IOM PACIFIC STRATEGY (2022–2026)
IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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Cover photo: A group of children rest on a boat at the riverbank of the Ba River on Viti Levu, Fiji (photo credit: Tom Vierus / Pacific Media House)

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Executive Summary

Human mobility, both internal and international, is a powerful driver of sustainable development for Pacific Island migrants and their communities. Migration and migrants are directly relevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Pacific and the achievement of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and many of their targets. The commitment to “leave no one behind” will not be achieved without a central focus on migration in the Pacific. Migration has long been used by Pacific Islanders as a strategy to mitigate environmental and economic risks and is increasingly important to sustainable development in the Pacific. Labour migration makes a substantial contribution to the economies and livelihoods of several Pacific Island countries, with remittances into ten PICs (Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu) amounting to US$689 million in 2018.1 Priority must be accorded to the development of appropriate pathways to facilitate safe, orderly, and regular migration in line with the rule of law and the promotion of human rights.

But the Pacific region is facing unprecedented challenges. Climate change and disasters due to natural hazards are already having an impact on mobility in the Pacific, interacting with and exacerbating existing migration drivers. Climate change projections, even those within 1.5 degrees of global warming, suggest that Pacific Island Countries are facing several critical security threats that are likely to intensify the drivers of migration, displacement and planned relocation of Pacific islanders and communities.2 More needs to be known about the nature of labour migration into the Pacific and the risks it may pose. Trafficking in persons is a growing concern in the Pacific region, which is a source, transit and destination point for trafficking in persons, though the scale of the problem is very difficult to determine, with limited empirical data and awareness and prosecution capabilities.3 Across the Pacific region, urbanization rates have almost doubled in sixty years, contributing to mounting social and environmental pressures.4 Despite the small population some urban settlements in the Pacific account for some of the highest population densities in the world.5 The goal of the IOM Pacific Strategy (2022–2026) is to contribute towards enhanced resilience, governance, and sustainable development in the context of human mobility in the Blue Pacific. In consultation with partners, IOM has identified three interconnected areas for cooperation and promotes cross-cutting approaches across these areas.

These areas reflect IOM’s analysis of the current state of migration in the Pacific and reflect the organizational aim to address related opportunities and challenges. The pillars are:

1. Resilience to climate change and disaster related human mobility
2. Labour mobility and human development
3. Governance for border management and migrant protection

IOM recognizes the importance of cross-cutting considerations in programming. These are:

a. Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic
b. Gender, disability and social inclusion
c. Localization
d. Research, data and evidence

IOM continues to consolidate its expanding presence in the Pacific and partnerships with governments, Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies, civil society and faith-based organizations, communities and development partners. This Strategy recognizes the opportunity for IOM to strengthen localization and active engagement with CSOs and communities at the sub-national level to share best practices, lessons learnt and strategies. IOM plays a central role in the Pacific regional architecture. Leveraging its global roles as the UN Coordinator for the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) coordinator and secretariat of the UN Network on Migration (UNNM), IOM also acts as the focal point for migration in the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in the Pacific and joint UN programming through the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system. The ‘Blue Pacific Continent’ emphasises the connections that the people of the Pacific have with their natural resources, environment, cultures and livelihoods. Pacific Island communities are facing compounding risks from climate change and disasters as well as challenges in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. The promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration has never been more important for Pacific Island countries.

2 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Global Warming of 1.5°C (2019) Available from Global warming of 1.5°C (IPCC).
3 Pacific Immigration Development Community Regional Immigration Framework to Combat Human Trafficking and People Smuggling (2019).
Acronyms

ADB  Asian Development Bank  PIANGO  Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
ASEAN  Association of Southeast Asian Nations  PIC(s)  Pacific Island Country(ies)
CERT  COVID-19 Economic Recovery Taskforce  PICTA  Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement
COFA  Compacts of Free Association  PIDC  Pacific Immigration Development Community
COP  Conference of Parties  PIF  Pacific Islands Forum
CREST  Corporate Responsibility in Eliminating Slavery and Trafficking  PIFS  Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
CROP  Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific  PRP  Pacific Resilience Partnership
CSO  Civil Society Organization  RC  Resident Coordinator
DRR  Disaster Risk Reduction  RLMM  Regional Labour Mobility Meetings
DTM  Displacement Tracking Matrix  RSE  Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme
FRDP  Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific  SDG(s)  Sustainable Development Goal(s)
GCM  Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration  SGBV  Sexual- and Gender-Based Violence
GDP  Gross Domestic Product  SIDS  Small Island Developing States
GMS  Greater Mekong Subregion  SPC  South Pacific Community
IDMC  Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre  SPREP  Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
ILO  International Labour Organization  SWP  Seasonal Worker Program
IOM  International Organization for Migration  TIP  Trafficking in Persons
IRIS  International Recruitment Integrity System  TWG  Technical Working Group
LMRG  Labour Mobility Reference Group  UNCT  United Nations Country Team
MCO  Multi-Country Office  UNSDCF  UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
MSGFTA  Melanesian Spreadhead Group Free Trade Agreement  UNSDG  United Nations Sustainable Development Group
PCCM-HS  Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme
PDD  Platform on Disaster Displacement
Introduction

Migration in the Pacific will play a vital role in supporting the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) and the commitment to “leave no one behind.” Human mobility, both internal and international, can be a powerful driver of sustainable development for Pacific Island migrants and their communities in countries of origin, transit and destination. However, Pacific Island communities are also facing unprecedented risks from climate change and disasters as well as challenges in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Arguably, the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration has never been more important for Pacific Island countries. The goal of the IOM Pacific Strategy (2022–2026) is to contribute towards enhanced resilience, governance and sustainable development in the context of human mobility in the Blue Pacific. Through long-term engagement by IOM with governments and other key stakeholders, the strategy programme pillars have been developed based on IOM’s mandate, expertise and operational history aligned with the migration and sustainable development priorities of Pacific Member States.

The Strategy localizes the global IOM Strategic Vision and the Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy (2020–2024) at the Pacific regional level, contextualizing these in the rich diversity and social, economic and cultural context of the Pacific. It also focuses on the drivers of vulnerability in the Pacific and establishes priorities for multi-country programming to build resilience and prosperity in the Blue Pacific continent. Multi-country programmes (implemented in more than one country) respond to common or cross-border challenges and complement country programming that support country-specific needs. IOM will pursue innovative approaches to the design and implementation of systems to better manage migration so that Pacific people can lead “free, healthy and productive lives.”

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6 From the Vision of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) ‘2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.’
4 IOM Pacific Strategy (2022–2026)
The IOM Pacific Strategy and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

The IOM Pacific Strategy has been developed in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). The IOM Pacific Strategy supports the UNSDCF vision statement contributing to ensuring that by 2027, all people in the Pacific, leaving no place behind, are equal and free to exercise their fundamental rights, enjoying gender equality and peace, resilient to the existential threats and living in harmony with the blue continent. This alignment is demonstrated in Figure 1: The UNSDCF and the IOM Pacific Strategy.

Figure 1: The UNSDCF and the IOM Pacific Strategy
IOM in the Pacific: A genuine and durable partner

IOM continues to strengthen its presence in the Pacific and partnerships with governments, Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies, civil society (including the Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organizations (PIANGO) and faith-based organizations), communities and development partners. IOM works in a unique space between stakeholders, prioritizing integrated operations and intervention that can be effectively scaled across countries. This Strategy recognizes the opportunity for IOM to strengthen localization and active engagement with CSOs and communities at the sub-national level to share best practices, lessons learnt and strategies. Recognizing the importance of coordination and coherence in addressing regional issues, IOM plays a central role in the Pacific regional organization architecture. For example, under the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) IOM chairs the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Human Mobility in the context of Increasing Climate and Disaster Risk. IOM participates in meetings of the Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) and actively supports PIDC priorities. Leveraging its global roles as the UN Coordinator for the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) coordinator and secretariat of the UN Network on Migration (UNNM), IOM also acts as the focal point for migration in the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in the Pacific and joint UN programming through the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system. This Strategy directly links into and promotes the mainstreaming of migration considerations in the UNSDCF, which will drive planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of collective UN support for achieving the 2030 Agenda for countries. The framework will be enacted under the guidance of the three Pacific-based Multi-country Offices (MCOs) in Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Samoa for the period 2023–2027.

