

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**CAPACITY BUILDING AND DISASTER RESPONSE:
A CASE STUDY OF NGOS' RESPONSE TO CYCLONE EVAN IN
SAMOA**

A research report presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the degree of Masters of International
Development at Massey University, New Zealand

By Virginia Pycroft

2015

ABSTRACT

With natural disasters increasing both in number and economic impact, the challenge for governments is to effectively respond to the needs of affected communities. In difficult conditions, and often with resource constraints, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have contributed to meeting the needs of affected communities during disaster responses. NGOs usually have flexible structures, which enable them to respond to a rapidly changing environment. They also often have strong links to the communities in which they work, which creates good synergies when responding to disasters. The involvement of NGOs in a disaster response has been discussed widely in the international community. The challenge is to ensure that NGOs have the capacity to respond effectively when the need arises.

This report has a particular focus on Samoa and uses a capacity building lens to investigate a disaster response. It looks closely at the ability of NGOs to assist the Samoan government in a disaster response. The report used a document analysis and semi-structured interviews, with representatives from NGOs involved in the response to Cyclone Evan in 2012, to investigate capacity building in NGOs with a view to enabling them to respond effectively in disaster.

The key finding of the report is that the ability of NGOs to form relationships with other stakeholders and to maintain those relationships between disaster responses is important to building partnerships that contribute to the effectiveness of a response.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research, like many, would not have come together without the support of the following people:

Firstly I would like to acknowledge, my supervisor, Maria Borovnik. Maria has had endless patience as I have written this report and provided helpful comments on successive drafts. Thank you Maria, your encouragement and support have been invaluable.

Secondly, a big thank you to the interviewees. As development professionals your practical insights have made an important contribution to this report. I really appreciated your willingness to share your experiences and I have learned a lot from your professionalism.

Finally, to my flatmate and friend who gave up precious time to pay particular attention to proofreading along the way. This report is better for your insightful comments, of which my favourite still includes “yuk”. ☺ Also to my very tolerant friends and family, who have been supportive in so very many ways. This includes practical proof reading support and providing the all-important moral support.

Thank you

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
TABLE OF CONTENTS	III
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	VI
FIGURES	VI
TABLES	VI
SUMMARY OF TERMS (ACRONYMS)	VII
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Cyclone Evan	1
SAMOA, NATURAL DISASTERS AND DISASTER RESPONSE STRUCTURES	3
The Role of NGOs	7
RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS	8
LIMITATIONS	8
METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN	9
Data Collection Methods and Analysis.....	10
The Interviewees	10
Ethical Considerations	11
RESEARCH REPORT OUTLINE.....	12
CHAPTER 2: CAPACITY BUILDING IN DEVELOPMENT	13

INTRODUCTION.....	13
CAPACITY BUILDING DEFINED	13
Capacity Building Definitions.....	14
Capacity Building as a Process	15
NGOS AND CAPACITY	16
Defining NGOs	16
NGO Capacity Building	17
Capacity Assessments	19
CHALLENGES TO NGOS SUSTAINABILITY	20
IN SUMMARY.....	24
CHAPTER 3: THE ROLE OF NGOS IN A DISASTER RESPONSE	25
INTRODUCTION.....	25
NGOS AND DISASTER RESPONSE.....	25
Networks and Partnerships.....	27
Coordination in Times of Disaster	29
Disaster Affected Communities	31
CAPACITY BUILDING WITHIN NGOS FOR DISASTER RESPONSE.....	32
Disaster Preparedness.....	34
The Policy Environment for Disaster Preparedness.....	35
IN SUMMARY.....	36
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS: NGOS RESPONSE TO CYCLONE EVAN	39
INTRODUCTION.....	39

BACKGROUND TO CYCLONE EVAN RESPONSE PROJECTS.....	40
THE RESPONSE TO THE DISASTER.....	42
STAKEHOLDERS: RELATIONSHIPS AND COORDINATION	44
International Partners	46
Coordination of Data and Activities	49
THE CAPACITY OF NGOs TO RESPOND TO FUTURE DISASTERS IN SAMOA ...	50
IN SUMMARY.....	52
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS: BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY IN NGOs FOR DISASTER RESPONSE IN SAMOA	53
INTRODUCTION.....	53
GENERAL FINDINGS	54
BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY	55
Fostering Relationships with Other Stakeholders.....	56
Pursuing DRR and Preparedness Projects Between Disasters.....	58
Participate Actively in Disaster Responses.....	58
SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES IN SAMOA.....	59
Capacity Building Successes In Samoa	59
Capacity Building Challenges In Samoa.....	60
THE EFFECT OF THE CYCLONE EVAN RESPONSE	61
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	62
Areas for Further Research	64
APPENDICES	65

APPENDIX 1: TABLE OF CAPACITY BUILDING WEBSITES	65
APPENDIX 2: TABLE OF DRR WEBSITES	66
APPENDIX 3: INFORMATION SHEET	67
APPENDIX 4: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM	69
REFERENCES.....	71

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

Figure 1: Cyclone Evan Track Map	1
Figure 2: National Disaster Management Core Organisational Structure	4

TABLES

Table 1: Participant Table	11
Table 2: Capacity Building Websites	65
Table 3: Table of DRR Websites	66

SUMMARY OF TERMS (ACRONYMS)

ADRA	Adventist Development & Relief Agency
CDCRM	Community Disaster and Climate Risk Management
DAC	Disaster Advisory Committee
DMO	Disaster Management Office
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECDF	East Coast Development Forum
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FESA	Fire and Emergency Services Authority
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IDA	Initial Damage Assessment
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MWCD	Ministry of Women, Social and Community Development
NDC	National Disaster Council
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
NDMP	National Disaster Management Plan
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NZMFAT	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
PHT	Pacific Humanitarian Team
SAT	Samoa Tala
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SRCS	Samoa Red Cross Society
SUNGO	Samoa Umbrella of Non-Government Organisations
SWA	Samoa Water Authority
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs