



Auckland Emergency Management

Tokonga Mate Ohotata o Tāmaki Makaurau

Multi-lingual children's storybook – storms and floods

CDEM Resilience Fund Project

October 2023



Acknowledgements:

The project was developed by Auckland Emergency Management and funded by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) through the Resilience Fund.

This report was prepared by Rebecca Long (Senior Education and Youth Advisor, Auckland Emergency Management).

We'd also like to acknowledge all the student authors who helped to create these stories and the project team who supported with all the deliverables to get the final books we see today.

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Background:

Auckland Emergency Management (AEM) recognise children and young people as one of the groups that can be disproportionately affected by emergencies. As children and young people are agents of change, this makes them not only future leaders, but current leaders to influence and encourage their families, schools, peers and others on the importance of emergency preparedness.

This project relates to the NDRS priority of enabling, empowering and supporting community resilience: specifically objectives 13, 14 and 18. These objectives link to enabling and empowering individuals, households, organisations and businesses as well as cultivating an environment for social connectedness in our communities through the engagement and design process. The project requires engagement directly with multiple cultural groups to ensure their beliefs, values and stories are accurately captured for the children's storybooks.

This project provides children with the initial stepping stone to develop their knowledge and skills to influence their environment as they grow.

AEM also recognised the large culturally and linguistically diverse communities of Tāmaki Makaurau, and across Aotearoa and wanted to ensure these books could be read and engaged with by many in these communities.

AEM also found limited resource for kids around storms and flooding hazards, which are now common occurrences across the country. From this it was determined that each of the books would be based around a type of severe weather hazard to help people learn what to do and how to be safe during these events.

As such, the four multi-lingual storybooks, storms and floods project began. This project wanted to incorporate cultural views of our communities to engaged with youth from particular schools and groups that practice and speak the four languages that were chosen; Māori, Samoan, Chinese and Hindi.

Aotearoa has many cultural and ethnic groups that live, work and play in areas that can be impacted by storms and floods. It is essential that all have a plan on how they can best mitigate, prepare and respond to these common emergencies.

This project builds the sector's inclusiveness of disproportionately affected communities, both ethnic, migrant and young people, as well as increases CDEM's responsiveness to and with these communities.

The storybooks provide excellent opportunities for community resilience engagement and collaboration between CDEM groups and these communities. This process helps build whakawhanaungatanga, allows better understanding of emergencies, roles and responsibilities and builds community trust with agencies responsible for emergency messaging. Ultimately this contributes to better response outcomes for communities.

This engagement also offers the CDEM sector insight into the values and beliefs of New Zealand's ethnic communities and obtain a better understanding of the rich cultural resources of diverse communities in Auckland and New Zealand.

Project Focus:

The focus of this work is to engage with culturally and linguistically diverse children's communities to;

- Encourage their knowledge and understanding of emergencies and how to be prepared
- Support the writing and illustration of four multi-lingual children's books about storms and floods.

The final outcome of the four multi-lingual children's storybooks is to be creating a fun way for children to learn about a commonly occurring hazard, storms and floods, and to know what they can do to be prepared for these events as well as what to do to keep themselves and their families safe when they occur.

During the initial youth community engagement sessions, it became apparent that all the children had their own experiences with storms or floods and the project team did their best to incorporate these stories and experiences into the storybooks.

Project Deliverables:

Community Engagement

To ensure that this project aligned with the beliefs and values of each of the chosen cultures (Māori, Samoan, Chinese and Hindi), each community has a Community Working Group (CWG) that consist of children and adults working on their cultural story.

The four community groups are Sutton Park School – writing the Samoan story, Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Te Kotuku – writing the Maori story, Waitakere Hindi School – writing the Hindi story and the New Zealand Multicultural Arts & Sports Centre – writing the Chinese story. Two are school-based groups full immersion units/schools and two after school language and cultural groups.

The workshops for each group involved cover story writing, disaster preparedness, and design and illustration workshops.

AEM engaged a children's story writing teacher and a design and animation teacher to guide each of the groups through the story writing and design process. All four groups supported writing their cultural natural disaster stories. During the design workshops the children and community members from each language group helped to design and illustrate the characters, story settings and overall look of their book. This was to ensure the final storybook was a reflection of the children and community who wrote it.

Development and writing of story

A professional children's writer was contracted to work with each of the CWG's to take their ideas, thoughts and stories in the development of the text for the story.

It was important to AEM that we were inclusive and respectful of our communities groups and their knowledge, understanding and stories about storms and floods, as well as integrating their values into the storybooks.

David Riley from Reading Warrior was the writer contracted who has previously worked with youth and community groups to develop stories for kids.

Illustrations and Artwork development

An experienced illustrator was a part of the team to work with the children to bring their vision of the characters to life on the page. He worked with each of the kids from the groups to hear their thoughts and understand how they wanted the characters to look and feel.

The illustrator used was Stan Fong from Kurawaka Animations. The studio runs a student program with the main focus on training and nurturing young Māori and Pacific artists in a variety of animation skills and techniques.

Evaluation

It was important to AEM that the process of storybook development was captured appropriately through the form of a formal evaluation.

The evaluation consultant, Dovetail, was contracted and met with the four community working groups (CWGs), and the project advisory group to assess and evaluate the overall process and development of these books.

