



# RURAL COMMUNITY REHABILITATION THROUGH EMERGENCY PUBLIC WORKS IN RESPONSE TO THE DEADLY FLASH-FLOOD DAMAGE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

Report of the pilot programme April 2014

## 1 BACKGROUND

1. The Solomon Islands became a member State of the ILO in 1984; it has a population of 515,870 people and consists of 992 islands.
2. Around 80 per cent of people live in rural areas. The population is highly dispersed with limited access to basic services such as health, education, water, sanitation and infrastructure. They are also isolated from markets.
3. Solomon Islands is ranked 143 out of 187 countries in the United Nations 2012 Human Development Index.
4. It is one of the poorest countries in the Pacific with GDP per capita estimated at around US\$2,923. Around 23 per cent of the population lives below the basic needs poverty line.
5. In Solomon Islands, gender inequality is evident in all parts of daily life. Solomon Islands was ranked by the World Bank as the worst country in the world for sexual violence in 2012. Two thirds of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner.



6. Starting in 1998 and lasting to 2003, ethnic tensions on the main Island of Solomon Islands (Guadalcanal), rapidly escalated leaving more than 30,000 people displaced and hundreds of people missing and unaccounted. The conflict destroyed government offices and business and led to the near-collapse of the country's government, which was unable to provide services or ensure public safety. Today

people go about their daily lives in improved freedom and personal security, but below the surface, untreated post-conflict trauma continues to affect many individuals and communities.

7. Solomon Islands is a member of the G7+ voluntary association of countries that are or have been affected by conflict and are now in transition to the next stage of development (Fragile States). ILO has in April 2014 signed a MoU with the G7+ group with a view to strengthen its support to Fragile States in the recovery and transition processes.

## 2 SOLOMON ISLANDS HIT BY DEADLY FLASH-FLOOD

8. Heavy rain from a tropical depression, which later became Tropical Cyclone Ita, caused severe flooding in the Solomon Islands at the beginning of April 2014. More than 20 people were confirmed dead, and over 50,000 people affected. Houses were washed away and infrastructure damaged, with an estimated 12,000 people affected.



9. There are concerns over-crowding and the uneven distribution of relief items may lead to security issues. Diarrhoea, conjunctivitis and respiratory infections are being reported, particularly in children. International assistance is starting to flow in from aid agencies and donor countries and a draft response plan is being developed.



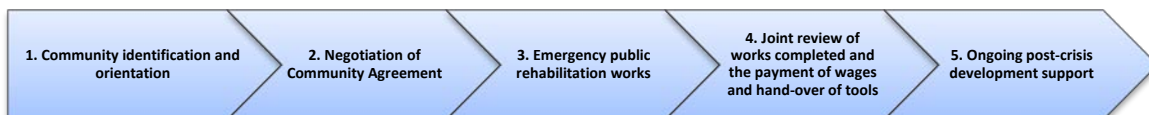
## 3 ILO RESPONSE

10. In November 2013, the International Labour Organization conducted in Solomon Islands a sub-regional workshop title “Capacity Development Training Workshop on Disaster Response”, which in part highlighted the relevance of Cash for Work (CFW) as an important mechanism in response to disasters.
11. Internationally in recent CFW has become established as an important mechanism in response to disasters. The question is no longer if CFW should be considered as an option, but how to ensure that it is only implemented where appropriate and that the scheme itself is compatible with the needs of the affected communities. The ILO has a specific role to play in ensuring that CFW schemes are designed and implemented in a fair and decent manner.

12. On the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2014, the ILO Office for Pacific Islands wrote to the government of the Solomon Islands and ILO social partners, expressing on behalf of the ILO its condolences to the Government and people of Solomon Islands for the loss of life and serious damage caused by the flooding. In this correspondence, ILO offered assistance in supporting the launch of a CFW programme as part of the massive clean-up and rebuilding required.
13. The ILO support was coordinated through and integrated into the combined efforts of the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) which is the regional coordination mechanism to facilitate wide collaboration in emergency preparedness and response in the Pacific. The PHT consists of UN agencies, the Red Cross movement, regional and bilateral organisations, NGOs, faith-based and community based organisations, and donor partners.
14. Subsequently, the ILO agreed with the relevant government partners and the government's Livelihood Cluster coordinated by the Ministry of Rural Development, to launch a pilot programme that (a) would quickly demonstrate the effectiveness of CFW and (b) be able to be expanded should additional funding become available. The pilot was to be based on the similar programmes supported ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries during the Fiji floods in 2012. This pilot programme was fully funded, and managed by the ILO.

#### 4 PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

15. Broadly, the pilot programme provided wages and tools to support target communities to clean-up and repair of public areas and infrastructure (common gardens, halls and churches, schools, wells, drains and paths) that were damaged by the recent floods.
16. Based on advice from the Provincial Government and the Livelihoods Cluster, it was agreed to focus the pilot programme on the communities of Roroni and Papangu. These rural communities are located east of Honiara and both were severely damaged by the floods. Annex 1 of this document provides photographs of the flood damage and examples of rehabilitation work undertaken.
17. In these communities, the programme was implemented in the following phases:



##### 4.1 PHASE 1: COMMUNITY IDENTIFICATION AND ORIENTATION

- Identify communities that will benefit from the works - that is there is public areas and infrastructure that require clean-up and repair; and
- Ensure that community leaders and potential workers are aware of how the programme will operate.



