



NO ORDINARY MAN

One man's quest to lead his village in Papua New Guinea to adapt to climate change

If there are mangroves, there is a future, Alfred Masul proclaims. He is a conservation evangelist located on the remote northern coast of Papua New Guinea. In Numuru Village, after a bad flood about 10 years ago and watching fishing stocks steadily decline, Alfred started planting mangroves.



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The main climate change effects experienced in the area are river flooding and erosion. In 2015, a prolonged drought caused increased dependence on rapidly depleting fish stocks.

Working in the nearby school, Alfred was a teacher's aide. Sensitised to conservation, Alfred declared almost half of their coastline tambu (taboo) seven years ago, and imposed specific rules on the use of available interior land. In that seven-year rest period, bait fish and predator species began to return.

To bolster Alfred and other local communities' efforts, the Government of Papua New Guinea, via its Office of Climate Change and Development (OCCD) - in partnership with UNDP, initiated a project to "Enhance Adaptive Capacity of Communities to Climate Change-related Floods in the North Coast and Islands Region of PNG". With funding provided by the Adaptation Fund, the project's objective is to enhance the adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities to make informed decisions about and adapt to climate change-driven hazards affecting both coastal and riverine villages. In particular, the project worked to build community resilience to coastal and inland flooding events.



In recognition of their increasing exposure to climate change impacts, the Government of Papua New Guinea – via its Climate Change and Development Authority (CCDA) - in partnership with UNDP, initiated a project to "Enhance Adaptive Capacity of Communities to Climate Change-related Floods in the North Coast and Islands Region of PNG". With funding provided by the Adaptation Fund, the project's overall objective was to enhance the adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities to make informed decisions about and adapt to climate change-driven hazards affecting coastal villages.

In Madang Province, UNDP partnered with World Wildlife Fund (WWF) PNG. Funding from the project enabled the WWF PNG to reach out to 16 coastal communities, including Numuru, to establish mangrove nurseries and plant trees along degraded coastlines, as well as provide education and awareness on climate change and related risks.

As part of these activities, communities are supported to replant a total of 75,000 seedlings and rehabilitate a portion of the existing areas of degraded mangrove forest. In 2017, Alfred and his team planted 1,045 seedlings in Numuru Village alone.

