



PACIFIC ISLANDS APPLIED GEOSCIENCE COMMISSION

**Disaster Risk Management National Action Plan Workshop for  
Members of Parliament, Majuro, Republic of Marshall Islands  
27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

*SOPAC Trip Report 477*

**Mosese Sikivou**

*Community Risk Programme*

## **BACKGROUND**

The Community Risk Programme participated in a joint mission to RMI with the UNDP to facilitate a UNDP-funded workshop for Members of Parliament in RMI as part of UNDP's assistance to RMI under a *Support to Parliament Project*. The workshop was designed to enhance the understanding of disaster risk management amongst Members of Parliament or *Nitijela*, and specifically to acquaint them with the DRM National Action Plan for RMI (NAP) and to obtain their support for its implementation.<sup>1</sup>

The representatives of SOPAC and UNDP on the mission were:

- Mosese Sikivou, Manager CRP
- Moortaza Jiwani, DRM Advisor, UNDP Pacific Centre

## **WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES**

- To inform Honorable Members of the Nitijela of the Disaster Risk Management National Action Plan.
- To discuss the role of the Nitijela in relation to the implementation of the NAP.

## **BRIEF SUMMARY**

A DRM workshop was held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009 for the Members of Parliament in RMI (see Annex 1 for the workshop programme) organised jointly by the UNDP and SOPAC. The workshop also had the active involvement of the RMI NAP Task Force which had been established in December 2006 with the express purpose of leading the development and implementation of the NAP. The participating members of the NAP Task Force were:

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<sup>1</sup> The DRM briefing for Parliamentarians is in itself a specific 'Objective/Action' under the RMI NAP.

- Jorelik Tibon, Deputy Chief Secretary
- Reginald White, Director National Weather Service
- Yumi Crisostomo, Director Office of Environmental Policy & Planning
- Wilbur Heine, Secretary for Internal Affairs
- Clement Capelle, Director National Emergency Management & Coordination Office

A list of participants is at Annex 2.

SOPAC and the UNDP played a supporting technical role during the workshop and provided the Members of Parliament with an understanding of the global and regional policy context for DRM as well as providing the rationale in terms of the importance of DRM to sustainable national development. Following this short introduction the NAP Task Force then took the lead and provided participants with a comprehensive run-through of the NAP and in particular of the 10 Goals under it. This session by the NAP Task Force was conducted in Marshallese as were the 'Q&A' sessions with participants that ensued. It was encouraging to see the NAP Task Force take charge of the workshop and this bodes well for the future implementation of the NAP.

The NAP was endorsed by the *Nitijela* and the next step is for it to be formally presented to Cabinet for approval. Suffice to say that since most members of Cabinet were present (including HE the President) it is highly probable that the NAP will receive Cabinet approval at its next meeting on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February.

## ISSUES EMERGING

As representatives of their communities, Senators (and some Ministers) raised a number of DRM priorities within the communities they represented and acknowledgment was given to the fact that the NAP reflected these as follows:

- Early Warning and Communication relating to Disasters
- Water security
- The need for building codes and planning

Specific questions were also raised on the implementation strategy for the NAP, revolving around:

- Time-Frame
- Funding

## RESOURCES

RMI National Action Plan (obtainable from Mosese)

## OTHER MEETINGS

The opportunity was taken during the mission to conduct additional meetings as follows:

### **Casten Nemra, Chief Secretary: 9.00am – Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January (Mosese)**

Discussions were on the Parliamentary workshop, NAP implementation and the May 2009 meeting of the Pacific Platform for DRM.

The Chief Secretary was very encouraged by the support of the Nitijela for the NAP and he looked forward to working with Members on NAP implementation particularly for those Actions that are to address community needs. He reiterated the sentiments expressed by the Nitijela about the importance on on-going support from SOPAC, UNDP and other Partners for the NAP and was grateful for the support provided thus far.

### **NAP Task Force: 12.00noon - Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January (Mosese/Moortaza)**

This meeting discussed the following

#### 1. Debrief of Parliamentary Workshop on the NAP (All)

*The Task Force was quite pleased with the outcome of the workshop and that the Parliamentarians were very interested and had pledged support. The Task Force resolved to be proactive about involving MPs wherever and whenever possible to assist with NAP implementation particularly at local government and community level.*

*They acknowledged that there was a need for continuous updating and reporting on NAP progress to the Nitijela and to Cabinet and resolved to do this with greater commitment.*

#### 2. UNDP Pilot Project on Local Level/Community DRM in line with the NAP (Moortaza)

*The Task Force was advised that funds had been assigned for this project and that Stephanie Zoll was going to the UNDP PC focal point given her experience in similar projects. The project will have 1-year duration and will include the recruitment of an RMI local to assist with implementation on the ground.*

#### 3. NAP Implementation Programme: Priorities for 2009/10 (Mosese/Moortaza)

*The Task Force decided to review the priorities agreed in 2007 but to first of all undertake a stock-take of progress of implementation up to January 31<sup>st</sup> 2009. SOPAC and UNDP are to assist with this. The stock-take report will be submitted to Cabinet and the Nitijela as the first NAP progress report.*

*Following the completion of the NAP update the Task Force will use this to help set the 2009 priorities on a quarterly basis. This will be communicated to CRP for the purpose of setting a NAP implementation budget using funds available to CRP – under the AusAID NAP Facility and ACP/EU Natural Disaster Facility.*

#### 4. Review of National DRM Arrangements (Mosese)

*The Task Force agreed to finalise the draft arrangements shortly and submit to the National Disaster Committee and to Cabinet for endorsement and approval respectively. Prior to this SOPAC is to consider a return visit by the consultant (Alan Mearns) to assist in a 'refresher' for the NAP Task Force and the NDC.*

