

PACAM NEWSLETTER

Communities Celebrate New Projects



Left photo: Representatives from USAID and PACAM join CARE International in Vanuatu for the project launch. Above photo: Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby Joel Maybury congratulates Rigo District Development Authority Chief Executive Officer Raga Magini, and ChildFund PNG Country Director Manish Joshi. Below photo: USAID officials with the community beneficiary of Rigo District in PNG's Central Province. Photos © PACAM

The U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Pacific-American Climate Fund (PACAM) recently launched two projects to increase small islands' climate-resilience in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Vanuatu.

On January 26, PACAM awarded a grant of \$516,000 to CARE International in Vanuatu to implement the project *We're Ready for Climate Change: Increasing Small Islands' Resilience to Climate Change in Vanuatu*. The project will help communities apply climate resilient agricultural practices, improve water resource management and food preservation techniques, train teachers to incorporate climate change awareness into school curricula, and assist community leaders and provincial government to implement development plans addressing climate risks.

On March 3, PACAM awarded a grant to ChildFund PNG to implement *Adaptive, Resilient, and Productive Agriculture in*



PNG. Through PACAM's grant of \$496,045, ChildFund PNG will enhance indigenous farming practices, introduce new soil and water management techniques, and promote resilient varieties of local crops; thus, improving the local food security of climate-vulnerable communities in PNG.

At the ChildFund PNG project launch ceremony, the Deputy Chief of Mis-

sion at the U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby Joel Maybury highlighted similarities between drought conditions in his home state of California and that of PNG. He added, "The initiative we are launching today further strengthens the strong bond between the American people and the people of Papua New Guinea by looking for solutions to our shared challenge of global climate change."♦

IN ACTION | Project Updates from the Islands

GeoJournalism: First of Its Kind Workshop on Climate Change Reporting in the Pacific

Apia, Samoa — Internews-Earth Journalism Network (EJN) recently held the first of its kind Pacific GeoJournalism workshop in Apia, Samoa. The workshop was designed to equip local journalists with the skills and knowledge to improve their coverage of climate change and natural resource management.

The two-day workshop was attended by a dozen practicing journalists from TV, print, and online media outlets; journalism students from the National University of Samoa also attended.

During the opening ceremony, Secretary of the Pacific's Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Director for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management Stuart Chape noted the value of journalists in community outreach and in building greater awareness of climate change impacts and adaptation. United States *Chargé d'Affaires* Angelina Wilkinson and Pacific-American Climate Fund Chief of Party Peter Collier also reiterated the commitment of the United States government to working with Pacific Island journalists on improving climate change reporting.

Topics discussed included the science of climate change, best practices for climate journalism, and how to link climate change issues to the day-to-day life of



Left photo: Internews-Earth Journalism Network Executive Director James Fahn facilitating a workshop on climate change reporting. Right photo: Samoan journalist participants interviewing the manager of the Palolo Deep Marine Reserve as part of the GeoJournalism workshop. Photos © Internews-Earth Journalism Network



local communities.

The classroom session on day one was followed by a field visit to Palolo Deep Marine Reserve on day two. During the field visit, journalists were briefed on how global issues such as ocean acidification and sea level rise are impacting the natural resources in their own communities. They also had an opportunity to interview the family who manages the reserve, and hear their first-hand account of the changes to the reserve they have witnessed as a result of climate change.

EJN Executive Director James Fahn then led a discussion where journalists

broke down the issues surrounding the marine reserve story and strategized the approaches they could take in covering it, including the many different angles they could use – from business to politics to culture.

Vatapuia Maiava of the *Samoa Observer* newspaper noted that the workshop, “not only helped me learn about climate change but how to do journalism in general, to break down stories, and look for different angles.”

The Earth Journalism Network will also award small grants for individual journalists in the Pacific region to pursue climate change stories. ♦

EMPOWERING VILLAGE WATER COMMITTEES IN KIRIBATI



Community members learning to analyze their water source options. © Institute for Sustainable Futures University of Technology Sydney

The Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney and the Kiribati Climate Action Network held a series of water supply and adaptation planning workshops from March 11 to 16. The participants included members of Village Water Committees on the outer islands of the water-scarce Pacific Island nation of Kiribati. The practice-based workshops trained 65 villagers (23 female, 42 male) to identify triggers and define specific water-related adaptation strategies. The training also accommodated young people who requested to attend so they could learn about adapting to water shortages. In Kiribati, wells that supply water are increasingly affected by saltwater intrusion due to high tides, sea level rise, and the increased frequency of storms and tropical cyclones. This makes the water unfit for people to drink, severely impacting health and well-being. The workshops were under USAID's *Supporting Community Adaptation to Water Shortages in Kiribati* project. ♦

IN ACTION | Project Updates from the Islands

Post-Tropical Cyclone Winston, Fiji Grantees Tackle Damage Assessment and Disaster Response

In the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Winston, grantees in Fiji were actively involved in damage assessment and disaster response.

