resulting in the community decision to build a weather-resistant medical aid clinic.

The design of the C-CAP program allows all voices to be heard and solutions found to build the entire community's resilience to the adverse effects of climate change.

Photos by C-CAP

Partnerships & Collaboration in Disaster Management

According to a United Nations [report](#), countries in Asia Pacific faced damages caused by natural disasters costing approximately \$60 billion in 2014. The report emphasized the role that innovative technologies such as global positioning systems (GPS) play in alerting populations to impending disasters and in assessing damages to lives and property in their aftermath. However, for the island nations of the Pacific, GPS technology is not widely available and establishing effective communication remains an issue in reaching and providing aid to people on isolated atoll islands before and after a disaster hits.

USAID/C-CAP is working with communities to enable them to prepare for, cope with, and adapt to future climate-related disasters by facilitating adaptation measures to reduce the impacts of these events and build long-term resilience to climate change. The programs being implemented by C-CAP bring disaster planning to communities that are remote and generally do not have sophisticated technology at their disposal.

“Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Disaster Risk Management



DRR PLANNING: PNG community mobilizer discusses DRR plans of partner communities with a representative of the PNG National Disaster Center.

Photo by C-CAP



TAKING NO RISKS: Disaster Risk Management committee for C-CAP partner community in New Ireland Province, Papua New Guinea.

Photo by C-CAP

(DRM) are becoming increasingly more important as climate change is expected to result in more frequent and severe hazards in the future. It is also expected to increase people’s vulnerability, resulting in ever more disasters,” said C-CAP Senior Technical Advisor Jeremy Cole.

C-CAP initiated multiple DRR activities with its partner communities in 2014 and will continue to expand these activities this year, to assist coastal communities in strengthening disaster management by identifying risk reduction opportunities, developing disaster management plans, and engaging with local and national government stakeholders to implement disaster management strategies.

In New Ireland Province, Papua New Guinea, C-CAP worked with local government officials, ward councilors, and community members to establish a Disaster Risk Management Committee to develop plans and strategies to prepare for disasters and to be the first point of contact in organizing local assistance and to assess property damage or casualties to authorities in the event of a disaster.

To date, C-CAP has assisted in drafting disaster risk and response plans for 34 communities, and is expected to provide plans for an additional 33 communities by the end of 2015. The draft plans developed with each community will be consolidated by C-CAP and shared with relevant government departments and relevant organizations so that they can be finalized and presented back to the communities. Collaboration with national and subnational stakeholders in disaster risk management is crucial for these plans to be effective and recognized by the government bodies and relevant authorities.

“The final step is for C-CAP and its partner communities to organize a community management drill day. Country mobilizers have already established links with relevant government disaster management offices and emergency support services to ensure their involvement in the drill days,” said Cole.

The ‘drill day’ consists of simulating different types of disasters and evaluating stages of preparedness, warning and response by the communities.



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Around the Pacific

USAID assistance in the Pacific region supports programs that mitigate the negative impacts of global climate change and environmental degradation. USAID has a growing portfolio of climate change-related projects. This regular feature of the C-CAP Newsletter captures some additional highlights from other USAID projects to provide readers a broad perspective of how USAID is supporting healthy environments and addressing climate change needs in the region.

SPREP-USAID Project supports 'Tamana' pump community training

The village of Takarano is north of the island of Abaiang in Kiribati, with a population of 71 households (2010 Census). Addressing water needs is a national and community priority, with many households relying on water from open wells which are often at risk of contamination from poor sanitation and other human activities. Climate change adds to the problem, resulting in reduced water supply or salination of the ground water from rising sea levels.

The [SPREP-USAID](#) project is implemented in collaboration with the

USAID/C-CAP is a participant in the Kiribati-Whole-of-Island approach, working towards **increasing resilience** as an integral part of local development plans in collaboration with multiple partners who support

implementation and monitoring. This article highlights such collaborative activities with partner participant Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in a project funded by USAID.

Ministry of Public Works and Utility (MPWU) and Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development targeting water security at the household level with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Five villages on Abaiang have been selected with Takarano as the first to

undergo training in the operation and maintenance of the tamana pump. The locally designed pump is simple to operate and reduces contamination by allowing pumping from closed wells. Sixty households of Takarano have been selected, based on water assessments conducted by the SPREP-USAID National Project Coordinator and MPWU, to receive tamana pumps through the project.



BRINGING THE PIECES TOGETHER: Community members assemble components of the tamana pump at Takarano, Kiribati.

Photo by Azarel Maiai/SPREP

“The training is the first phase of implementation, focusing on building capacities of households to operate and maintain their pumps and consequently strengthening community ownership and project sustainability,” said Azarel Maiai, SPREP-USAID Climate Change Technical Officer. The training was supported with funding from USAID and implemented by MPWU, Kiribati Water and Sanitation for Outer Islands (KIRIWATSAN) and SPREP.

The two-day workshop was attended by 60 members from Takarano village. SPREP-USAID will conduct similar training for the remaining project sites on Abaiang.

For further information about C-CAP and other USAID Pacific Islands projects visit www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands

ADAPTATION IN MOTION

CHECKING WITH C-CAP COMMUNITIES: KIRIBATI, SAMOA, TONGA AND VANUATU

In this periodic series, the C-CAP team checks in on partner communities that are navigating long-term climate change adaptation.

In Kiribati... USAID/C-CAP is strengthening collaboration with stakeholders by conducting Disaster Risk Reduction and Response (DRR) workshops with government ministries and nongovernment organizations and completing the DRR plans for communities in Abaiang and North Tarawa. These workshops and resulting plans will give the communities better preparation in times of disasters. In addition, community agreements have been signed to install 21 new water tanks in conjunction with Abaiang's "Whole-Of-



MAKING IT WORK: Landowner in Evena, Kiribati signs agreement authorizing construction of climate-resilient infrastructure.

Photo by C-CAP



IN COLLABORATION: Project representatives and communities in Tonga discuss climate effects and identifying priority climate-resilient project.

Photo by C-CAP

Island-Approach," and two medical aid centers in North Tarawa identified by the C-CAP partner communities as priority climate resilient projects.

In Samoa... In a collaborative outreach initiative USAID/C-CAP, SPREP-USAID and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) set up community awareness sign boards on Tanu Beach Fales in Manase, Samoa. The sign boards are designed to encourage the community and tourists to protect the vegetative beach cover when accessing and using this busy tourist beach. This outreach activity also supports the C-CAP shoreline protection project for the Manase community anticipated to be completed by end of February.

In Tonga... During the USAID/C-CAP-facilitated Climate Change Risk and Asset mapping activities, three partner communi-

ties in Tonga identified the need for strengthening evacuation centers as their priority due to the communities' vulnerability to cyclones. Renovation work has started on rehabilitation of two existing evacuation centers in Nukuleka and Tatakamotonga and work has commenced in building a new evacuation center in Popua.

In Vanuatu... USAID/C-CAP has completed the Climate Change Risk and Asset mapping activities in ten communities—seven identified water security as their main concern, two focused on building evacuation centers and one determined that the community would benefit most from a weather-resilient medical aid clinic. With the assistance and support from the US Government through C-CAP, these partner communities and project engineers have identified sites for these climate resilient infrastructures and have begun the process of designing the site-specific projects.

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