The key findings from the report were:

- Initial reactions to the storybook proofs were extremely positive. Tamariki were captivated by the illustrations and seeing their names and stories in print and recognised their contributions in the narratives and illustrations. Some expressed disappointment at how some aspects had been modified in the final proof. A small number of issues were raised in relation to the translations and visual representation of the different communities.
- Tamariki thoroughly enjoyed the writing and design processes, due to the co-design methods adopted and the engaging delivery of the storybook developers. Another highlight was the ‘Get Ready’ workshops facilitated by Auckland Emergency Management, particularly the treasure hunt and tour of the emergency vehicle.
- Involvement in the storybook project has supported tamariki to build upon previously limited knowledge of emergency preparedness, with evidence of new learning relating to specific weather events. The development of interpersonal skills alongside writing and illustration capabilities was also identified.

Challenges included inadequate resourcing, the limited number of sessions to develop the resources, and an unclear review process. There was broad consensus across the groups that insufficient time was allocated to both the writing and design sessions, which meant that the process was not fully child-led.

Project Management:

Auckland Emergency Management was responsible for the administration of the contracts.

Budget and Expenditure

Income	Expenditure	Comment
\$85,500		Source: National Emergency Management Agency Resilience Fund
	\$6,000	Initial community engagement
	\$20,079	Development and writing of stories
	\$275	Translations
	\$52,900	Illustrations and Artwork development
	\$,6530	Final design deliver
	\$13,756	Initial print run

	\$13,340	Evaluation
	\$112,880	Total Expenditure

Challenges:

Auckland experienced unprecedented rainfall in the first few months of 2023, this resulted in Auckland Emergency Management activating the Emergency Coordination Centre while this project was underway resulting in some delays to the development and design of the books.

The final storybooks were a few months behind schedule, however all those involved in the project were kept informed of the delays and the final products were launched in October 2023.

On-going Costs:

Following on from recommendations and enthusiasm from community groups, there will be ongoing future developments of these stories that will require additional funding.

Auckland Emergency Management will continue to promote these books across its region and to other CDEM groups around the country to encourage conversations with children and young people. Any additional costs for printing for use by AEM will be incurred by Auckland Council.

AEM has secured additional funding from the NEMA Resilience Fund to have each of these storybooks made into an e-book as well as be available in audio format with narration.

Following this phase, there may be additional books created in other languages to accommodate our growing diversity of culture and language.

Final Comments:

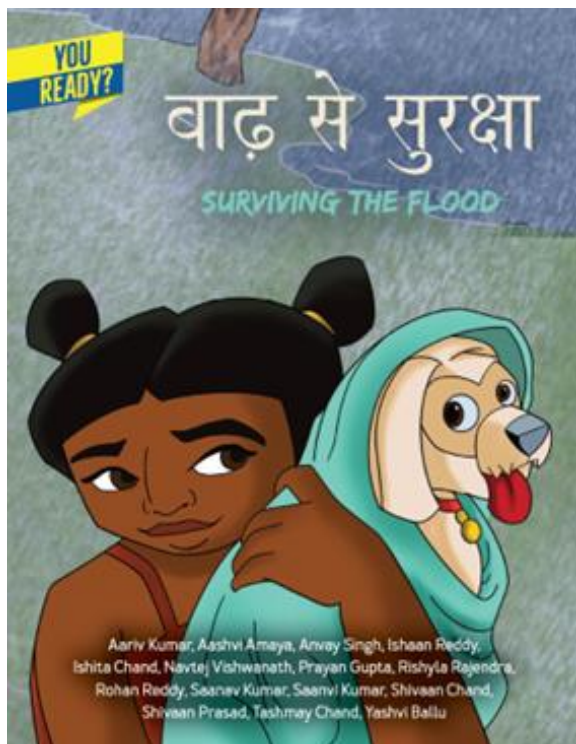
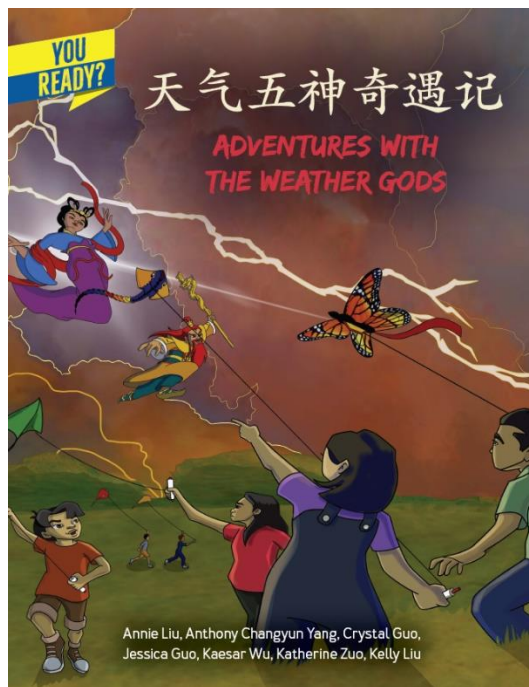
Auckland Emergency Management will continue to support children and young people to prepare for emergencies through the promotion and engagement of these books across the rohe.

The project has contributed to local community groups building their knowledges of storms and floods and bringing in cultural knowledge and understanding of what to do in these situations.

These books are available to download from Auckland Emergency Management's website www.aem.org.nz/storybooks, or you can request a copies directly from AEM through aeminfo@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz.

Appendices:

1. Covers of finished books



2. Photos from the launch







3. Photos from Community Workshops