Established in 1951, IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with government, international, civil society and community partners. IOM has a strong presence in the Pacific providing support to 12 Member States (Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu). IOM has offices in the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Within the larger geographical area of the Asia-Pacific region, covered by the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) located in Bangkok, Thailand, there are subregional migratory realities for which some country offices are assigned coordinating functions to deal with specific migration dynamics. These help address specific subregional migration issues and emerging trends. They establish priorities for project development and resource mobilization and support project development guided by subregional needs, policies and consultative processes. IOM Canberra, Australia, is the Country Office with Coordination Functions for the Pacific.

The Principle of Leaving No one Behind

IOM’s approach to implementing the principle to leave no one behind in the Pacific will be integrated with the UNSDCF and with IOM’s global, regional and cross-cutting strategic frameworks.

IOM in the Pacific will systematically apply human rights-based, non-discrimination/inclusion, and participatory approaches in the prioritization, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of relevant policies and programmes. It will seek to ensure that migration-related policies and programmes are perceived, designed, and implemented as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, and as an essential contributing factor to leaving no one behind in the region.

It will take into account the UNSDCF other guiding principles of gender equality and women’s empowerment, resilience, sustainability, and accountability. Further, when requested, IOM will assist governments in the follow up to UN human rights recommendations, and support steps towards the ratification of international human rights instruments. It will continue to strengthen the region’s understanding of human rights in the context of migration and reinforce the value of the Global Compact on Migration as a commitment founded in human rights.
Multi-country programme pillars

IOM, in consultation with existing partners, has developed three strategic multi-country programme pillars in the Pacific. These are based on long-term engagement with partners in the Pacific as well as a Pacific Migration Common Country Analysis, UNCT joint analysis and programming for the UNSDCF, the IOM Institutional Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development and lessons learned through programme, project and policy evaluation. These inter-related and mutually reinforcing priorities are based on the principle of leaving no-one behind, emphasize social inclusion and are supported by cross-cutting programming approaches focused on COVID-19, gender, disability and social inclusion, localization and research, data and evidence. Responding to sub-regional needs, IOM’s strategic multi-country programme pillars in the Pacific are:

Pillar 1: Resilience to climate change and disaster related human mobility

Objective 1: Pacific Island governments and communities demonstrate strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity in the context of climate change and disaster-related human mobility.

Pillar 2: Labour mobility and human development

Objective 2: Labour migrants and their communities benefit from effective and well managed labour mobility for sustainable human development.

Pillar 3: Governance for border management and migrant protection

Objective 3: Pacific Island Countries (PICs) have strengthened capacities, policy frameworks and data to protect and assist migrants in situations of vulnerability and promote safe migration and borders.

Cross-cutting programming priorities

In addition to the multi-country programme priorities, IOM recognizes the importance of cross-cutting considerations in programming. These are described below but are also addressed in more detail under each pillar, noting the need for more precise and operationally focused responses.

A) COVID-19

The pandemic and its socio-economic fallout pose great risks to migrants in the Pacific. Migrants experience multiple barriers to public and health services, including insecure legal status, restrictive policies and limited knowledge of health systems. Migrants will be crucial to longer-term recovery and promoting migrants’ right to health must be central to COVID-19 response and recovery plans. IOM will continue to scale up provision support and will work to increase understanding of social impacts of COVID-19 on migrant sending households, in some cases COVID-19 has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities of migrant populations, for example though an identified correlation between lockdowns and increased instances of trafficking in persons (TIP), migrant smuggling, and exploitation. Since the pandemic hit in March 2020, IOM has been responsive in tracking and collecting data on the impacts felt throughout the Pacific as highlighted in IOM’s publication of resources including the Rapid Assessment of the Socioeconomic Impacts of COVID-19 on Labour Mobility in the Pacific Region (2020). IOM will continue to support regional coherence with other regional efforts underway through the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Taskforce (CERT) and the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway-COVID-19 (PHP-C).

B) Gender, disability and social inclusion

Due to pre-existing inequalities, marginalized and vulnerable groups including women, people with diverse sexual orientations, gender expressions and sex characteristics, youth, the elderly and persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic. These groups are also routinely excluded from economic opportunities including access to labour markets and opportunities for labour mobility, further exacerbating their vulnerabilities. Continued discrimination, violence and exploitation, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) violates human rights, limiting productivity and economic growth. SGBV and other abuses can extend to all genders within mobile populations, with women...
often experiencing a heightened threat of being trafficked, smuggled or migrating under unsafe, insecure conditions. TIP includes many diverse and changeable gender dynamics and can impact communities as such in nuanced ways. Labour mobility schemes in the Pacific have been dominated by males. Considerations of youth need to be made in programming as more than 50% of the Pacific region’s population are under the age of 23. This “youth bulge” is expected to result in growing unemployment and accelerated rural-urban drift. Migrants with disabilities face many obstacles and face much greater vulnerability including restricted access to services. A whole of society approach is required for more assertive and collective efforts to promote inclusive and gender-responsive measures across the board.

C) Localization

While both migrants and displaced persons may travel vast distances, migration is essentially a local-to-local dynamic, linking communities in places of origin, transit and destinations. IOM recognizes the rich diversity of cultures throughout the Pacific and notes the importance of valuing traditional knowledge and cultures, particularly in the context of relocation, mobility and adaptation. Local governments and other key local actors are well placed to understand and contextualize migration realities. Localization is crucial in developing and implementing multi-country programmes based on policy frameworks that coordinate action at all levels (individual, community, national, regional and global). Empowering governance at local levels is key to effective service delivery that promote integrated and

Female market vendors at the main market in Port Vila, Vanuatu (Tom Vierus / Pacific Media House).

inclusive approaches to human mobility. The inclusion of a diversity of local stakeholders supports broad-based ownership that responds to local needs and cultural norms. In times of crisis, this also supports innovative and rapid responses, and improved accountability to affected populations (AAP). While the international and national legal and policy frameworks are important, an integrated multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach is needed to promote transformative approaches at the local level. In recent years development partners like the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) have ensured that localization is a high-level policy priority. Within these frameworks, a key focus on localization translates to the development of quality in-country partnerships, facilitation of locally led development and a commitment to capacity-building and sustainability of results among civil society and other relevant partners. IOM remains committed to localization following these principles at all levels of programming across the Pacific.

D) Research, data, and evidence

Quality, accessible, reliable and timely research, including disaggregated data, is essential to inform policies, action and public opinion. This is key to the advancement of rights-based, people-centered migration governance. The recent development of institutional resources like the IOM guide on Leave No Migrant Behind: The 2030 Agenda and Data Disaggregation, reflects the growing understanding that disaggregation of data is an important way to ensure inclusiveness for specific population subgroups.

IOM has drawn upon its global expertise and practices to provide advisory support to Pacific governments to enable more informed government decision making on migration governance matters. Similarly, effective disaster response is reliant on pre-existing data and data collection and analysis capabilities of people and resources. Innovation is the cornerstone of adaptation to changing conditions, including climate change, and this relies on data to identify areas requiring new approaches, and to provide feedback and refinement as the initiative is piloted and upscaled.

While progress continues to be made in collecting and analyzing data in the region, many challenges continue to be faced, particularly in ensuring appropriate understanding and use of statistics. Equally, more can be done to ensure that traditional knowledge is systematically integrated into decision making. Continued emphasis is needed on harmonization of definitions and indicators; improving administrative data collection and analysis; better use of census and survey data; and support to better utilize data and statistics in national planning and budgetary processes.

Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in Vanuatu

The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) gathers and analyzes data to disseminate critical multi layered information on the mobility, vulnerabilities, and needs of displaced and mobile populations. The DTM provides information on the needs of the communities affected by slow and sudden-onset hazards or disasters, to establish their needs, and to track mobility and movement in respect to evacuation orders and inter-island migration that enables decision makers and responders to provide these populations with better context-specific assistance. DTM has been operational in Vanuatu from 2018 and was instrumental in the response to the South-East Ambrym Earthquake, the 2019 Ambae Earthquake and Tropical Cyclone Harold in 2020. As a critical step in the disaster responses, site assessments and return intention surveys were carried out with coordination from the Vanuatu National Disaster Management Office.

