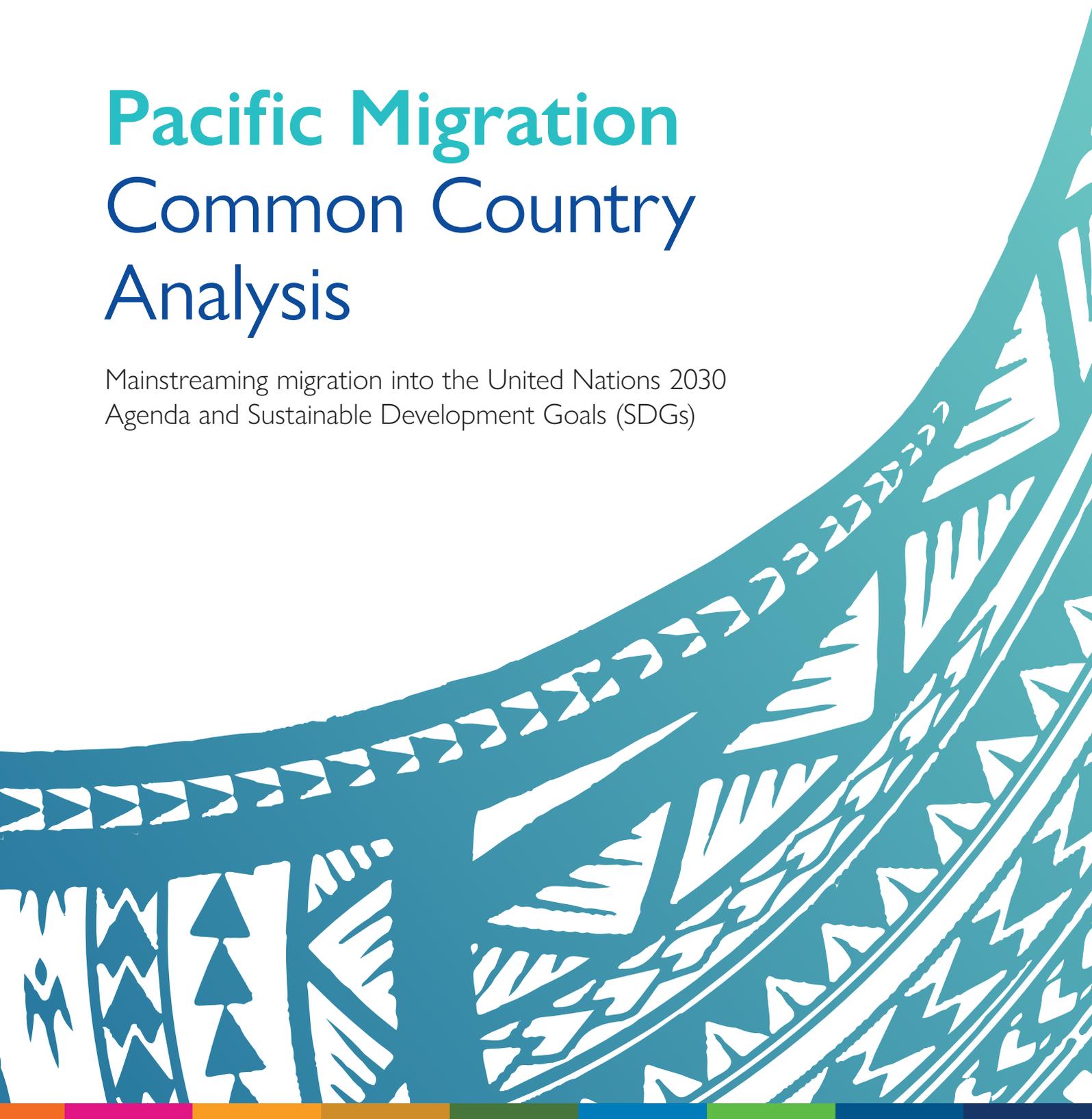




Pacific Migration Common Country Analysis

Mainstreaming migration into the United Nations 2030
Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



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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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Executive Summary

Pacific Islanders have been described as one of the most mobile groups in the world.¹ Migration has long been a common strategy used by Pacific Islanders to mitigate environmental and economic risks. Human mobility in the Pacific, even in response to changing environmental conditions, is not unusual and is in fact considered to be a necessary aspect of environmental sustainability and livelihood security in many island communities.

