Sato'alepai, Samoa

"...imagine kids going to school in a canoe?"

O le nuu o Satoaleapai

O le eleele latalata i matafaga o lo'o iai i Samoa o ni fanua manaia i le tafao ona o le matagofie o le sami moana, ma matafaga matagofie ae maise la'au e pei o niu o loo faamatagofie ai le fanua...ae e ia se faafitauli talu ai fesuiaiga o lo'o i ai le tau.

O Satoaleapai o lo'o tu pe a ma le tasi le itula mai Salelologa. Sa matou o ai ma lau vasega e talatalanoa i le pulenuu o Satoaleapai, o lona igoa o Polutea. Sa ia fai mai ai o le faafitauli i totonu o le nuu o le lologa mai i le vai talu ai timuga malolosi. Ma e o'o ai i se tulaga ua le mafai ona kolosi se isi i le isi itu pea oo i taimi e mamafa ai timuga. A'ui! E te mafaia ona e mafaufauina le fa'aaogaina o tamaiti aoga o paopao e o ai i le aoga? Ou te lei faaloga lava i se mea faapena!

Ae peitai, o le fofo o le faafitauli na ma'ua ina ua ave se talosaga a le nuu i le UNDP mo se vaega tupe. Sa faaogaina e Satoaleapai lenei seleni e fausia ai se au'ala laupapa, e mafai ona kolosi ai tagata. Ma na fausia ai paipa sima e mafai ai e i'a ma le vai foi ona u'ia totonu ma oo atu i le isi itu. Ma sa faaogaina foi se isi vaega o le tupe e fausia ai se taligalu e puipui ai latou fanua mai i le solo ese atu.

Oute manatu afai e faia e nuu uma o loo aafia i nei aafiaga ona o le fesuisuiaiga o le tau e pei o Satoaleapai, masalo, o le isi auga tupulaga o le a latou vaaia nei mea o loo tatou maua nei.

— BJ Lima

Satoaleapai Village

On the exterior Samoa is an idyllic place to visit because beautiful seas, the amazing beach and the swaying palm trees... but there are cracks in this interior due to climate change.

About one hour away from Salelologa stands a village named Satoaleapai. My class and I talked to the high chief of Satoaleapai. His name was Polutea. He said the problem with his village was that the river kept on flooding because of heavy rains. The people on either side of the river couldn't cross over because of the flooding. Man! Can you imagine kids going to school in a canoe? That's just unheard of!

Anyway the solution to their problem was that they sent a proposal to U.N.D.P for some money and they were successful. Sato'alepai used their money to build a bridge for people to cross over. They built culverts under the bridge so the fish and water could flow through. The grant money was also used to build a sea wall to protect their land from erosion.

You know what I think? I think that if every village that has been affected by climate change followed in Sato'alepais footsteps, then who knows, our next generation might still be able to see what we see in front of us today.

Portraits of Resilience is part of the Many Strong Voices Programme. It illustrates in a personal way what climate change means to young people in the Arctic and Small Island Developing States and helps communities create their own visual archive of the changes they are experiencing. More @ www.manystrongvoices.org