

Development of Climate Resilience Strategies in Honiara, Solomon Islands

With support from Development Account, UN-Habitat has kick-started an urban climate change resilience programme focusing on capacity development of local authorities and other key urban stakeholders in the Pacific. The capacity development assistance provided to the Solomon Islands resulted in the development of an urban resilience and climate action plan. Based on this plan, a pilot initiative which supports two informal settlement communities in developing resilient water and sanitation facilities as prioritized by the communities is now being funded by a donor government.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific, such as the Solomon Islands, have suffered from the disastrous effects of natural hazards, such as earthquakes and tsunamis, and are among the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change.

Most of the vulnerability and adaptation work that has been undertaken in this area has, to date, however, predominately focused on rural or remote areas with emphasis being placed on island ecosystems and traditional subsistence based livelihood options, and with lesser attention having been paid to urban areas.

UN-Habitat capacity development efforts supported through the Development Account

With support from the 7th tranche Development Account *Capacity development for cities in Asia and the Pacific to increase resilience to climate change impacts (1011AN)* project, UN-Habitat launched an urban climate change resilience programme focusing on capacity development of local authorities and other key urban stakeholders in the Pacific.

Following up on this initiative, UN-Habitat implemented the *Capacity Development to increase Asian and Pacific Cities' Resilience to Climate Change (1213AU)* project under the 8th tranche of the Development Account with the aim of enhancing the capacities of local and national governments in the Asia-Pacific Region to build climate change resilient human settlements. Through this project, as well as through its Pacific Cities and Climate Change Initiative, UN-Habitat has assisted the

Government of the Solomon Islands with its climate resilience efforts since 2013.

Honiara Urban Resilience and Climate Action Plan

In Honiara, the capital city of the Solomon Islands, exposure to natural hazards such as river flooding, storm surges and landslides has been compounded by sensitivity to external shocks and stresses due to existing deficits in urban infrastructure, housing and service provision. These deficits have resulted from rapid and unplanned urbanization and the associated growth of informal settlements, inadequate infrastructure and poor access to basic services in many areas, issues related to land tenure particularly in peri-urban areas, and weak governance and institutional structures for protection of the urban environment.

At the request of the Honiara City Council, UN-Habitat supported the development of the comprehensive Honiara Urban Resilience and Climate Action Plan. The stakeholders, including some 30 community representatives from informal settlements, all participated in consultations and in developing priority actions. The plan was finalized for full endorsement before the end of 2016. The strong partnership between communities, local government and national government ensured that local climate considerations are being mainstreamed into ongoing initiatives.

Based on the Honiara Urban Resilience and Climate Action Plan other projects have been developed, including the Government of

Sweden-funded pilot initiative which supports two informal settlement communities in developing resilient water and sanitation facilities as prioritized by the communities.

“Honiara City Council’s partnership with UN-Habitat in the development of the Honiara Urban Resilience and Climate Action Plan has been very rewarding in terms of fully understanding the vulnerabilities of the city and

in particular the communities in the informal settlements which are prone to flooding, landslides as well as diseases that are made worse by climate change. We have already taken some action and are committed to fully implement the Resilience Action Plan with the support of UN-Habitat and other partners.”

- Deputy Mayor of Honiara and City Climate Change and Resilience focal point