

REDUCING CLIMATE AND NATURAL HAZARD VULNERABILITIES OF TRANSPORT SYSTEMS IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

(Project Period: 2019/6/26-2022/4/30)



Credit: World Bank Group

CHALLENGES AND OBJECTIVES

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are constantly exposed to the effects of climate change and natural hazards, such as flooding and hurricanes. Such extreme weather events are often beyond their coping capacities, and even a single event can have a devastating impact on their small economies. The transport sector is often the main infrastructure sector in SIDS and plays a vital role in their economies and societies, but it is also one of the sectors that are most impacted by extreme weather events.

The technical assistance grant, “Reducing climate and natural disaster vulnerabilities of transport systems in Small Island Developing States”, provided through the [Japan-World Bank Program for Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Management in Developing Countries](#), has been improving the resilience of transport systems in four selected countries: Vanuatu and Solomon Islands (Pacific Region); Saint Vincent (Caribbean Region) and Cape Verde (Africa Region). The technical assistance has assessed the vulnerabilities of transport asset management in the target countries, in order to develop transition plans to move towards an “ideal” climate and natural disasters resilient transport asset management system. In addition, the technical assistance has been providing capacity building in resilient transport asset management to SIDS transport agencies through knowledge exchange events and the development of an e-learning course.

JAPANESE EXPERIENCE LEVERAGED

During the development of the e-learning course, three professors from Kyoto University were consulted to incorporate techniques and experience from Japan for integrating disaster risks considerations throughout the lifecycle of transport asset management. The resulting e-learning course, [Climate Resilient Transport in SIDS](#), is open for enrollment on the World Bank’s online learning platform and will be officially launched together with a new website in May 2022. The course will be available to an audience beyond this project’s target countries and will thus contribute to capacity building of transport authorities in various client countries. The e-course includes opening remarks by the Ambassador of Japan to Vanuatu, Mr. Hirohisa Chiba.

In assessing the vulnerability of Cape Verde’s airports and ports to natural hazards, the lessons learned from the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, as well as the results of extensive research conducted in the Human Security Engineering Program at the Kyoto University were incorporated.

MOVING FORWARD

The transition plans developed under this project informed the preparation of World Bank investments in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, now under implementation, and are expected to inform future World Bank operations in Saint Vincent and Cape Verde. The World Bank will continue to support SIDS in strengthening the resilience of their transport networks and transport asset management systems. The experience and lessons learned from this project will be utilized to strengthen the resilience of transport in other SIDS.