Dear CG Members,

Located in some of the most disaster-prone regions in the world, small island states have been taking big steps toward building their resilience to natural hazards and climate change. Eager to share lessons learned from these experiences, development practitioners from nearly 30 small island states came together last month for the Fourth Meeting of the Small Island States Resilience Initiative (SISRI) Practitioners’ Network in Geneva, Switzerland. Below, we take a closer look at efforts to boost climate and disaster resilience in small island states.

If you have ideas, questions or want more information, please contact Naraya Carrasco, Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist (ncarrasco@worldbank.org) and visit the SISRI website: www.gfdrr.org/sisri.

Best,
Julie

News & Views

Standing stronger together: Reflections on building resilience for small island states

By exchanging experiences and lessons learned from resilience efforts already underway, small island states are moving closer toward a resilient future. At the Fourth Meeting of the SISRI Practitioners’ Network, participants highlighted risk-based decision-making, innovative finance, implementation capacity building and gender-inclusive planning as critical areas for building resilience in small island states.

In small island states, resilient transport is providing a lifeline against disasters

While climate and disaster risk impacts almost all aspects of life in small island states, transport is disproportionately affected, in part because the infrastructure in many places is located in disaster-prone areas right next to the sea. By implementing a combination of ‘hard’ infrastructure investments and ‘soft’ capacity building activities, small island states are fortifying their transport sectors to withstand the next disaster.

Learning from big innovations in small island states

Though their size makes small island developing states vulnerable to natural hazards, it also makes them ideal for piloting comprehensive analytical tools that can help reduce climate and disaster risk. For instance, a local-level, multi-hazard risk assessment on Ebeye Island in the Marshall Islands is using an innovative methodology that could be scaled up to other coastal countries.
**News & Views**

**Weathering financial shocks from disasters in the Pacific Islands**
Understanding Risk Finance (URf) Pacific, a regional forum on climate and disaster risk finance attended by representatives of 12 Pacific island countries, highlighted the importance of regional cooperation, private sector engagement and customized financial protection instruments as key pillars for ensuring financial resilience to shocks and stresses in small island states. [Watch the video series from URf Pacific.](#)

**Building climate resilient communities in Kiribati**
King tides and storm surges caused by increasingly violent storms in the Pacific Ocean can wash over entire islands, causing flooding for days and contaminating drinking water supplies for weeks and even months. The Kiribati Adaptation Program works with communities to expand access to safe drinking water and strengthen coastal protection.

**Knowledge**

**Publication: Fiji Climate Vulnerability Assessment**
In an effort to adapt the country’s development strategy to climate and disaster risk, the government of Fiji has pioneered a first-of-its-kind climate vulnerability assessment. The assessment takes into account economic losses across sectors, effects on the government’s development plan, and the impact on people’s well-being. [Watch the related video.](#)

**Results in Resilience: Furthering Disaster Risk Finance in the Pacific**
Innovative financing instruments which mobilize private financing will be critical to ensuring that small island states have the resources they need to rebuild resiliently when disaster strikes. The Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative (PCRAFI) has helped expand post-disaster insurance benefits to more than 640,000 citizens in five Pacific island countries.

**Results in Resilience: Building Community Resilience in the Solomon Islands**
The Community Resilience to Climate and Disaster Risk in Solomon Islands Project (CRISP) is working with communities across the Solomon Islands to strengthen their ability to cope with natural hazards and climate change. In total, over 50,000 people have benefited from ongoing provincial and community resilience efforts. [Watch the video Q&A.](#)
**Videos**

**Primer: The Small Island States Resilience Initiative (SISRI)**
The Small Island States Resilience Initiative (SISRI) provides technical and operational support to help small island states address financing and implementation bottlenecks in their resilience investments. In conjunction with these efforts, the initiative also nurtures a vibrant community of practice for resilience in the small island states through the Practitioners’ Network.

**Q&A: Engaging women and girls in disaster risk management in the Solomon Islands**
Dolores Devesi, Country Director for Oxfam in the Solomon Islands, shares a few insights about how the Womenitarian project is engaging women and girls in disaster risk management in the Pacific Island country. A video interview on the sidelines of the Fourth Meeting of the SISRI Practitioners’ Network.

**Q&A: Putting Haiti’s national building standards into practice**
While the development of a national building code has helped Haiti chart a more resilient path since the 2010 earthquake, challenges remain in its enforcement, according to Fritz Auplan, Chief of Civil Engineering and Urban Engineering for Haiti’s Ministry of Public Works. A video interview on the sidelines of the Fourth Meeting of the SISRI Practitioners’ Network.

**Q&A: Building regulations for resilience in small island states: issues and challenges**
Deryck Omar, CEO for the CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ), sheds light on the main issues and challenges small island states face as they work to build the resilience of the built environment. A video interview on the sidelines of the Fourth Meeting of the SISRI Practitioners’ Network.

**Q&A: Doing preventative relocation the right way: the case of Jamaica**
Drawing on his experience working to reduce disaster vulnerability in Jamaica, Omar Sweeney, Managing Director of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund, stresses the importance of community buy-in when relocating populations at risk of disaster. A video interview on the sidelines of the Fourth Meeting of the SISRI Practitioners’ Network.