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**Theory of Change**

The below Theory of Change diagram is a tool to summarize and communicate internally, and to all stakeholders, the pathway and assumptions underpinning our theory of how IOM and partner contributions will lead to positive change. That is, it communicates the key stakeholder priorities and needs we are focusing on, the actions in our area of expertise which we plan to undertake, and how this will lead to the achievement of the overarching strategic goal.

This Theory of Change is a living document that may be updated to ensure the Strategy remains aligned to regional, international, and IOM developments and needs, as they evolve. It facilitates later evaluation of the effectiveness of our strategy, specifically by allowing us to interrogate assumptions and change pathways.

**Figure 2: Theory of Change**

Contribution to enhanced resilience, governance, and sustainable development in the context of human mobility in the Blue Pacific

- Resilience to climate change and disaster-related human mobility
- Disaster management capability and planning for sudden and slow onset hazards in government and community
- Improved disaster management operational frameworks and skills
- Climate-related policy and legal frameworks

- Labour mobility and human development
- Enhanced impact of diaspora communities and their remittances
- Pre-departure assistance and reintegration for labour migrants

- Governance for border management and migrant protection
- Protection of migrants experiencing vulnerability
- Integrated border management and robust regional data collection and sharing

Cross-cutting: COVID-19; Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion; Localisation; Research, Data and Evidence.

**Issues: Governments and community require improved data, policies and operational capacity, including regional harmonization, to respond efficiently to long- and short-term effects of climate change, including displacement.**

**Issues: Labour migrants require further social, economic, and psychological support throughout the migration cycle. Strengthened coordination and remittances can be used to maximize the impacts of labour migration.**

**Issues: There is a risk of TIP and associated national and individual risks; exposure to other illegal trades; and an inability to track migration and thus manage risks effectively.**

**Pillars are mutually reinforcing – only most prominent pathways of influence are shown**

**Key assumptions:**
- Resources for multi-country regional programming is available, as donor priority.
- Regional bodies and governments continue to prioritize migration.
- IOM adaptation & risk management measures continue to effectively respond in crises.
- Regional bodies and governments will draw on IOM’s technical expertise in developing sustainable and regional migration strategies.
Pacific Migration Context

Migration and development outlook in the Pacific

Migration has long been a common strategy used by Pacific Islanders to mitigate environmental and economic risks and is increasingly important to sustainable development in the Pacific. Pacific islanders are considered to be one of the most mobile groups in the world. Migration and migrants are directly relevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Pacific and the achievement of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and many of their targets. The commitment to leave no one behind in the Pacific will not be achieved without a central focus on migration. The Pacific ‘Sea of Islands’ have a combined land mass of 64,200 square kilometers (excluding PNG) yet their ocean area covers 15% of the earth surface. The ‘Blue Pacific Continent’ narrative agreed by Pacific leaders recognizes Pacific Island Countries as large ocean states with shared stewardship of the Pacific Ocean. It emphasizes the connections that the people of the Pacific have with their natural resources, environment, cultures and livelihoods. But Pacific Island countries are acutely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change which is undermining sustainable development progress and human security.

Figure 3: SDGs relevant to the IOM Pacific Strategy

The IOM Pacific Strategy directly relates to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
**Climate change and disasters** are already having an impact on mobility in the Pacific, interacting with and exacerbating existing migration drivers. Climate change is undermining rural and coastal livelihoods and compounding socio-economic vulnerabilities of local communities and prospective migrants. Climate change can contribute to migration undertaken voluntarily in support of employment or better access to services (either internal or cross-border), displacement (predominantly internally but also voluntarily across borders) and is the critical issue to which planned relocation is becoming an important response. Disaster displacement is one of the region’s most significant humanitarian and sustainable development challenges. Displacement or poorly planned relocation can exacerbate and lead to other vulnerabilities, such as internal migration to informal urban settlements which can be disaster prone with few livelihood opportunities and also increase the risk of exploitation and trafficking. Importantly, migration may not be possible for the most vulnerable including the poor, disabled, elderly and women and children. This may lead to a situation where people are ‘trapped’ and become increasingly vulnerable with the increasing adverse impacts of climate change.

**Labour migration** makes a substantial contribution to the economies of several Pacific Island countries, and international labour migration remains a key strategy to improve livelihoods for Pacific Islanders. Historically, labour migration flows in the Pacific have mostly consisted of permanent migration to the Pacific Rim, including New Zealand, the United States and Australia. Seasonal work has significantly increased in the Pacific in the last decade with over 100,000 Pacific Island visas approved between 2010 and 2019 for seasonal employment in Australia under the Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) and in New Zealand under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme alone. Labour migration flows from PICs have become more diverse in recent years with small but consistent flows of Fijians, Tongans, and other Pacific Islanders to Japan as well as Fijians to the Middle East for private military and security work since the early 2000s. Intra Pacific labour migration is also on the rise, with Papua New Guinea and Fiji receiving a number of Pacific Islander labour migrants every year\(^1\). In the North Pacific, the Compacts of Free Association (COFA) between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Republic of Palau allows citizens of the freely associated states to live and work in the United States, contributing to high rates of emigration. Despite having some of the highest remittance transfers cost, remittances accounted for at least 10% of GDP in four countries in this region, including 37.6 per cent of Tonga’s GDP in 2019, which is the highest of any country in the world\(^2\). Target 10c of the Sustainable Development Goals calls to reduce the transaction costs of migrant remittances to 3 per cent by 2030. For many Pacific Island countries, the emigration of workers can cause shortages in key skills but results in the benefit of remittances and new skills amongst returnees. It is important to link education and skill development with labour market needs but also maintain focus on overall sustainable development progress in local communities. The COVID-19 crisis has revealed the limitations of migration policies and governance in the region, with the majority of PICs yet to roll out support to migrant workers and their households\(^11\). The region is also reliant on a strong travel and tourism industry, with some countries experiencing tourist arrivals that outnumber resident populations. In 2019, tourism contributed to 34% of Fiji’s GDP, and 35% of Vanuatu’s. Even in countries with a relatively small travel and tourism sector, such as Kiribati, the contribution at 19% of GDP in 2019 is significant. As debt levels grow in the Pacific, there are significant pressures to reopen borders quickly, particularly for countries with a greater reliance on tourism and whereby governments have provided significant financial support for tourism businesses. Chairing the UNCT’s Task Force on Reopening Borders, IOM aims to support Pacific governments in providing necessary capacity to gradually lift travel restrictions and relaunch cross-border human mobility.

**Trafficking in persons** is a growing concern in the Pacific region, which is a source, transit and destination point for trafficking in persons. The scale of the problem is very difficult to determine due to a lack of overall awareness, infrequent prosecutions and limited official statistics, as well as a related paucity of information due to a dearth of targeted research and data collection and the insidious nature of the crime. While labour mobility is important for Pacific islanders, there is also significant labour migration into the Pacific, particularly from Asian countries to work in construction and extractive industries (mining, logging and fisheries). This has created challenges in protecting the rights of these migration workers and many have been stranded without support following border closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More needs to be known about the nature of labour migration into the Pacific and the risks it may pose. There are clear links between TIP and the extractive industries in a number of PICs.

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\(^1\) ILO, *Labour Mobility in Pacific Island Countries* (Fiji, 2019) Available from [wcrs_712549.pdf](https://ilo.org) 
\(^2\) It is estimated that the proportion of emigrants to resident population comprises, 50.6% in Tonga, 46.2% in Samoa, 39.2% in the Federated States of Micronesia, 32.8% in Palau, 22.4% in Marshall Islands, 21.5% in Fiji and 18.4% in Tuvalu, World Bank, *Pacific Labour Mobility, Migration and Remittances in Times of Covid-19* (2020) Available from [World Bank Document](https://www.worldbank.org) 
\(^11\) Ibid.
The long distances between islands and small land areas make maritime areas difficult to monitor, with PICs lacking the resources to effectively monitor borders and enforce national and international law. Evidence of forced labour and other abuses (including unexplained deaths at sea) have continued to come to light in the fishing industry in the Pacific. Many fishing fleet operators rely heavily on rural, migrant workers (often from Southeast Asia) and these workers are extremely vulnerable to abuse in distant-water fleets.