While acknowledging the well-established attachment to land in the Pacific, the relatively unbound relationship that Pacific Islanders have with the sea, embodied by thousands of years of migration, also needs to be understood. The Pacific 'Sea of Islands' (excluding PNG) have a combined land mass of 64,200 square kilometres² yet their ocean area covers 15% of the earth surface. The 'Blue Pacific Continent' narrative recognises Pacific Island Countries (PICs) as large ocean states and the shared stewardship of the Pacific Ocean and emphasises the connections that the people of the 'Blue Pacific' have with their natural resources, environment, cultures and livelihoods. The long distances between islands and small land areas, however, make maritime areas difficult to monitor however, with PICs lacking the resources to effectively monitor borders and enforce national and international law.

All Pacific Island countries are acutely vulnerable to the impacts of environmental and climate change. The Pacific Islands region is also rapidly urbanising and this is contributing to mounting social and environmental pressures. Despite small population numbers, there are places in the Pacific that have some of the highest population densities in the world³. Labour migration makes a substantial contribution to the economies of several Pacific Island nations. For many Pacific Island countries, the emigration of workers can cause shortages in key professions but results in the benefit of remittances and new skills amongst returnees. The COVID-19 crisis has abruptly disrupted flows of labour migrants and has revealed a major limitation of immigration policies in the region. All countries in the Pacific have adopted mobility restriction measures including closing of borders and strict quarantine measures, leading to a major contraction of nearly all economies in the region. Even with increased development assistance and the maintenance of some remittances, Pacific economies will continue to suffer until international travel is restored.

All countries have recognised the need to adopt measures to avoid the worst impacts of displacement and poorly planned migration. There is an urgent need to avoid the

realisation of negative impacts through timely and proactive policy responses including *in situ* adaptation measures. Socio-economic threats and vulnerabilities that contribute to forced displacement or poorly planned relocation can exacerbate and lead to other vulnerabilities, such as settlement in informal urban settlements, disaster prone areas or areas with few livelihood opportunities. Importantly, migration may not be possible for the most vulnerable including the poor, disabled, elderly and women and children.

The COVID-19 crisis has abruptly disrupted labour migration flows and has revealed a major limitation of immigration policies in the region. All Pacific countries (excluding Kiribati and Tuvalu) expect significant drops in their GDP due to the pandemic. Human trafficking remains a misunderstood and hidden phenomenon in the Pacific and requires increased attention. The Pacific is also a source, transit point and destination for human trafficking. The scale of the problem is very difficult to determine due to a lack of overall awareness, lack of prosecutions and limited official statistics, as well as a related paucity of information due to limited targeted research and data collection and the insidious nature of the crime. The Pacific is vulnerable to exploitation by human traffickers, yet few resources are directed towards countering human trafficking.

Despite its central importance in the Pacific region, human mobility has not been systematically considered in UN common-country analyses and programming in the Pacific to date. Migration and human mobility are highly relevant to the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) principles for the development of the Common Country Assessment (CCA), and the risks recognised by UNSDG Guidance. There are important regional policy opportunities for the UN system to build on, especially in the development of responses that build resilience and 'leave no one behind'. These include the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) and Pacific Resilience Partnership and labour mobility dimensions of trade agreements. Unfortunately, the apparent recent fragmentation of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) membership will likely undermine Pacific regionalism and potentially solidarity.

1 IOM (2016). 'Effects of climate change on human mobility in the Pacific and the impact on Canada'.

2 <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.LND.TOTL.K2?locations=S2>

3 UNFPA (2014), 'Population and Development Profiles: Pacific Island Countries'.

This report examines migration related challenges and opportunities in the Pacific and makes recommendations on migration programming for the next UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) cycle. It provides an overview of the CCA and UNSDG frameworks and IOM Thematic Priorities, followed by Pacific contextual analysis. The report provides thematic regional priorities relating to migration, followed by individual country migration analysis.

