

# Niue Country Brief



## Project Site Activities

Three village communities have been identified as priority areas for Niue, resulting from the Participatory Needs Analysis in December 2020. These villages are Alofi North, Namukulu, and Toi. Neither are without community development plans. Before these findings, a key document was the Joint National Action Plan on Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change 2012. Momentum for its revision commenced in 2019 but came to a halt in 2020 with the Climate Change Officer relocating to New Zealand. Assistance, however, for its progression is formidable via the Green Climate Fund managed by Project Manager Ann Marie Aholima and Director for Niue's Project Management Coordination Unit Felicia Pihigia Talagi.

### Progress

| Activities                               | Status |           |
|--|--------|-----------|
| Desktop Review                           | ✓      | Completed |
| Stakeholder Consultation – PNA Report    | ✓      | Completed |
| Outreach and Awareness Raising           | ✓      | On-going  |
| Identification of Change Agents          | ✓      | On-going  |
| Consultation with Ministries             | ✓      | On-going  |
| Identification of Training Needs         | ✓      | Completed |
| Training as per the identified need      | ✓      | On-going  |
| Identification of local development plan | ✓      | Completed |
| Implementation of development plans      | •      | Initiated |

| Outreach Activities | Status |   |
|---------------------|--------|---|
| Radio show          | ✓      | Fortnightly – English & Niuean          |
| Annual newsletter   | ✓      | Dec 20 completed; July 21 (in progress) |

|                       |   |           |
|-----------------------|---|-----------|
| Climate change videos | ✓ | Completed |
| Radio audio ad        | ✓ | Completed |

| Capacity Building          | Status |   |
|----------------------------|--------|---|
| Training and Assessment    | ✓      | 2 x Niueans completed – Nov 2019 (incl RCO) |
| Cert IV in Resilience      | ✓      | 12 Niueans completed – Sep 2020 (incl RCO)  |
| Village Competency Modules | •      | Initiated                                   |
| Train the trainer (RCO)    | •      | Initiated                                   |

## Government Ministry Consultations

An in-country inception workshop was held in October 2019 led by the Pacific Community (SPC) in collaboration with the local lead agency, the Niue Department for Environment. It is to lay the foundation for consultations that followed with respective ministry and department heads in enhancing understanding of the project amongst partners, establishing and harnessing collaboration for delivery of the key objectives and activities of the project.

The background of the key result area being 'water security was conveyed to each representative at the national forum by the Director for Environment, Mr. Haden Talagi, who revealed the decision was an Executive one made by the government.

## Desktop Review

The Research Community Officer (RCO) for the GCCA+SUPA project delivered the desktop review providing a snapshot of the local government's capacity to address climate change on certain areas including governance and social systems disaster risk management and capacity development. The reports analyzed these areas and made recommendations on potential capacity-building options that will enhance community resilience to pose threats of climate change and disasters. The Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA) stakeholder consultation facilitated detailed discussions on the recommendations prioritizing the target audience's training needs.

As part of the desktop review, the local governance structure development was also completed and now subject to review by the newly elected government in May 2020.



# Local Development Plans/Island Strategic Development Plans

A principal and leading document for Niue is the Niue Declaration on Climate Change, officially presented by forum leaders at their Forum Leaders meeting in Niue, August 2008.

The Niue Declaration has guided subsequent documentation to acknowledge the plight of climate change which today, COVID aside, remains the single biggest threat to Pacific livelihoods.

Chief subsequent plans are:

1. The Niue Joint National Action Plan on Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change 2012 (JNAP)
2. National Disaster Plan 2010

## Niue JNAP

Since the commencement of the Niue USP RCO, attention of the SUPA project USP component immediately was for support of the review of the JNAP given its age and new developments since 2012. The PMCU, via the GCF readiness and support project, has secured informed assistance for its review. While progress was made in 2019 to kick start the review process, it lost traction following the departure to New Zealand of the DoE Climate Change Officer of whom had been given the designated supervisory role for its review. However, the PMCU and GCF Unit inform their commitment to the progress of the JNAP and the maintenance of relations with the former Climate Change Officer. No forum since the first steps of the review process in 2019 has been facilitated for the progression of this plan.

## Niue National Disaster Plan

Synonymous with the JNAP, the Niue National Disaster Plan is a 2010 plan. There had been substantial momentum for reviewing this plan that a 2018 document was prepared, reviewed with a final draft meeting with all key stakeholders held in November 2019 before the intention of submission to Cabinet for endorsement. The then Chief of Police, Mr. Tony Edwards, facilitated the final review forum in November 2019. A new Chief of Police, Mr. Timothy Wilson, was appointed the role in 2020 following the relocation of Edwards to New Zealand. In light of the new pandemic COVID-19, Wilson informed to revert to the National Disaster Plan 2010 as precedent for guidance of local plans until a time for proper review inclusive of COVID is implemented to be inserted into the FINAL Draft Niue National Disaster Plan 2018.



Focus thus has been diverted to the development of sustainable village development plans, the first community being Alofi North, followed by Toi and Namukulu villages. Each of these plans will be guided by the two principal documents assisted by the new project activities undertaken by the Niue PMCU, including the new AEREAN project that acknowledges that renewable energy components haven't succinctly been captured in the principal documents. Assistance and support to the development of such plans have already been initiated, which will proceed until quarter one 2022.