Across the region, urbanization is contributing to mounting social and environmental pressures. Despite the small population some urban settlements in the Pacific account for some of the highest population densities in the world. Rural to urban migration can be a positive strategy for livelihood diversification and building resilience, including among communities facing climate risk in the Pacific Islands region where urban centers and main islands already attract large numbers of people. However, there are numerous challenges associated with urbanization including the growth of informal settlements and increased urban poverty. People living in informal settlements face additional vulnerability as a result of their occupation of land being unsuitable for development (for example due to high flooding and erosion risks) while lack of legal recognition of informal settlements (stemming from an absence of permits or secured tenure) can render them largely excluded from urban planning, including provision of critical services. While issues of land ownership and tenure can be complex and often contentious, traditional and customary systems in the past have accommodated movement of people, including whole communities, onto land they do not own. This movement may be temporary or permanent, though clearly any public policy response must prioritize community participation and consultation.

While demographic change rarely drives migration directly, it is a proximate factor that interacts with other factors (such as livelihood opportunities) to influence migration. Elements of population size and structure, such as aging, dependency ratios, and population density in cities, are important determinants of environmental burden and risk, and therefore become important considerations in migration policy. In most Pacific Island countries, urban population growth is much more rapid than that of the rural population, thereby contributing to a “triple jeopardy” of areas of high population growth, climate change “hotspots” and areas of high poverty. The continued high fertility rates in a number of Pacific countries result in large numbers of young people (often referred to as a youth bulge) requiring education and job opportunities. High population growth is driving a rapid increase in the proportion of young people in PICs, with half the region’s population aged under 23. Programme actions need to uphold the values outlined in the UN 2030 Youth Strategy where the human rights of every young person are realized; every young person is empowered to achieve their full potential; and that young people’s agency, resilience and their positive contributions as agents of change are recognized.

Blue Pacific sub-regional priorities

In addition to strengthening support for the implementation of global agreements on migration such as the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and important sustainable development frameworks for small island developing states (SIDS) such as the 2030 Agenda and SAMOA Pathway, there are important regional policy frameworks and agreements for the IOM (and the UN system more broadly) to ensure that support is anchored in regional priorities. These include:

• The Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP): aims to guide and promote coordinated and integrated priorities and approaches for regional, national and community levels. These embed risk considerations into sustainable development which contribute to development outcomes that are resilient to climate change and disaster risks.

• Boe Declaration on Regional Security (2018) and Boe Declaration Action Plan (2019): The Declaration supports an expanded concept of security, emphasizing human security and humanitarian assistance. The ‘Boe Declaration Action Plan’, endorsed by Pacific leaders in Tuvalu in 2019 provides a framework for Forum Members to implement the Boe Declaration including actions under Strategic Focus Areas that include ‘Climate Security’ and ‘Human Security’.

• The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent: based on ‘drivers of change’ that require concerted collective action, including population change, migration, urbanization, labour mobility and remittances.

• The Framework for Pacific Regionalism was endorsed by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in 2014 to provide the platform for a reinvigorated regionalism through a more open and consultative process of priority-setting.

• Trade agreements that include a focus on movement of labour in regional and subregional trade agreements such as Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA), Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER Plus), Melanesian Spreadhead Group Free Trade Agreement (MSGFTA) and the Post-Cotonou arrangements (beyond 2020), specifically the Pacific Regional Protocol (PRP) as well as the proposed Regional Labour Mobility Meetings (RLMM).

• The PIDC Regional Human Trafficking and People Smuggling Framework
Multi-country programme pillars

IOM, in consultation with partners, has identified three inter-connected areas for cooperation and promotes cross-cutting approaches across these areas which reflect IOM’s analysis of the current state of migration in the Pacific and the organizational aim to address related opportunities and challenges. These three pillars localize the global IOM Strategic Vision in the Pacific and reflect a clear shift away from strictly defined programmatic areas. IOM’s humanitarian work complements long-term development planning while migration governance needs to evolve to address challenges such as climate change and health services in addition to maximizing the human development opportunities created by labour mobility. These pillars respond to Pacific regional sustainable development and migration needs and have been developed in alignment with the UNCT Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) process. IOM’s three strategic multi-country programme priorities in the Pacific (2022–2026) are as follows.

**Pillar 1:** Resilience to climate change and disaster-related human mobility

**Pillar 2:** Labour mobility and human development

**Pillar 3:** Governance for border management and migrant protection
Objective 1: Pacific Island governments and communities demonstrate strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity in the context of climate change and disaster-related human mobility

Resilience to the slow and sudden onset hazards exacerbated by climate change is fundamental to Pacific communities, their culture, and achievement of the SDGs. Steps and measures should be taken to avert, minimize or address the adverse impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters, including ensuring the rights of individuals and groups in situations of vulnerability. Climate change and disaster displacement related programmes and policies need to be underpinned by data, evidence and research — applying mixed-methods and participatory methodologies. Ensuring that national ownership of data and research is in place, that collection and management of evidence is robust and well-integrated in the region, and that analysis and utilization capabilities are adequate, is critical to ensuring the preparation of PICs is informed and effective. Such approaches are also complimentary to conflict-sensitive, do no harm approaches, and have the potential for strong integration with accountability to affected populations initiatives.

Drawing on this improved evidence base, robust policy and legal frameworks unlock the Pacific’s ability to improve resilience to slow and sudden onset hazards — ranging from in-situ adaptation and planned relocation, through to efficient responses to disasters. In turn, policy and legal frameworks provide support for capacity building in operational response and skills. IOM’s strategic focus thus responds to the region’s need for more synchronized, effective, and protection-sensitive operational and policy approaches to climate change and disaster management. This will include fit-for-purpose policy and implementation frameworks, informed livelihoods initiatives, data-informed decision-making, and stakeholder understanding and skill building. Critically, disaster management approaches will focus on long term preparedness and capacity-building, paired with innovative and flexible risk response facilities. This enables a rapid pivot of programming to support disaster response and recovery as required, thus operationalizing the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus. Importantly, the IOM Pacific Strategy is aligned with the IOM Institutional Strategy on Migration, Environment and Climate Change 2021–2030.

Damage to a house after Ambrym Earthquake and Volcano in January 2019 (photo credit: IOM Vanuatu).
Outcomes:

**Outcome 1.1:** Improved integrated and government-owned evidence and research on climate-related mobility and disaster displacement

**Actions:**
- Provide support for **nationally owned displacement tracking mechanisms** and climate mobility monitoring, to address emergency displacement and long-term mobility challenges relating to climate change.
- Developing governments’ long-term predictive analysis of climate change and migration trends.
- Support **governments and communities’ own data priorities**, via building on current systems and capacity.
- Enable government and civil society actors to utilize data and evidence to inform their own **advocacy priorities and actions**, thus supporting Pacific voice in arenas such as international policy debates.
- Ensure that research and evidence is **inclusive, protection-sensitive, gender-sensitive, participatory, and utilizes Pacific-origin research methodologies** and frameworks, such that these elements are systematically incorporated in all stages and areas of data and evidence use.
- Facilitate **innovative and flexible approaches** via improving usability and timeliness of data.