The University of Fiji had developed pre-cyclone maps of the Yasawa Group of Islands in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community-Geoscience Division. Due to the severity and scale of damages sustained, there was a huge demand for pre-cyclone maps which were then compared with post-cyclone aerial images captured by the Australian and New Zealand Air Forces. The results of comparison is a map that shows the scale of infrastructure damages through the cyclone's path. Through USAID's *Developing Base Maps of Tropical Aquatic Resources in the Pacific* project, the Pacific-American Climate Fund is helping the University of Fiji to use Geographic Information System (GIS) technology in mapping and monitoring the reefs surrounding Votua Ba and the Maui Bay on the Fijian island of Viti Levu. This project will increase the capacity of the Fijian government and the communities to protect their coastal and marine resources for the future.

Meanwhile, World Wide Fund (WWF)-Pacific, which is implementing USAID's *Strengthening Governance and Resource Management for Climate-Resilient Communities in Fiji*, launched disaster relief operations. This was part of a long-term recovery response program to help community members rehabilitate farming-related livelihoods post-TCW and further,



Fijian government's relief operation in the wake of the destructive cyclone. Photo © Government of Fiji

enhance their resiliency to future disasters. WWF-Pacific's relief rations included garden packs containing vegetable seedlings in addition to the standard food, water, and shelter pack. PACAM is supporting WWF-Pacific to improve management of threatened ecosystems and the services they provide for the communities in the Ba Province of Fiji, an area heavily impacted by the cyclone. The project will help farmers integrate climate resiliency into their farming practice and livelihood support system. The communities will also benefit from the application of agriculture best practices and standards for food security through this project. ♦



Left: GIS training for University of Fiji in late 2015. Photo © University of Fiji; Right: Loading ration packs into trucks in the WWF-Pacific office in Fiji. Photo © WWF-Pacific



“Know Your Soil”: Villagers Learn Climate-Smart Land Use in Micronesia

The College of Micronesia-Federated States of Micronesia recently held “Know Your Soil” sustainable soil management trainings in four villages on Yap, reaching 40 community members and their families. About 24 percent of upland soils on the island of Yap are degraded and are at much greater risk from the damaging impacts of climate change. Degraded soils are vulnerable due to serious losses of soil organic matter and soil biodiversity, greater soil compaction, and increased rates of soil erosion. Soil management practices will help enrich the soil and make it possible to grow food, among other benefits. PACAM is supporting the College of Micronesia-FSM to help make communities more resilient through climate-smart agriculture strategies, water harvesting techniques and water conservation, and sustainable soil management. ♦



Villagers and their families learning sustainable soil management on the island of Yap. Photo © College of Micronesia-Federated States of Micronesia

SPOTLIGHT: Partners' Profile

Q & A

*PACAM Regional Manager Lara Studzinski's conversation with Simon Ellis, Director of the **Marine and Environmental Research Institute of Pohnpei (MERIP)** in the Federated States of Micronesia*

Lara: *What is the mission and vision of MERIP?*

Simon: Our mission is to support environmentally and economically viable businesses through technical partnership and research. We want to see ecologically sustainable Pacific Island businesses that are engaged in community-based conservation and [sustainable management of] natural resources.

Lara: *How does MERIP help communities adapt to climate change through the work you're doing with PACAM?*

Simon: One of the main problems we have in Pohnpei is decreasing fisheries. Under the effect of climate change, these fisheries are expected to decrease quite severely in the coming years. We also face increasing pressure on the environment from overfishing. We primarily get people in the fishing community to engage in aquaculture in the hope that they will eventually be able to replace or supplement their income from fishing. Also, Pohnpei has very high rainfall. Many people are growing *sakau* — a traditional root which is drunk here — in

the upland of Pohnpei. The *sakau* is grown more in a slash and burn-type agriculture; because of that, you get sedimentation from the very heavy rainfall. By also engaging people working in the uplands, we hope to reduce sedimentation in the lagoon and thereby help the fisheries as well.

Lara: *Please tell us about some of the successes the project has had so far.*

Simon: We now have 16 farmers working with us on our first year. The number of products that we export has increased significantly: from 22,300 farmed corals in 2014 to roughly 28,250 in 2015 — a 20-25 percent increase. The giant clam grow-out program that we've introduced to the farmers shows a lot of promise.

Lara: *How has the PACAM grant helped MERIP?*

Simon: The grant builds the capacity of MERIP to be an outreach organization, which is very useful for us long-term as a nongovernmental organization. In addition, PACAM gave us a leg-up in piloting and introducing fish farming to Pohnpei, something entirely new for us and the communities here. ♦



With the PACAM grant, the number of farmed corals that MERIP exported has increased significantly: from 22,300 farmed corals in 2014 to roughly 28,250 in 2015, or a 20-25 percent increase. As MERIP engages more farmers, a higher percentage of the corals exported are also grown by farmers. The PACAM grant also helped MERIP pilot and introduce fish farming to the communities they work with in the Federated States of Micronesia. Photo © MERIP

ABOUT THE FUND

The Pacific-American Climate Fund (PACAM), is a grant-making facility funded by the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and administered by Partners for Global Research and Development, LLC (PGRD) that assists 12 Pacific Island countries to reduce long-term vulnerabilities associated with climate change. PACAM awards grants to civil society organizations in support of climate change adaptation measures and related “co-benefits”, such as livelihoods enhancement, improved health, food security, disaster risk reduction, or sustainable natural resources management.

In addition to building climate resiliency, the Pacific-American Climate Fund, through the awarded grants, will assist in strengthening the managerial and financial capacity of civil society organizations. The countries in which PACAM operates are: Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

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