## Challenges and Solutions

### Communications

There is an apparent and concerning disconnect between the lead agency DoE and the USP since its early implementation phase (April 2020 – 6 months following the employment of the USP RCO). Early reports have revealed that the RCO has conducted activities in an ad hoc manner, expressions put forward by the DoE. While there have been formal interventions, there have been no communications changes with no correspondence from the Director for Environment to the RCO. While invitations have been sent and delivered to the DoE for attendance and collaboration, no representative from the DoE has attended forums held by the USP RCO. While very disheartening at the outset, the RCO has fortified outputs as the prime concern. Alarming given the inception phase in 2019 with intentions of only being a 3 year project, no momentum has been seen from the DoE about the project.

### Finance

The execution of activities by the RCO was hindered by the availability of finance at the USP Niue campus. This has impacted the RCO, particularly in wanting to execute on time, such as the PNA. As an example, the PNA findings to ministries were intended to be delivered in December. Due to holidays and misunderstanding of the project's financial requirements (both Fiji and Niue), the PNA findings were finally delivered in April 2021. A subvention subsequently submitted to support the grievances by the RCO prospected to be received by the Niue campus in May 2021. As indicated below, it is opportune for finances to be processed so activities can be implemented while Niue enjoys being COVID free. Should the virus arrive in Niue, it will significantly cause more significant impact than what it has already especially prohibiting meetings and workshops in the country.

### COVID-19

About the USP outputs, the Resilience Accreditation first cohort was impacted by the global pandemic in prohibiting the in-country classes by Fiji-based facilitators. Virtual consultations have



become the norm since quarter one, 2020. While an excess of 20 students did enroll in Niue's first cohort of the Resilience accreditation, COVID-19 significantly impacted the course of study by disrupting lives and especially enhancing students' disconnect prohibiting more significant inclusivity peer to peer learning opportunities. Many did withdraw from the course due to restructuring of both workforces and day-to-day operations with commitments foremost to protecting families. Niue did go through one substantial lockdown period.

Aside from that, there have been no known COVID cases here in Niue since. This has proven opportunistic for the execution and achievement of the PNA findings. It is encouraging for the continuation of activities efficiently while still without COVID cases.

## Lessons Learnt

### Niue without a National Capacity Strategy

The desktop review revealed Niue does not have a National Capacity Development Strategy, Plan or Policy. Currently, the Niue Public Service Commission (NPSC) progresses with a National Occupational Health and Safety Plan, given the country is without one. The NPSC informs it is a priority for developing a National Human Resource Development strategy, especially human resource retention, inclusive of skills and knowledge retention. To align with the previous statements, efforts are also targeted towards climate-proofing Niue with support from the GCF Readiness Preparatory and Support Project in capturing the needs of the private sector concerning climate change.

### Change agents

Key change agents in each community are the Village Councils. Equally important are the village elders and the Members of Parliament per village. All play an influential role, albeit the Village Councils are appointed with greater responsibility and reporting duties to the government. Each Village Council is allocated an operations budget and a stipend (per Village Council member) to deliver outputs for their villages. This reinforces their obligation and responsibilities for the village. A promising outcome of the resilience accreditation has been the added identification of change agents that have already been utilized for outreach and community workshops (needs identified in the PNA) to utilize and apply the new skills and knowledge learned. This has been a promising output of the resilience accreditation.



## Village Competency Modules

The PNA identified the huge gap in knowledge and understanding of climate change concepts amongst the sub-national level that it demands priority for Niue. Allowing equitable access to training is essential. It's intended that modules are contextualized for Niue. And delivered in villages to allow full participation, long-distance travel from villages to USP could hinder participation.

A considerable change agent identified for developing such modules is Facilitator Apenisa Tamani, a beneficial resource for resilience accreditation. There are plans for the Niue RCO to progress to acquire the Train the Trainers to also become an equipped facilitator to conducting such modules and resilience accreditation very soon.

## Financial Summary

| Item/Activity   | Total Budget Allocation (EUR) | Year 1 & 2 Actual (EUR) | Balance (EUR)  |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| <b>(1.2.1) Research &amp; Community Officer</b>   | 79,931                        | 29,887                  | 50,044         |
| <b>(1.4) Total Office Costs</b>   | 10,625                        | 143                     | 10,482         |
| <b>(2.1) Mobilisation and outreach on climate and disaster resilience with local area stakeholders in intervention areas</b>                      | 21,000                        | 3,275                   | 17,725         |
| <b>(2.2) Provision of training in resilient development to local area stakeholders</b>  | 16,500                        |                         | 16,500         |
| <b>(2.3) Mainstream and integrate climate change and disaster risk management in sub-national sustainable development plans e.g. island plans</b> | 15,500                        |                         | 15,500         |
| <b>(2.4) Enhance the capacity to implement, monitor and evaluate sub-national sustainable development plans e.g. island plans</b>                 | 10,656                        |                         | 10,656         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>154,212</b>                | <b>33,305</b>           | <b>120,907</b> |