**Outcome 1.2:** Climate-related human mobility policy and legal frameworks are effective and harmonized

**Actions:**
- Provide technical support to policy development on migration, environment and climate change issues, and integrate **human mobility dimensions in national climate change and disaster risk reduction frameworks and policies**, ensuring coherence across policy domains. Specifically, this should build the capacity of public and private stakeholders and individuals across the region to engage with, contribute to and develop policies, plans and frameworks to address the consequences of climate change and environmental degradation on human mobility. Policies developed will seek to address urbanization, land tenure and ownership policy, laws related to relocation and displacement, and livelihoods impacts, as well as address needs of vulnerable groups including women, children, youth, persons with disabilities and the elderly to facilitate peaceful and orderly migration and avert vulnerability and conflict.
- Facilitate enhanced South-South and triangular cooperation on migration, environment and climate change, promote knowledge exchange and policy harmonization across the Pacific, to improve regional coordination and policy strength, particularly around the transnational elements of climate change- and disaster-related human mobility.
- Support **Pacific-led advocacy for including climate mobility** in regional and global agreements, including in the outcomes of COP negotiations, in the country-led commitments and plans developed under such agreements and supporting the role of youth as agents of change in the Pacific.
Outcome 1.3: Improved disaster-management capabilities within governments and communities through cohesive and clear operational frameworks and skills

Actions:

- Facilitation of harmonized disaster preparedness and response plans, recognizing that effective cross-sectoral and regional response requires common understanding of response procedures, coordination mechanisms, protection mechanisms, and concepts.
- Facilitation of emergency simulation scenarios such as tabletop activities for dissemination across countries at the sub-regional level.
- Support for disaster preparedness within communities and governments, paired with programme structures that provide pre-designated rapid response funding and support to communities and governments as disasters occur, such that resilience and preparedness resourcing can be repurposed for disaster response and recovery.
- Localization of disaster preparedness initiatives, including locally led planning, training, and response.
- Incorporation of traditional and indigenous knowledge and strategies to manage disasters and displacement.
- Addressing the human mobility information needs of populations in challenging situations, such as via dissemination of information about safe and fair internal and international migration pathways, and options to adapt in situ.

Specific cross-cutting considerations

i. COVID-19:

COVID-19, paired with the ongoing challenges associated with climate change and environmental degradation, further underlines the importance of investing in longer term resilience and locally led responses to slow and rapid onset crises. IOM will give additional consideration to managing COVID-19 risks in displacement contexts, including mitigating disease outbreaks in crisis settings.

ii. Gender, disability and social inclusion:

Migrants too often fall through the cracks of emergency preparedness, relief and recovery systems, particularly where intersectional vulnerabilities, such as displacement paired with disability, compound challenges arising from slow and sudden onset hazards. Planning for climate related mobility must ensure that ‘trapped’ populations, or those that face barriers to well managed human mobility, are protected. These include language barriers, restrictions on mobility, irregular immigration status, limited social networks and isolation that hinder the ability of migrants to access protection, move out of harm’s way, or otherwise ensure their own safety and wellbeing. Disaggregated data must be featured in all programming. Paired with improved representation and adequate time dedicated to considering gender and disability status, this data will provide the foundation for legal and policy framework discussions, and disaster management capacity-building.

iii. Localization:

Local actors and institutions are increasingly at the forefront of addressing the climate crisis and the consequences of human mobility, since it is at the local level where the development impact of these issues is most profoundly felt. In some cases, however, local actors lack the capacity to deal effectively with the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on human mobility. In others, they are not sufficiently empowered to contribute to relevant policy development or to operational responses, despite possessing a wealth of local knowledge and expertise. Special attention is therefore required to recognize and support capacity at local level, including community and faith-based organizations, local civil society groups as well as local authorities. Support for existing local level networks and forums will be pursued to strengthen collective capacity for cost-effective and sustainable community responses.
## Partnerships

### Table 1: Pillar 1 Partnerships

| Regional Organizations | New and existing regional relationships will be consolidated to advance regional policy dialogues and evidence building on the links between climate change, environmental degradation, and human mobility, and to support resilience building activities. The regional influence and mandates of CROP agencies like the University of South Pacific, Secretariat for Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) including through the Pacific Resilience Partnership Technical Working Groups, especially the TWG on Human Mobility, the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) will be leveraged in IOM programming. Partnerships with other regional bodies like the Coastal Management Advisory Council (CMAC), Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA), the Historic Preservation office (HPO) will be strengthened, and new partners will be consolidated in future programming. |
| Governments | Collaboration and coordination with Pacific governments will be at the center of programming. Drawing upon the resources and experiences of government stakeholders, IOM will ensure government ownership of development results, support Pacific governments to develop inclusive and context-specific national policies and programmes and prioritize mainstreaming of climate change into national development planning. |
| United Nations Agencies | In line with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, IOM will adopt an integrated approach of partnerships with other UN agencies to coordinate efforts, establish synergies and ensure complementarity. Existing inter-agency partnerships are key such as with ESCAP, ILO and OHCHR in the implementation of the Pacific Climate Change and Migration and Human Security (PCCM-HS) and the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT), as well as partnerships with UNDP and UNEP. These partnerships will also serve as a blueprint to form durable partnerships with other UN agencies. |
| Civil Society | Climate change and environmental migration require a whole-of-society approach and the engagement of civil society actors is pertinent to this goal. Engagement and inclusion of local and regional CSOs, FBOs, Pacific communities and traditional leaders will be prioritized ensuring local capacity building and sustainability of interventions. Resourcing civil society partnerships also contributes towards ensuring the benefits of programming reach the most marginalized groups. Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (PIANGO) will be engaged and consulted. |
| Private Sector | Engagement with local, regional, and multi-national private sector partners will facilitate the establishment of diverse programme partnerships and support IOM’s effort to explore new opportunities for investment and innovation to address the region’s vulnerabilities. Private sector collaboration will also improve delivery of planned activities by using their pre-existing logistical and technical capacities, enhancing resource mobilization and coordination. |
| Academic Institutions and Media | IOM will harness the potential, vibrancy, and creativity of universities and think tanks that provide foundational research on slow and sudden onset hazards, and on human mobility. Collaboration with entities such as the University of the South Pacific (USP) will open doors to greater rigor and cross-border data sharing. Research will also be key to implementation of innovative and adaptive programming. Collaborative dialogue with the media will benefit advocacy and awareness raising initiatives as well as foster policy action. Accountability to Affected Populations initiatives will also be reliant upon understanding and engaging diverse, local media and communications avenues. |
**Pillar 2: Labour mobility and human development**

**Objective 2:** Labour migrants and their communities benefit from effective and well managed labour mobility for human development.

Labour mobility is recognized as a critical issue in the Pacific. IOM has been working closely with partners, including governments, donors, and communities across the Pacific, to strengthen their approach to labour mobility in a wide range of areas. In addition to other reasons for migration, labour mobility is embraced by various Pacific Island countries (PICs) as a way to contribute to climate resilience by increasing earnings that can be saved, pooled, and/or invested to improve the living conditions of migrant workers and their communities. The PIFS Comprehensive Assessment of the Pacific Labour Mobility Arrangements will number recommendations to strengthen Pacific labour mobility. Initial recommendations include greater information flow, including sharing of statistics and data, resolution of social issues related to labour mobility including family-marital instability and cultural barriers, strengthened economic policy schemes and diaspora remittance and greater protection of the rights of migrant workers. Strengthened gender-responsive and sensitive programming is required at all stages of the migration cycle to support greater inclusion of women in seasonal labour mobility schemes. A localized but global approach means a high standard of support that can be offered to Pacific Island governments.

Strengthening pre-departure and reintegration assistance to Pacific labour migrants, provides an opportunity to aspiring and participating labour migrants facing a host of challenges, including decent work deficits during recruitment and employment, adverse social impacts on families and communities left behind, lack of programming for social and economic pre-departure assistance and reintegration, costs and indebtedness associated with labour migration, and low participation levels of women in regional labour mobility schemes. Strengthening capacity of associations around diaspora communities can be used as a mechanism to provide financial training in remittances to reduce low levels of financial awareness and literacy amongst Pacific communities. Harnessing the potential of diaspora communities is a key pathway to strengthening sustainable human development of the region, as diaspora communities provide an essential source of support to many households in PICs, as remittances informally serve as critical social protection. A concerted effort to reducing the cost of sending remittances to the Pacific remains vital to ensuring the success of labour mobility initiatives. Enhanced diaspora communities also provide a pathway to knowledge and expertise sharing, skills development and training and can be harnessed to build sustainable development impacts. Strengthening regional labour mobility governance frameworks through collaboration with regional bodies, governments and other key stakeholders is key to facilitating a Pacific labour mobility environment in which there is increased access to labour mobility initiatives and greater regional dialogue on labour mobility decision making.

