



Cities and Climate Change Initiative

ABRIDGED REPORT

Lami Town
Fiji

Climate Change
Vulnerability Assessment



UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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Lami Town, Fiji – Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

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P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya

E-mail: infohabitat@unhabitat.org

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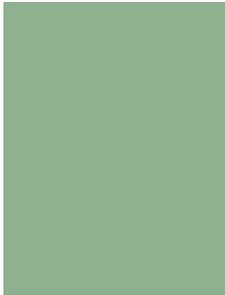
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Summarized by: Liam Fee

Reviewers: Bernhard Barth, Maria Adelaida Antonette Mias-Cea, Sarah Mecartney

Editor: Peter Grant

Design and Layout: Deepanjana Chakravarti



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Introduction

1.1 Cities and Climate Change

Climate change is already affecting millions of people worldwide. In urban areas, which are typically characterized by significantly higher population density, climate change will exacerbate and compound existing climate vulnerabilities, especially for the urban poor. As a result of climate change, it is expected that storm frequency and intensity will increase, flooding will become more serious and droughts will affect food production in rural areas, which will have damaging effects in cities. Coastal areas are particularly threatened by inundation from storm surges and sea-level rise. Existing urban development challenges, such as poor health and inadequate housing, is substantially exacerbated by the effects of climate change. At the same time, cities are the main drivers of increasing greenhouse gas emissions. This means that cities must be at the centre of efforts to both mitigate the causes of climate change, and to adapt to their anticipated effects.

In Fiji, as in many areas in the Pacific, urban populations are located in highly hazard-prone areas in the coastal zone. Storm surges and sea-level rise can affect settlements, food production and infrastructure. A lack of basic services such as clean water supply and solid waste management can exacerbate the negative effects of climate change. Amid all this, the poorest are almost always the most vulnerable, as they have less access to infrastructure, basic services and social safety nets in the event of a disaster.

1.2 UN-Habitat's Cities and Climate Change Initiative

Cities and local authorities have the potential to mitigate the causes of climate change, and protect themselves from the effects. The Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI) promotes the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change in developing countries. More specifically, it supports the development of pro-poor innovative approaches to climate change policies and strategies, building on UN-Habitat's rich experience of sustainable urban development (through the Environmental Planning and Management approach of the Sustainable Cities and Agenda 21 Programmes) as well as on well-recognized capacity building tools. CCCI develops, adapts and disseminates methodologies that put city managers and practitioners in a better position to support adaptation to climate change. It also promotes collaboration among local authorities and their associations in global, regional and national networks, with the rationale of:

- 1) enhancing policy dialogue so that climate change is firmly established on the agenda;
- 2) supporting local authorities' efforts to bring about these changes; and
- 3) enhancing awareness, education and capacity-building in support of climate change strategies.

A major outcome of the initiative will be the development of a set of tools for mitigation and adaptation.

02

Overview of the City

2.1 Fiji: Overview

Fiji is located in the South Pacific, around 2,000 km North of New Zealand, at a latitude of between 15° and 22° South and 175° and 178° East. There are 322 islands in the Fijian archipelago, of which 110 are inhabited. Of a total land mass of 18,270 km² Viti Levu (10,544 km²) and Vanua Levu (5,538 km²) are the two largest islands and account for most of the country's population and economic activities. Of its population of 837,271, as of 2007, approximately 51 per cent live in urban areas. Suva is the capital and is one of two cities, along with Lautoka. There are 11 declared towns, including Lami. The Fijian economy has shown relatively slow growth in recent years, with its annual GDP improving from a period of slight contraction in

2009 and 2010 to a 2 per cent increase in 2011¹ the main economic sectors are tourism and cash crops, particularly sugar.

2.2 Geographical Location

Lami Town is adjacent to Suva City on the southeast coast of Viti Levu. It is a coastal town in the north-western part of the greater Suva area, which is the most densely populated region in Fiji, with 62.1 per cent of the country's total urban population. The total land area of Lami is 680 hectares and the population is approximately 20,000.

Figure 1: Lami Town within the Greater Suva area



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