Recommendations for consideration:

1. Migration and human mobility should be a central part of the ongoing UN Common Country Analysis (UN CCA) and joint programming in the UNSDCF process. These are important aspects of the economic and social reality of the Pacific Islands and are mandated areas of operational strength of the UN system in the region.
2. Support should include a focus on migration governance, including legislative alignment with international legal obligations and in national planning and budgetary processes. Priority should be accorded to the development of appropriate pathways to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration, rule of law, and due process, so that international migration is governed equitably, predictably, and fairly.
3. In recognizing the importance of the principle of 'leaving no one behind', there is a need to develop human rights-based legal and policy frameworks as well as supporting states to operationalize these frameworks to equally protect people who are staying, moving (in anticipation of harm or voluntarily), and are displaced.
4. COVID-19 demands urgent attention on migrant health and border management. Migration will be key for economic recovery in the region but opening borders also introduces risks of exposure. Thus migrants should be eligible to receive the vaccination. This also highlights the need for migrants to access broader health systems and insurance schemes.
5. Climate change and environmental migration require a whole-of-government approach. Support for national and regional responses that build resilience also provide an opportunity for dialogue between countries and to share experiences and lessons such as policy approaches focused on planned relocation and managing displacement.
6. Continued support for inclusive labour mobility that expand opportunities for migration in the region, focused on strengthened labour migration governance that builds on national and regional approaches including emerging trade agreements in the region.
7. Support for increased policy attention on unregulated migration in the Pacific, including human trafficking. Trafficking appears to be increasing in the region and more needs to be done to understand the scale of the problem and what can be done to increase protection measures at the national and regional level, recognising the constraints that many governments in the region face.
8. Support for gender equality. This needs to be both considered as a stand-alone priority in migration and human mobility, but also mainstreamed across the different domains given existing inequalities and exclusion as well as the differentiated risks and increase in GBV faced by women in emergency situations, the social impacts of labour migration and unregulated migration.
9. Support for building the knowledge base for 'evidence-based' policy, including encouraging the strengthening of national statistical systems and with feasibility studies and targeted research focused on mobility backed by the UN and/or development partners.
10. Support for increased awareness of the impact of policies across different dimensions of the peace, development and security nexus. Clarity on climate security discourse, particularly in the development of national security strategies and in global advocacy is required to ensure coherence and avoid maladaptive approaches.
11. Enhanced support for the domestic alignment treaty obligations and enhanced ratification of key international legal instruments. Recognising the different areas of international law, soft law and policy approaches on migration. Navigating these and ensuring national legislative compliance and implementation becomes challenging for the (often small) bureaucracies of Pacific Island countries, where customary law is also recognised on issues such as land ownership.

Section 1

Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose⁴

Migration is increasingly important to the development of the Pacific region, with Pacific Islanders described as one of the most mobile groups in the world.⁵ The importance of migration for achieving the development outcomes is reflected in the 2030 Agenda as well as in the adoption of the 2018 Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Migration is increasingly recognised as a multi-dimensional reality of major relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination. With IOM becoming a related organization of the UN in 2016, there is increased engagement and participation in the UN Development System and mainstreaming migration in national and regional policies, frameworks and programmes. Despite its central importance in the Pacific region, human mobility has not been systematically considered in UN common country analyses and programming in the Pacific to date.

Following recent reforms repositioning the UN development system, new UNSDCF will be the overall planning and implementation instrument guiding UN and governments in support of the 2030 Agenda and will be prepared and implemented in full consultation with Pacific Governments. In the Pacific, the next UN Pacific Strategy will outline the collective UN response to national Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) priorities agreed with national governments and as such it is imperative to:

- A) Integrate migration into the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO)-led Common Country Analysis (CCAs) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).
- B) Develop sub-regional and country programme documents that are informed by the IOM Global Strategic vision, IOM Regional Strategy and linked to UN programming processes.