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**Outcomes:**

**Outcome 2.1:** Strengthened pre-departure assistance and sustainable reintegration support to labour migrants

**Actions:**

- Strengthening community, rural and youth awareness and engagement on labour mobility issues to support informed decision making through multi-media engagement and existing community-based structures.
- Provide comprehensive pre-departure assistance and strengthening of existing migrant resource centers including pre-employment orientation, holistic family support and social support, strengthening financial literacy, strengthening education on cultural and social contexts in countries of destination, rights-based empowerment and awareness raising of migrant workers, and needs-based support to workers with heightened vulnerability to abuse and exploitation.
- Support strengthened return and reintegration services, incorporating IOM’s integrated approach to reintegration encompassing social, economic, and psychological elements at the individual level, the community level, and the structural level, and utilising traditional knowledge systems where possible.
- Strengthening labour market information systems and capacity building of labour sending units.

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20 IOM, Reintegration Handbook - Practical guidance on the design, implementation and monitoring of reintegration assistance. (Geneva, 2019)
**Outcome 2.2:** Enhanced impact of diaspora communities and their remittances on sustainable development

**Actions:**

- Enable, engage, and empower diaspora to leverage remittances for strengthened human development through enabling communities to reach their full well-being potential, engaging connection of transnational communities, empowering trade and investment, knowledge and expertise sharing, skills development and training. Specifically, include mobilizing diaspora resources for disaster response and humanitarian assistance and financial empowerment of vulnerable groups such as women.

- Support capacity building for diaspora associations and networks, utilising traditional knowledge systems and online engagement, and support diaspora mapping. Assist Pacific governments to engage with diaspora more closely and strategically to further contribute towards development.

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**Outcome 2.3:** Strengthened regional and national labour mobility governance and coordination systems

**Actions:**

- Support the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and relevant working groups to increase accessibility of labour mobility initiatives and programmes to PIFS members, alongside operating as an inclusive regional platform for decision making on labour mobility.

- Continued support to the assessment of regional labour mobility and the subsequent development of a regional labour mobility strategy.

- Assessment, review and development of sub-regional and national migration policies for government (including data policy), conducting training for government officials involved in migration management, including incoming and outbound Pacific labour migrants.

- Facilitate, encourage, and support regional labour mobility governance platforms.

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21 IOM, IOM’s Strategy to Enable, Engage and Empower Diaspora. Available from IOM’s Strategy to Enable, Engage and Empower Diaspora | Diaspora and Development.


22 IOM Pacific Strategy (2022–2026)
Cross-cutting considerations

i. COVID-19:
COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on Pacific labour mobility, disrupting existing systems and introducing critical challenges to Pacific migrant workers and the economies that their remittances support. The pandemic has led to broad-based decreases in employment and earnings of seasonal workers, though the impacts range between PICs. As a result, remittances to PICs also decreased as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Strengthening labour mobility within the Pacific Islands can be used as a tool to support socio-economic recovery from COVID-19. Guidance from the World Bank recommends that policy interventions be introduced to curb the negative impacts of COVID-19 on labour mobility including greater protection and promotion of employment of migrant workers, expansion of access to social assistance and social services and reducing the cost of remittance services\textsuperscript{23}. Throughout labour mobility programming, support is required to involved stakeholders to facilitate mobility within a COVID-19 context\textsuperscript{24}.

ii. Gender, disability and social inclusion:
Local selection processes for participation in seasonal work schemes have discriminated against groups of people including based on age, gender, location, and disability, however this does differ between countries\textsuperscript{25}. From 2012–2019 the percentage of women in the Australian SWP ranged from only 12%–18%\textsuperscript{26}, however these numbers are increasing. Across all labour migration programming, there needs to be greater inclusion of women, people with disability and other minorities and strengthened gender-responsive and sensitive programming at all stages of the migration cycle to support greater inclusion of women. Support is required to build coordinated governance structures for women’s participation in labour mobility schemes, including the development of standard operating procedures for women’s health service provision while working in destination countries. Assessments on labour mobility, can be utilized to identify barriers to entry for potential minority labour mobility candidates and work to with regional bodies and governments to implement policies to address these challenges. Similarly, within pre-departure orientation greater community awareness and engagement and with women’s groups, and other minority groups can be used to support informed labour mobility decision making.

iii. Localization:
Centralized recruitment services can be a barrier for potential labour migrants from taking part in regional labour mobility schemes and other labour migration opportunities. There can be high costs associated with registering, having medical checks and police clearances, and even lodging passport applications, and often these services are not available in the outer islands. Some potential participants may not even hear about the opportunity to become a labour migrant if they are not aware of a recruitment drive. Support to decentralize recruitment services for labour mobility participants to outer islands can improve participation rates and have flow on effects in relation to equal opportunity and remittance flows. Utilising existing knowledge systems and coordination mechanisms such as provincial radio stations, print products, grassroots ambassadors, or local churches can be an effective way to increase community outreach and communication regarding labour mobility opportunities to people living outside of major centers. Through strengthened pre-departure assistance IOM can support the formalization of links between rural training centers and recruitment drives conducted by the government to improve competency-based recruitment and greater reach in rural areas. In turn, localizing the availability of labour migration opportunities can contribute to the benefits of social and economic remittances flowing into decentralized communities.

iv. Research, data and evidence:
There is a need for greater research, information flow, including the sharing of statistics and data on labour mobility within the Pacific region. IOM will increase research and data collection on regional, sub-regional and national labour mobility arrangements to inform regional policy development and coordination mechanisms. Under pre-departure assistance a strengthened labour market information systems are required to support databases of jobseekers and increase accessibility of labour mobility arrangements and preparation of required immigration health forms and documents. Research and data collection on remittances and diaspora communities will strengthen financial transparency and reform within the region, alongside supporting and sustaining diaspora association and networks. Research on the positive and negative socio-economic impacts of remittances is also needed to strengthen the livelihoods of individuals and communities who give and receive remittances.

### Partnerships

Table 2: Pillar 2 Partnerships

| Regional Organizations | Engagement with PIFS and active collaboration with the Labour Mobility Resource Group (LMRG) is key to supporting the implementation of their identified goals identified in the regional assessment of labour mobility, and the priorities outlined in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. Regional collaboration will be key to facilitating, encouraging and supporting regional labour mobility governance platforms to ensure an inclusive approach where all issues surrounding labour mobility can be discussed in a transparent and coordinated manner. Programming will coordinate with the Pacific Labour Mobility Workers Support Working Group which brings together governments, non-government organizations, recruitment agents, training providers and development partners, engaged to improve the delivery of Pacific labour mobility schemes. |
| Governments | Coordination with Pacific Island governments including relevant ministries and departments is necessary to achieve the outcomes identified under pillar two. Strong relationships with the governments in migrant receiving countries, including on their seasonal labour mobility schemes, provides a strategic basis for engagement across the Pacific, on improving labour mobility. |
| United Nations Agencies | Collaboration with other UN bodies is key to holistic, synergetic programming efforts, internal cohesion, and avoidance of duplication. In this connection, IOM will work closely with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on promoting decent work for all workers, inclusion of workers and employers’ organizations, and UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) on issues pertaining to remittances. IOM will continue to work closely with other UN agencies on labour mobility issues related to gender and human rights. Collaboration with the UNCT Data Monitoring and Evaluation Group (DMEG) will encourage a systemic approach to building a labour mobility evidence base. |
| Civil Society | Partnership with civil society, communities and traditional leaders will be particularly important in the development and upscaling of migrant resource centers, pre-departure and reintegration assistance and diaspora engagement. |
| Private Sector | Strengthening partnerships between the private sector, public sector, and the community provides a pathway to drive dialogue and innovative solutions to regional labour mobility challenges. Partnership with private sector, including labour recruitment agencies, can be key to addressing recruitment fee issues, promoting ethical recruitment, as well as establishing grievance redressal pathways. Collaboration and continued consultation with trade unions and employers’ federations will also improve Pacific labour mobility schemes. |
| Academic Institutions and Media | Academia and research bodies are key partners for strengthening research, data, and evidence on Pacific labour mobility. Local media can be utilized to enhance diaspora engagement and strengthen community awareness and engagement on labour mobility issues. |
Pillar 3: Governance for border management and migrant protection

Objective 3: Pacific Island Countries (PICs) have strengthened capacities, policy frameworks and data to protect and assist migrants in situations of vulnerability and promote safe migration and borders.

