

# Stories of Impact

*A series highlighting achievements in disaster risk management initiatives*

## Resilient Recovery in Samoa after Cyclone Evan



### RESULTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Based on the damage impact assessment findings, the government prepared a robust recovery and reconstruction framework that was endorsed by the cabinet in March 2013.
- The damage assessment helped to leverage \$40 million in World Bank financing that was used to support projects on road reconstruction, and recovery for farmers, among others.
- The rigor and detail of the damage assessment leveraged an additional \$50 million from the Asian Development Bank, European Union, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and others, which supported projects on recovery of the energy, water, tourism, and education sectors, among others.
- The Enhanced Road Access Project received an additional grant of \$13 million from the government of Australia.
- With World Bank support, the Agriculture and Fisheries Cyclone Response Project will benefit more than 7,000 cyclone-affected subsistence farmers and about 100 commercial farmers and fishers.

**REGION: EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC**  
**COUNTRY: SAMOA**  
**FOCUS AREA: RESILIENT RECOVERY**

In the Pacific Island nation of Samoa, tropical storms often cause devastating damage to homes, infrastructure, and communities. Following the powerful Tropical Cyclone Evan that swept across the island in July 2012, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the World Bank, with funding from the African Caribbean Pacific–European Union Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Program (ACP–EU NDRR), worked with the government of Samoa to assess damages, launch a comprehensive disaster recovery and reconstruction plan to make the transport and agriculture sectors more resilient, and strengthen the country’s financial capacity to manage future shocks from natural disasters.

## Context

Samoa is exposed to a number of natural hazards, including tropical storms, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and droughts. In 2012, Tropical Cyclone Evan destroyed over 600 homes, killing 14 and displacing more than 7,500 people. Decimating crops and farms, Cyclone Evan disrupted the livelihoods of thousands of farmers and fishers in Samoa. The storm also damaged the country's power supply, key roads, bridges, and tourism facilities. The total economic damages and production losses were estimated to exceed \$210 million, equivalent to about 30% of the country's GDP in 2011.

## Approach

GFDRR, the World Bank, and other partners supported the post-disaster recovery in Samoa by conducting an assessment of the socio-economic damage from the storm, with recommendations for recovery and reconstruction planning and fund mobilization. The assessment helped mobilize three World Bank grants that are working to:

- Repair damaged roads and bridges and strengthen the resilience of Samoa's road infrastructure through the Enhanced Road Access Project.
- Provide technical assistance and funding to repair damaged facilities, establish regular disaster-related data collection systems, and strengthen disaster response capacity through the Agriculture and Fisheries Cyclone Response Project.
- Strengthen public financial management and government budgetary response to future shocks through the Samoa Development Policy Operation Project.

## LESSONS LEARNED

### **A timely assessment enabled the results to better inform the government decisions about the national recovery strategy.**

A comprehensive damage and needs assessment was completed five weeks after the disaster, which allowed for its recommendations to guide the Samoan government's recovery strategy. These decisions were endorsed by the Samoan cabinet and are currently being implemented.

**Strong coordination mechanisms support quick decision-making and trust among stakeholders.** The government response team was chaired by the Ministry of Finance and comprised of representatives from the World Bank, United Nations, and other key partners. This setup ensured efficient and inclusive decision-making and oversight throughout the recovery planning process, and strong uptake of the findings by the government agencies and development partners.

**Inclusion of 'building back better' principles and risk reduction into recovery and reconstruction is important in efforts to build disaster and climate resilience.** The damage assessment addressed how to respond quickly to the immediate needs of the population and also strengthen the island against future storms, for example by enforcing improved building regulations.

## Next Steps

The Agriculture and Fisheries, Enhanced Road Access, and Samoa Development Policy projects are under implementation. The long-term strategy is to increase the resilience of Samoa's vulnerable population and sectors through continued engagement with the government in a manner in line with the National Disaster Risk Management Plan. This will also be done through Samoa's participation in a planned regional Pacific Resilience Program, with support from the World Bank, to strengthen disaster resilience, early warning and preparedness, as well as to improve post-disaster response capacity.

*"We welcome support for our long-term reconstruction program as we continue our efforts to rebuild more resilient infrastructure and to promote economic recovery."*

—Hon. Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga, Finance Minister, Samoa

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\*All figures in US Dollars