ACTION PLAN:
FOR THE CYCLONE DISASTER RECOVERY
IN THE RURAL AREAS OF THE FIJI ISLANDS

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INTRODUCTION

- Immediate Responses
- Relief and Rehabilitation
- Rebuilding and Reconstruction

This report is intended to draw out a Recovery Plan for the whole of Fiji resulting in a sustainable livelihood for the communities.
Hazard: In the Cyclone Belt

- Fiji
- Vanuatu
- Solomon Is
- New Caledonia

![Image of a cyclone in the cyclone belt with labeled areas for Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, and New Caledonia.](image-url)
Cyclone Accompanied by Flooding
Historically Fiji’s rural setting is based on a subsistence way of life whereby communities livelihood are on a daily basis. Recent development have made changes in this lifestyle and the communities are now setting periodic development plans and very slowly becoming more economic oriented in their set up. Cooperatives were set up decades ago in villages, unfortunately some have run into bankruptcy while most in the outer islands are still very much in business existence. Besides its geographical location Fiji is also highly vulnerable to cyclones because of the following:

- There are more than hundred small islands within and are highly exposed to strong winds and tidal waves.
- Housing constructions in villages are not directly under any building regulations and the communities build as they wish.
Why Rural?

Rural

• Building residential houses in villages is not directly related to any legal framework as in urban areas and established settlements. Therefore most of the houses built are highly cyclone prone.

• A major part of this action plan will cover the housing recovery together with infrastructure, institutions, lifelines and economical recovery. Damages also affecting village lives such as halls and church buildings are also included in the action plan.

Settlements

• Housing constructions in established settlements are under the regulations of the Rural Local Authorities right throughout Fiji. Therefore residential buildings in these areas are mostly cyclone proof. However community members who are mostly farmers are always affected by damages on farm roads, major roads and public utilities.

Towns and Sub-Urban.

• Most of the losses are economical as businesses and industries are closed due to flooding that normally come together with the cyclones. More so are the sales items that can be damaged by being in water for too long. To a certain degree industries suffer damages and in most cases they have to meet their own damage costs. Therefore industrial recovery is not covered in this action plan.

• However in villages and settlements most of the damage costs are often met by the national government.
ACTION PLAN FOR RECOVERY

BASIC PRINCIPLES

• Community Capacity Building Towards Social Capital
• The Financial Aspect
• Monitoring and Evaluation
RECOVERY FOR LIFELINES

- Risk Identification
- Risk Planning
- Risk Assessment
- Risk Communication

Risk Management approach and its application to all lifeline recovery should bring a new insight for the improvement of their services during any cyclone affecting Fiji.

Together with this will be the need to redivert roads, bridges, crossings, water pipes, power lines, telecommunication lines and land acquisitions to accommodate all these.

Because most of the land in Fiji are communally owned the national government will be working closely with the Native Land Trust Board and the communal landowners in this aspect.
ECONOMIC RECOVERY

• Outline of Fijis Economical Recovery
  – Set a recovery goal for a ten year plan.
  – Analyse the types of industries, degrees of losses, labour supply impact and opportunities for improvement.
  – Set recovery goals, diversifications, offshore opportunities, need for subsidies, grant or soft loans, where to and how.
  – Vigilant drive for new market opportunities.
  – Set up new initiatives like tax free zones for industrial sites etc.

• Formulation of the Economical Recovery Plan
  – Set up a Fiji Economical Recovery Council.
  – Council members to consist of
    • Academic Experts
    • Ministry of Finance and National Planning
    • Municipality representatives
    • Land owning communities representatives
    • Employees representatives
    • Primary producers etc.
    • Community representatives
    • Representatives from the Fiji Chamber of Commerce
    • Fiji Council of Social of Services.
  – Set up terms of references and working timetable.
  – Review at every year for the first three years and every six months from the fourth year onwards in an Economic Summit.
Preparation of the Master Plan

VISION - SAFER AND SECURE FIJI.
MISSION - BUILDING THE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO CYCLONES.