FIGURE 1. ENGAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

## 4.2 PHASE 2: COMMUNITY AGREEMENT, WHICH DEFINES:

- The responsible community leader/s and their duties
- The public works that will be undertaken (photographs)- in quantifiable terms
- The total amount of work-hours required to complete the public work
- The means of recruiting local men and women to undertake the public work
- The tools and materials that will be purchase through the programme
- The means of verifying that the agreed public works has been completed (before and after photographs)
- The means of verifying through time-sheets who and the hours they worked.
- How the tools will be distributed in the community only after the public works has been completed
- The start and end-date of the Community Agreement.



FIGURE 2. DELIVERY OF TOOLS

## 4.3 PHASE 3: EMERGENCY PUBLIC REHABILITATION WORKS

- Workers were registered in each of the target communities.
- The work was supervised by the responsible community leader/s. All workers will be registered by the community and ideally 50% of the workers should be women.
- As work was undertaken, simple Time-Sheets were kept that show the hours worked by each registered worker.



FIGURE 3. SAFETY EQUIPMENT FOR ALL WORKERS

## 4.4 PHASE 4: JOINT REVIEW OF WORKS COMPLETED AND THE PAYMENT OF WAGES AND HAND-OVER OF TOOLS

- When all the agreed public works has been completed there will be a joint (ILO and community leader/s) inspection of the completed public works. When the agreed public works had been completed, wages were paid, and the tools formally granted to the community and distributed in accordance with the pre-defined Agreement.



FIGURE 4. THE WORK BEGIN!

## PHASE 5: ONGOING POST-CRISIS DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

- It was anticipated that after the rehabilitation phase further community development support will be provided through the ILO component of the joint UN Human Security Trust Fund (UNHSTF) project.

## 5 RESULTS ACHIEVED AND LESSONS LEARNT

18. The pilot programme was conducted over two-weeks, with Phase 1 and 2 (Community Identification and Agreement) being conducted during the first week and Phases 3 and 4 (purchase/delivery of materials to the communities and rehabilitation works) being conducted in the second week.

19. Some of the key details of rehabilitation work undertaken in each community are summarized in Table 1, and photographs of the flood damage and examples of rehabilitation work undertaken are shown in Annex 1.

TABLE 1. PROGRAMME DETAILS

	Roroni	Papangu
Number of men and women register and involved	19 women & 32 men	34 women & 36 men
Total number of hours worked per worker	32 Hours (4 Days X 8 Hours)	32 Hours (4 Days X 8 Hours)
Hourly rate paid to workers <sup>1</sup>	SBD5.00	SBD5.00
Programme cost <sup>2</sup>	Wages – Women SBD\$3,040.00 Wages – Men SBD\$5,120.00	Wages – Women SBD\$5,440.00 Wages – Men SBD\$5,760.00
• Wages of women and men		
• Safety equipment (e.g. boots and gloves)	SBD\$13,800.00	SBD\$19,050.00
• Tools (e.g. Spades, hammers, saws, knives, wheelbarrows)	SBD\$23,250.00	SBD\$3,9140.00
• Consumable materials (e.g. seeds and seedling)	SBD\$170.00	SBD\$130.00

## 6 LESSONS LEARNT AND SCOPE FOR EXPANSION

20. This pilot programme has demonstrated that such programmes have the potential to supported local people help themselves and to rebuild their communities. Some of the direct observed benefits arising from the pilot programme include:

- housing and community buildings were cleaned and repaired;
- wells and wash facilities were cleaned and repaired;
- food crops were replanted;
- cash and tools were injected into the local economy; and
- community members were motivated to participate.

21. Wider application of these types of programme has can contribute to:

- the repair and rebuilding of community and household infrastructure, such as homes, schools, churches;
- improved water sanitation and health facilities;
- re-capitalization of the sources livelihoods and income;
- reduced future food shortages by quickly replanting food crops; and
- supporting and encouraging the return of families back to their home communities.

22. Expressions of interest have been received from a number of organizations to replicate the programme, including:

- The Provincial Government, who would like to expand the programme to other neighbouring communities
- The Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry, who would mobilize their member to support the programme.
- The Department of Commerce Industry and Labour, who are considering a programme to support (one-month work) for workers who have been laid-off by the floods.

23. Based on this experience of this pilot programme, the ILO has further refined its operating manual and is available to continue to support the programme. Further expansion of the programme is depended on further financial support.

<sup>1</sup> National minimum wage is SBD4.00 per hour. 1.00 USD = 7.2 SBD

<sup>2</sup> Excluding programme management costs.

**ANNEX 1. EXAMPLES OF FLOOD DAMAGE AND REHABILITATION WORK UNDERTAKEN**

**Examples of damage**



*Destroyed houses and shelter than needs to be rebuilt. On the left the remains of a group of houses in Papangu.*



*Roroni community kindergarten school and community hall filled with mud and needs clearing.*



*A family living in temporary shelter after homes were washed away by floods in Roroni*



*Flooded and damaged community hall in Roroni*



*Community garden in Papangu flooded - crops have been destroyed and covered by silt that must be removed or dug-in.*



*Corn farm in Roroni destroyed by the flash floods.*

**Examples of restoration work**



*Community member in Roroni removes rubbish from a community dug-well.*



*Drains being dug around a church in Roroni Community.*



*Newly cleared sight for community relocation in Papangu.*



*Reconstructed pig-pans in Papangu.*



*Women in Roroni community clearing debris from homes.*



*Community members removing coconuts from dug-well contaminated by the flash floods in Papangu.*



*Workers involved in rebuilding of the destroyed community wash room and well in Papangu. The community purchased the cement and plumbing materials with their own funds.*



*Rebuilding community infrastructure and houses in Papangu.*