



**Reef &
Rainforest**
RESEARCH CENTRE

PNG TREATY VILLAGES

Building Resilience in Treaty Villages, South Fly District, Western Province, PNG

As the 30th Anniversary of the Australian and PNG Torres Strait Treaty is celebrated, an Australian funded project in Papua New Guinea's South Fly District is producing real results, with compelling human stories emerging. The project operates on the border between Australia and PNG, where there are strong cultural ties between Torres Strait Islanders and the PNG Treaty Villages.

While only 4km from Saibai Island in Australia, the PNG Treaty Villages face major barriers to development including a lack of basic infrastructure such as roads, water and sanitation facilities, prevalence of communicable diseases, scarce food supplies and limited livelihood opportunities resulting in high poverty rates.



The project has trained 110 Community Rangers – 84 men and 26 women from local villages selected by village elders – in a wide variety of skills including first aid, sanitation, construction, midwifery, governance and leadership. The first 52 Community Rangers graduated in 2015 and another 58 graduated in 2018, and are now undertaking important infrastructure projects in their villages, including refurbishment of the Mabaduan Hospital and ongoing rainwater collection and storage facilities.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is providing over AU\$5 million for the pilot and full project running since 2014, with the RRRC and INLOC partners contributing another \$1 million. The project has expanded from the original four pilot villages into all 13 Treaty Villages and will operate until 2020.

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