#### 5. Disaster Assessments for the Swells in December 2008 (Mosese)

*In relation to 5, RMI has not yet finalised damage assessment reports in relation to the heavy swells they experienced in December last year. A preliminary report however produced by the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was presented to Cabinet on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January. This report will be made available to SOPAC and UNDP as soon as possible. Jorelik Tibon will follow upon this.*

*The delay in issuance of damage assessment reports is of concern. UN-OCHA through its Suva office is seeking to strengthen UN-OCHA support to the PICs in the north to help address these and other related issues in terms of the Governments' response to disasters. They are pursuing this through the UNDP Country Development Manager for RMI, Jane Ishiguro.*

### **FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS**

- Obtain formal Cabinet decision on the NAP from Chief Secretary's Office.
- Finalise NAP implementation programme for 2009/10 with NAP Task Force and commence implementation support with other partners/donors.
- Assist NAP Task Force with an update report of NAP implementation.
- Arrange follow up 'refresher' for the Task Force and National Disaster Committee on the draft National DRM Arrangements.

## Annex 1 – Workshop Programme



### Disaster Risk Management Workshop for Members of Parliament (Nitijela)

Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> January

#### Session 1

MC: Joe E. Riklon, Clerk

9:00 – 9:05 am

Opening Prayer: Rev. Enja Enos

9:05 – 9:15 am

Opening Remarks: Hon. Speaker Jurelang Zedkaia

9:15 – 9:30 am

Statement by: Hon. Christopher J. Loeak Minister in Assistance to the President

9:30 – 10:00 am

Intended Outputs of Workshop  
(Presenter: Chief Secretary – Casten Nemra)

10:00 – 10:30 am

**TEA BREAK**

#### Session 2

10:30 – 11:15 am

Rationale for Disaster Risk Management & Global and Regional Context  
(Presenter: SOPAC/UNDP)

11:15 am – 12:00 noon

National Context, the DRM National Action Plan & Implementation  
(Presenter: NAP Task Force)

12:00 – 1:15 pm

**LUNCH**

#### Session 3

1:15 – 3:00 pm

Discussion: Role of MPs in NAP Implementation

3:00 pm

Closing & Group Photo

3:15 pm

AFTERNOON TEA

## **Annex 2 – Workshop Participants**

### **NAP WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:**

Thursday, 29 January 2009

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

#### **Members of Parliament:**

1. His Excellency President Litokwa Tomeing (Wotje Atoll)
2. Speaker Jurelang Zedkaia (Majuro Atoll)
3. Minister in Assistance to the President, Christopher J. Loeak (Ailinglaplap Atoll)
4. Minister Fredrick Muller, Resources & Development (Ujae Atoll)
5. Minister Jack Ading, Finance (Enewetak Atoll)
6. Minister Kejjo Bien, Public Works (Mili Atoll)
7. Minister Norman Matthew, Internal Affairs (Aur Atoll)
8. Minister Amenta Matthew, Health (Utrik Atoll)
9. Minister Dennis Momotaro, Transportation & Communications (Mejit Island)
10. Senator Jeban Riklon (Kwajalein Atoll)
11. Senator Michael Kabua (Kwajalein Atoll)
12. Senator Jerakoj Bejang (Lib Island)
13. Senator Kenneth Kedi (Rongelap Atoll)
14. Senator Maynard Alfred (Ailuk)
15. Senator Alvin Jacklick (Jaluit Atoll)
16. Senator Ruben R. Zackhras (Ailinglaplap Atoll)
17. Senator Kaiboke J. Kabua (Namu Atoll)
18. Senator Wilfred I. Kendall (Majuro Atoll)
19. Senator Tomaki Juda (Kili/Bikini/Ejit)
20. Senator Donald F. Capelle (Likiep Atoll)
21. Senator Rellong D. Lemari (Lae Atoll)
22. Senator David Kaba (Wotho)

#### **Members of the Chief Secretary's Office/Task Force - Disaster:**

23. Casten Nemra, Chief Secretary
24. Jorelik Tibon, Deputy Chief

25. Clement Capelle, Disaster
26. Yumi Crisistomo, Director OEPPC
27. Reginald White, Weather Station (Meteorologist-In-Charge
28. Wilbur Heine, Secretary of Internal Affairs

**UNDP/ SOPAC:**

29. Mosese Sikivou, SOPAC
30. Moortaza Jiwani, UNDP Disaster Risk Management Advisor
31. Jane Ishiguro, RMI's UNFPA Country Development Manager (CDM) for RMI

**Parliament Staff:**

32. Joe Riklon, Parliament Clerk
33. Lena E. Tiobech, Assistant Clerk
34. Divine Waite, Legislative Counsel
35. Atalina Langidrik, Page
36. Tomomi Motellang, Chief Journal
37. Marina Lanwi, Page
38. Disve Riklon, Executive Secretary
39. Bernice Joash, Interim UNDP
40. Cathy Ralpho, Legal Clerk
41. Terry Nemra, Fiscal Officer
42. Tatios Anjolak, C. Officer
43. Robil Clary, Sergeant-at-Arms
44. Mela Rena, Page
45. Pearl Anien, Law Librarian
46. Lucy Anrak, Receptionist
47. Retty Biamon, Page
48. Meltina Abner, Page
49. Albert Robe, Adm. Assistant
50. Gladys Lang, Journal Clerk
51. Irene Henson, Custodian
52. Libby Henry, Translator
53. Varina Kabua, Journal Clerk