



# Solomon Islands Resilience Project

(CCADRR)  
SANTA CATALINA  
CULTURAL ART FESTIVAL



Case Study

Clera and other Santa Catalina villagers tending the community garden.



## Disaster risk reduction in Solomon Islands

Over the past decade several natural disasters have struck Solomon Islands, including cyclones, king tides, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, droughts and tsunamis. With over 1,000 islands and atolls, Solomon Islands is also vulnerable to changes in climate and rising sea levels.

Given the distances and isolation of many communities, disaster response is more challenging and problematic than in other parts of the world.

Through our work in disaster risk reduction, we help communities to prepare for potential disasters and mitigate their impact. We integrate climate change adaptation with disaster resilience projects to help communities adapt to changing conditions.

This work is critical to development, protecting lives and livelihoods so people can break free from poverty.

## Solomon Islands Resilience Project

Makira-Ulawa is one of Solomon Islands' most disaster-prone provinces.

Running from 2013 to 2015, our DFAT-funded Solomon Islands Resilience Project sought to raise awareness about climate change and disaster risks and reduce the vulnerability of seven rural communities in the remote east of the province.

The project evaluation found it filled a large gap in providing relevant information. There was also a significant increase in the number of households implementing at least one climate-resilient innovation or improved practice, such as limiting the use of water for irrigation.

The partnership with Kastom Gaden Association, a local non-government organisation, provided benefits through the demonstration of improved agricultural techniques such as use of organic fertilisers. Project activities also included distributing farming tools, supporting climate change adaptation committees and identifying evacuation routes.

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# Building resilience in Santa Catalina, Makira

Jacob with World Vision staff member Robert, who was project coordinator for the Makira CCA DRR Project.

## Climate-resilient practices

On the remote island of Santa Catalina, Jacob attended a three-day training with Kastom Gaden Association in 2015. He then applied the techniques he saw at the demonstration plot in his own garden.

Before, Jacob planted whatever he had all together. The plants would get tangled and didn't grow well. Through the training, he learnt to organise his crops. Now he plants all his root crops in the same plot, which has seen them grow bigger and healthier.

Jacob also learnt how to make organic compost by mixing coconut husks with soil. He received pumpkin seeds through the training and now sells pumpkin seeds on a small scale in the village.

**The project has made a big difference for Jacob's wife Annie and their three children. "Before, I used to get hungry," Annie says. "But now I never go hungry because I have these greens and vegetables to support the root crops that we have."**

She says it's also helped her add variety to the children's diets. Now she can feed their baby son Custy pumpkin and cabbage – sometimes mixed with fish when Jacob goes fishing.

Patson, Frank and Clera also took part in Kastom Gaden Association training. They learnt about preparing seedlings, cultivating the soil and implementing climate-resilient techniques. They're continuing to apply this knowledge in their own gardens and in the community garden started through the project, which is now full of beans, salad, slippery cabbage and cassava.

Different harvest times for each crop mean families also have food available throughout the year. A father of six, Frank says his family no longer experiences hunger like they did before.



Jacob shows off his pumpkins.



World Vision staff member Robert provides local farmers Peter and Clera with advice about maintaining their crops.

# Disaster response knowledge

Silas is chairman of the Development Association, a grouping of all the different committees in Santa Catalina.

Through the project, he learnt about what to do in a disaster. “When there is a tsunami warning, we run up to the hill. We don’t come and look out to sea,” he says. “We also learn when we evacuate, we shouldn’t be busy with other things; we should run fast for safety.”

This knowledge was put to the test in the December 2016 earthquake. “During the recent disaster, the training from World Vision really helped us because everyone knew what to do,” Silas says. “Everyone just ran. All the children from the school were [up the hill] first, because we learn from the training and then we teach our children.”

The community also knew not to come back down until everything had settled. Police called community leaders like Silas by radio and mobile and gave them the all-clear to return to the village.



Silas with his community's action plan.