Support for effective migration governance requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, and coherence in the implementation of policies to harness the potential of migration for sustainable development. This includes a focus on alignment with international obligations and incorporating human mobility in national planning and budgetary processes. Priority must be accorded to the development of appropriate pathways to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration in line with the principle of rule of law, so that international migration is governed equitably, predictably, and fairly. Support also needs to be lent to increased policy attention on unregulated migration in the Pacific, including human trafficking and smuggling of migrants. The lack of reliable data on irregular migration, including on trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and individual irregular cross-border migration, underlines the need for greater efforts to understand the scale of the problem and how to appropriately strengthen protection measures at the national and regional levels, recognizing the policy, procedural and technical capacity constraints that many governments in the region face. There is a need to focus on improving working conditions and labour rights that address vulnerabilities. Considerable opportunities equally exist to adopt evidence-based and harmonized approaches to integrated border management.

A group of fishers sort their catch by getting the small fish out of the net and distributing them among each other. Munda, Solomon Islands (photo credit: Tom Vierus / Pacific Media House).
Outcomes:

**Outcome 3.1:** Safe and secure Pacific borders are established and promoted through integrated border management and strengthened data collection and sharing systems

**Actions:**
- Provide technical and specialist support to encourage the development of integrated border management models and approaches that champion robust and gender-sensitive data collection and sharing, regional cooperation and the harmonization of practices across countries in the Pacific.
- Align inter-agency coordination between relevant stakeholders (i.e., immigration, customs, maritime and health agencies) to ensure complementarity between processes, efforts and referrals in detecting trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling and in upholding cross-border health management.
- Support the development and implementation of Standard Operating Procedures to mainstream migrant health and assistance into integrated border management processes, particularly in the context of borders re-opening post-COVID-19.

**Outcome 3.2:** Enhanced government and civil society capacity across the Pacific to identify and provide rights-based and gender-sensitive protection and assistance to migrants in situations of vulnerability

**Actions:**
- Strengthen regional policy frameworks on the identification, referral and protection of victims of trafficking and migrants in situations of vulnerability and support the creation of new frameworks where relevant, with an emphasis on most vulnerable groups including women, children, youth, persons with disabilities and the elderly.
- Enhance the capacity of regional and national actors to collect, analyze and interpret data related to trafficking, exploitation and smuggling through capacity building, support to the development of data management systems, and targeted analyses and sector-specific assessments, with focus on extractive industries (mining, logging, fishing) where migrant vulnerabilities might be heightened.
- Support regional and interdisciplinary coordination on trafficking in persons and migrant protection in order to harmonize approaches and practices, strengthen data-sharing, and establish transnational referral mechanisms for victims of trafficking and migrants in situations of vulnerability.
- Support regional counterparts in strengthening national alignment and uptake of regional policy frameworks and labour standards through technical assistance, legal and policy support, and the development of regional resources, training tools and guidance notes.
- Enhanced understanding of the extent of exploitation in offshore fisheries to strengthen regulation.

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26 IOM Pacific Strategy (2022–2026)

27 Pacific Immigration Development Community, Regional Immigration Framework to Combat Human Trafficking and People Smuggling (2019).
Cross-cutting considerations

i. COVID-19:
Efforts to enhance migration governance in the Pacific will give due consideration to heightened health and protection risks in the wake of COVID-19, its socio-economic impacts, and its consequences on global and regional mobility. Programming to strengthen integrated border management will include support in operationalizing Standard Operating Procedures for frontline officials at Points of Entry in response to COVID-19, as well as broader efforts to uphold cross-border health management. Protection responses will account for the vulnerability of migrants stranded by border closures across the region, as well as for the risk of migrants being insufficiently included in vaccination roll-out. Noting the correlation between lockdowns and increased instances of trafficking in persons, migrant smuggling, and exploitation and gender-based violence, training materials and tools will include guidance and recommendations on how to account for the impacts of COVID-19 on identification, referral and service provision. Health considerations will also be mainstreamed throughout protection programming, to ensure that victims of trafficking and migrants in situations of vulnerability are able to access trauma-informed and victim-centered health services and psychosocial support.

ii. Gender, disability and social inclusion:
Migration governance programming will promote inclusion and representation at all levels to ensure that border management and protection services are rights-based and accessible to all. Capacity building interventions will underline the need for gender-based approaches to border management as well as gender-sensitive and child-sensitive screening for victims of trafficking and exploitation. Prevention interventions will be purposefully directed to those who are most marginalized and at greatest risk. Efforts will be made to strengthen the delivery of protection services that are responsive not only to women and girls, but also to men and boys, persons with disabilities, and those who may be insufficiently included because of their migration status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or because of language and literacy barriers.

iii. Localization:
Governance approaches should acknowledge the role and support needed by local authorities and other local actors and help create specific vertical coordination and consultation mechanisms to allow for joint policy making, planning and implementation. Alignment of migration governance with strategic planning, including urban planning and local economic development and opportunities for education and skills development is key. Furthermore, the development of specialized service provision is critical in protection programming and capacity development focused on psychosocial support to victims of trafficking and migrants in situations of vulnerability. While IOM’s approach will remain rights-based and guided by international normative frameworks and best practices, particular attention will be paid to ensuring that training materials, tools and programmatic approaches are contextually relevant and take into account the unique challenges faced by Pacific Island countries. IOM will also continue to apply its determinants of vulnerability model in framing programmatic responses, which considers not only individual factors of vulnerability, such as age and gender, but also situational determinants, such as household, community and structural factors.

iv. Research, data and evidence:
The dearth of migration-related data for the Pacific underlines the need for additional research, capacity building in the fields of data collection, analysis and interpretation, and improved data management systems. These efforts are key to informing migration policy more broadly, as well as specific policy interventions related to border management, migration management and migrant protection. Efforts to systematically disaggregate data and identify correlations between variables will allow for a clearer identification of factors of vulnerability in the context of the Pacific. This will in turn lead to more effective migration governance, resulting in more targeted and effective protection and prevention interventions, as well as greater resource efficiencies. A better understanding of trends relating to trafficking, smuggling and irregular entry will also allow for strengthened detection capacities at Points of Entry as well as the development of enhanced screening protocols. Efforts will also be made to support improved and harmonized data governance in the Pacific, to ensure that as data collection capacities increase, these are accompanied by enhanced data security measures, data protection protocols and adherence to practices which maintain data privacy and confidentiality.
## Partnerships

### Table 3: Pillar 3 Partnerships

| Regional Organizations | Migration governance programming will require sustained partnership with Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) Agencies. The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) is also an important CROP partner, in fostering regional coordination to enable the sustainable utilization of shared offshore fisheries for Pacific social and economic benefit. The Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) also constitutes an essential regional body to ensure a cohesive regional approach, ownership of interventions and sustainability of multi-country programme results. |
| Governments | Pacific Island Country government engagement and buy-in will be essential to the success and longevity of programme interventions, particularly in ensuring integrated and regional approaches to immigration border management. |
| United Nations Agencies | Ongoing and consistent coordination with all relevant United Nations (UN) Agencies is instrumental to maximize impact and avoid duplication of regional mechanisms and initiatives. In this vein, IOM seeks to partner with relevant agencies including, United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in areas like trafficking and border management respectively to achieve Pillar 3 outcome areas. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will be continually consulted to ensure alignment and complementarity of the design and delivery of border and identity management as well as customs support. |
| Civil Society | Faith-based organizations and community-based organizations offer a valuable grassroots perspective to complement IOM programming and are particularly important in conducting interventions to identify, support and provide assistance to migrants in situations of vulnerability, including survivors of trafficking in persons, labour exploitation and migrant smuggling. Trade unions and workers associations will also be important channels through which to reach and collaborate with migrant populations. PIANGO – as an important catalyst for collective action within the Pacific NGO community – will be coordinated with. |
| Private Sector | To ensure the sustainability of integrated border management efforts, taking into account the continued financial constraints faced by PIC governments, strong partnerships with donor entities will be essential, including mobilizing support from non-traditional donors within the private sector. IOM will also explore innovative ways that the private sector can be engaged to approach migrant protection and assistance (through existing IOM initiatives like Corporate Responsibility in Eliminating Slavery and Trafficking (CREST), which is a regional partnership initiative that aims to realize the potential of businesses to uphold the human and labour rights of migrant workers in their operations and supply chains, and the International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS) which is an ethical recruitment tool utilized to combat occurrences of forced labour and human trafficking. |
| Academic Institutions and Media | Other essential partners to be engaged under this pillar of programming will also include media representatives and media outlet counterparts as well as academic institutions like universities, think tanks and research organizations. The University of the South Pacific is a vital home for localized knowledge production in the region and will be an instrumental partner for IOM in supporting and encouraging improved data collection and sharing efforts across and between Pacific Island Country entities. |
Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Framework

