



PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGE

Building partnerships to adapt to climate change in Papua New Guinea

Josaphat says: “If you’re not strong enough, you have to leave the island.” To show his love to Olita, he helps her with her work. “The best gift you can give to your partner is your hard work,” she says. They live on Pati Island, in Papua New Guinea’s New Ireland Province.



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In the North Coast and Islands regions of Papua New Guinea flooding is the most urgent climate-change related hazard, threatening coastal communities, economic centres, and provincial capitals.

In recognition of their increasing exposure to climate change impacts, 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.

Josaphat and Olita watched the mangroves surrounding their island disappear from large-scale logging and unsustainable use. They “didn’t know what they could do” until a partnership between UNDP and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) implemented activities to raise awareness and initiated activities to restore critical mangrove areas. Now their home, perched just metres from the encroaching shore, is buffered by a mangrove plantation they maintain.

The partnership and dedicated effort of Josaphat and Olita is a microcosm of the community, provincial, national, and international partnerships that will be necessary to prevent the mangrove forests of New Ireland Province – and their attendant development gains - from being eroded by climate change.



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