- In formulating a master plan for the whole of Fiji the following factors are taken into account.
- The community learning activity through the Participatory Project Cycle Management is a tool to make them aware and understand that they have an important role in their own community as an individual and as a community.
- The extent of damages by the thirteen cyclones mentioned above on housing, infrastructure, agriculture, number of people who have lost their lives, and industries,
- The participatory PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Action, ) process between the rural communities, the municipalities, disaster agency partners and the national government.
- Be able to have an understanding of the other hazards besides cyclones alone.
- That this recovery plan is everyones responsibility.
RECOVERY PLAN FOR LIVELIHOOD AND COMMUNITY (2)

Formulation of Fiji’s Recovery Plan

- There should be a governing body called a council or committee and to be selected from a wide range of fields and expertise.
- This should include: Consultants
- Set up a working timetable for each component of the recovery plan for the ten years.
- Set up a number of working sub committees as below
RECOVERY PLAN FOR LIVELIHOOD AND COMMUNITY (3)

Strengthening of the Solesolevaki Concept in the Rural Communities

• At the end of the first year each village/settlement should have undergone training on the Participatory Project Cycle Management.

• Development plans by the communities for cyclone proof housing, improvement from a more subsistence farming to commercial for livelihood, market sales, and profit making targets, small business enterprises such as tourism sites development, and networking are produced.

• Community sub committees to be formed to manage each of the activity mentioned above with smaller working groups for the day to day operations.

• All subcommittees to document proceedings and activities and to submit reports to the village/settlement council.

• Each subcommittee will then have to work with consulting agencies for advise for improvement etc. Regular social activities and disaster response drills within the communities and inter communities to be carried out. Thanksgiving church services on the first Sundays of every month.
RECOVERY PLAN FOR LIVELIHOOD AND COMMUNITY (4)

Preparation of Draft Recovery Plans

see table 1: National Disaster Recovery Plan and Implementing Strategies
Initiation and Approval of the Recovery Plans

1. Community Consensus Building
2. Provincial/Advisory Council
3. Divisional Development Council
4. National Development Council
5. Cabinet

CABINET PAPER SUBMISSION FOR APPROVAL AND FUNDING PRIORITY FUNDING
Implementation of the Plan by All Stakeholders.

- Concensus Building. In order to initially implement the plan there should be a nationwide awareness to all the stakeholders.
- Then there will be some answers to this awareness which will give way to the next step.
- Once there is a general consensus the government will institute a legal framework for a working platform.
- Together with the framework a timetable will be also a major part of it.
- Cabinet will then submit a paper in the parliament for a democratic voting.
- Parliamentary approval is required for the purpose of allocating funds into the recovery plan.
- Once this is obtained the whole of Fiji is informed either through the media or through the parliamentary circulars and each responsible Ministry is to then submit the Requisition to incur expenditure.
- Although there is a national governing council for the recovery programme all funds will still be controlled by the Ministry of Finance.
COLLABORATIVE CONSULTATION

Government

Implementation of the Recovery Plan

Municipality

Community

International Regional National Institutions
Conclusion

• In Fiji today all restoration, rehabilitation and reconstruction works are the full responsibilities of the government.
• The Kobe experience of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake and the lessons learned from the recovery plan has given great depths into the software part of the recovery spectrum. This is the new direction each country participant present here today feel that the whole world should follow.
• Initially the rural communities in Fiji who have always been victims of the disasters mentioned above should be the prime target group for empowerment both socially and economically and to be made aware of their roles in disaster recovery.
• There is a need for a change of approach by the government administration from build, restore and dump to build, restore, recover and sustain.
• Fortunately for Fiji the social network is already in place, however their empowerment through the participatory project cycle management will definitely give them a new vision to commit themselves through solesolevaki for executing the recovery plan at their level.
• Moreso they will be more motivated to carry out recovery programmes on their own together with the use of their resources and labour.
• In this way the agencies at government level should have more respect on the down up approach than the top down.
• The social partnership through the solesolevaki realm is to be given high respect as it solidifies the social dynamic for recovery works, instill a strong sense of ownership for the implementation.
• In the end with continuous support and collaborative consultations on a platform of respect and understanding the creation of a more disaster resilient community in Fiji is expected to be highly promoted.
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