Introduction of Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Tools

IOM is committed to accountability, learning, and results-based management. This Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Framework facilitates the achievement of these goals via a selection of key tools and evaluative processes. Further detail on the function of each tool and process is outlined below in Table 4.

Monitoring and Evaluation Standards and Ethics

IOM is committed to quality monitoring and evaluation, in a way that is context-driven, and yet aligned with global coordination mechanisms and best practice. To this end, monitoring and evaluation initiatives have been, and will continue to be, driven first and foremost by Pacific needs, with an ambition to ensure alignment with key Pacific mechanisms such as the Pacific Data Hub and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework in the Pacific. Simultaneously, the IOM Pacific Strategy seeks to align with and contribute to global data initiatives including UNINFO, to ensure Pacific representation and assist in assuring that these global initiatives are adapted to Pacific needs.

Monitoring and evaluation activities will be aligned with IOM Data Protection Principles, IOM Monitoring Policy 2018, IOM’s Code of Conduct, principles of Do No Harm, and IOM safeguarding policies. In addition to this, mid-term and final evaluations will be carried out in line with the IOM Evaluation Policy 2018, and the UN Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluation28.

All data collection will be conducted in accordance with best ethical practice in research, particularly with respect to ensuring participants’ safety, anonymity, the protection of data, and risk mitigation. Both relational and procedural ethics will be considered. Information will be provided to monitoring and evaluation practitioners and participants regarding avenues through which to raise ethical concerns, and how to report misconduct. To support the practical realization of our ambitions on high-quality monitoring and evaluation, including with regard to the IOM Pacific Strategy, IOM has put in place a Pacific Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy to improve IOM Pacific capacity, funding, and learning. Progress around monitoring and evaluation capacity of IOM in the Pacific is being monitored via this Strategy. This Pacific-focused strategy is aligned with IOM’s global Office of the Inspector General Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy, which provides high-level support for quality monitoring and evaluation.

Table 4: Function of tools within the Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory of Change</strong></td>
<td>The Theory of Change underpins the logic and rationale, as well as key assumptions, behind the areas of programming prioritized under the strategy. The Theory of Change is thus a fundamental grounding feature of later evaluations, specifically by allowing us to interrogate assumptions and change pathways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results and Resources Plan</strong></td>
<td>A Results and Resources Plan provides an overview of the key resource inputs into each area of the Programme Strategy, the geographical focus anticipated in each area, and the results expected to arise as a result of this resource and action. It thus improves external accountability at a strategic level and facilitates discussion over resourcing contributions and resultant outputs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results Matrix</strong></td>
<td>The Results Matrix is designed to provide routine monitoring and reporting of key information, and identify areas requiring additional attention or revision of approach at the earliest possible stage so as to adapt and improve IOM approaches. Annual results monitoring will be guided by the Results Matrix, and this data will also inform evaluations, and feed into the annual Cooperation Framework results. An internal living document, the results matrix is adaptable to changes in context as needed – for example, additional indicators may be added to ensure optimal alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources Matrix</strong></td>
<td>The Resources Matrix facilitates planning and tracking of financial allocations toward specific objectives and outcomes. This ensures that we identify gaps and thus take action to balance resource allocations wherever needed, and at the earliest opportunity. As with the Results Matrix, the Resources Matrix will be reviewed at least annually, and will be adapted as necessary to ensure alignment with changes in context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mid-Term Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>An internal mid-term evaluation will probe the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy. In particular, it will review alignment with the context and key strategies and policies published since the initial publication of the IOM Pacific Strategy, including the forthcoming UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027. The evaluation will provide formative recommendations for the remainder of the Strategy’s operation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>A final evaluation will evaluate the overall success of the strategy in achieving its goals, and answer questions as to why the strategy has or has not achieved its ambitions. This final evaluation will also identify and disseminate lessons learned and recommendations to inform the IOM Pacific Strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resource Requirements

To contribute towards enhanced resilience, governance, and sustainable development in the context of human mobility in the Pacific, IOM requires USD$28M in resources to deliver multi-country initiatives for the period between 2022–2026. These resources will be split between the pillars outlined in this strategy document with $12.9M to Pillar 1, $5.3M to Pillar 2 and $9.8M to Pillar 3 and have been formulated through consultations between all IOM country offices in the Pacific region.

IOM will continue to facilitate programming in partnership with other UN agencies and civil society and regional organizations where appropriate. This collaborative, strengths-based approach to partnering with others is fundamental to the practical realization of our commitments to localization, regionalism, and joint UN programming. The budget figures above refer to multi-country programmes on human mobility in the Pacific where IOM is the recipient organization.

The IOM Pacific Strategy 2022–2026 forms the basis for IOM’s multi-country programming in the Pacific, outlining broad programme areas that respond to Blue Pacific priorities, based on a common set of IOM’s institutional priorities. Given IOM’s projectized model of operation, multiple projects will be developed and implemented under the 3 Pillars of the strategy. The IOM Pacific Strategy 2022–2026 situates these projects within the broader context of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in which the IOM operates within the Pacific region.
### Strategic Goal: To contribute toward enhancing resilience, governance, and sustainable development in the context of human mobility in the Blue Pacific

#### Pillar 1: Resilience to climate change and disaster-related human mobility
- **Objective 1:** Pacific Island governments and communities demonstrate strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity in the context of climate change and disaster-related human mobility.
  - **Outcome 1.1:** Improved integrated and government-owned evidence and research on climate-related mobility and disaster displacement.
  - **Outcome 1.2:** Climate-related human mobility policy and legal frameworks are effective and harmonized.
  - **Outcome 1.3:** Improved disaster-management capabilities within governments and communities through cohesive and clear operational frameworks and skills.

#### Pillar 2: Labour mobility and human development
- **Objective 2:** Labour migrants and their communities benefit from effective and well-managed labour mobility for sustainable human development.
  - **Outcome 2.1:** Strengthened pre-departure assistance and sustainable reintegration support to labour migrants.
  - **Outcome 2.2:** Enhanced impact of diaspora communities and their remittances on sustainable development.
  - **Outcome 2.3:** Strengthened regional and national labour mobility governance and coordination systems.

#### Pillar 3: Governance for border management and migrant protection
- **Objective 3:** Pacific Island Countries (PICs) have strengthened capacities, policy frameworks and data to protect and assist migrants in situations of vulnerability and promote safe migration and borders.
  - **Outcome 3.1:** Safe and secure Pacific borders are established and promoted through integrated border management and strengthened data collection and sharing systems.
  - **Outcome 3.2:** Enhanced government and civil society capacity across the Pacific to identify and provide rights-based and gender-sensitive protection and assistance to migrants in situations of vulnerability.

See page 18–19 for Actions under Pillar 1
See page 22–23 for Actions under Pillar 2
See page 27 for Actions under Pillar 3

An adaptive and internal IOM Pacific Strategy Results Matrix includes indicators and targets.
An aerial photo of a small island surrounded by coral reefs. Beqa island, located south of Fiji's largest island Viti Levu, is visible in the distance (photo credit: Tom Vierus / Pacific Media House).