This report examines migration related challenges and opportunities in the Pacific and recommends best practices and migration programmes to consider in the next UNSDCF cycle. This is achieved via an introductory section giving an overview of CCA and UNSDG frameworks and IOM Thematic Priorities, followed by Pacific contextual analysis. The report then provides regional thematic priorities relating to migration, followed by individual country migration analyses and recommendations.

1.2 Approach and limitations

The preparation of this report has been desk based and thus is limited by the information available from reports and publications from international organisations, government, non-governmental organisations and academia. This introduces potential bias to the findings including the 'Streetlight' effect⁶ of research on climate change. Recognising this as a potential constraint, effort has been made to be thorough and ensure objectivity. Nevertheless, wider consultation with counterparts in government, regional organisations and development partners will be an important step for future programming. The report was researched and produced by an external consultant in close coordination with IOM internal staff in the Pacific, Regional Office of Asia and the Pacific and Head Quarters during the process of review.

⁴ Based on the Terms of Reference for the assignment.

⁵ IOM (2016), n1 above.

⁶ The streetlight effect is a type of observational bias that occurs when people only search for something where it is easiest to look. Adams, Courtland; Tobias Ide; Jon Barnett and Adrien Detges 2018 'Sampling bias in climate-conflict research' *Nature Climate Change* 8: 200-205.

1.3 CCA and UNSDG guidance⁷

According to UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) guidance, CCA delivers thematic analyses based on the principles of:

- Leaving no one behind;
- Human rights;
- Gender equality and women's empowerment;
- Sustainability and resilience; and
- Accountability.

The CCA should seek to move beyond the aggregation of sectoral analysis to develop a comprehensive and common understanding of the interdependence of the SDGs across the humanitarian–peace–development nexus. The CCA is also intended to identify the key risks that could impact the development trajectory of the country (or region in the case of multi-country frameworks). These include:

- Climate change and disaster risk
- Disease outbreaks
- Rapid urbanization
- Conflict and displacement
- Financial and economic shocks.

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- Disease outbreaks
- Rapid urbanization
- Conflict and displacement
- Financial and economic shocks.

Risk is understood as the “probability of negative consequences resulting from the interaction of hazards, vulnerability and capacity”.⁸ Migration and human mobility, more generally are highly relevant to all these areas. The CCA should provide a strategic overview of the most critical government policies as well as the most significant gaps in the policy architecture. Additionally, it should document national participation in subregional, regional and global mechanisms, including trade agreements, that can eventually forge the subregional, regional and global development agenda. To the extent possible, the CCA should be “aligned to and consistent with national priorities and sustainable development plans and strategies, and in particular, with national SDG action plans.”⁹

Multi-country programming represents a challenge for common country planning processes by the UN system in the region in that it needs to recognise the unique challenges and nuanced development needs of each country while consolidating the strengths of the UN in supporting Pacific Island Countries (PICs). In this context, it is important to understand the different nature of support and needs in country analysis and programming, including:

- Regional issues (that require multi-country cooperation) such as human trafficking, labour migration and international displacement.
- Common challenges faced at the national level and situations where regional cooperation assists with global advocacy (such as climate change).
- Common challenges faced by countries that require responses at the national level such as disaster displacement, rural-urban migration; and
- Preparation for, and implementation (including monitoring and reporting) of, international and global agreements such as the Global Compact on Migration, SAMOA Pathway and 2030 Agenda.

⁷ <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/UNDG-UNDAF-Companion-Pieces-1-Programming-Principles.pdf>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

1.4 IOM Thematic Priorities

Aligned with the IOM Global Strategic vision (2019-2023),¹⁰ the IOM Regional Strategy (2020-2024)¹¹ outlines the following priorities for the Asia-Pacific region:

i. Resilience

IOM seeks to build national, community and individual resilience by focusing on the following:

- A) Deepening the understanding of migrants' risks, vulnerabilities and coping strategies by consolidating primary and secondary data and analysis, particularly on the drivers of migration and displacement, to enhance IOM expertise.
- B) Focusing on supporting authorities at the national and subnational levels (provincial, municipal and community) in the implementation of relevant policies, in line with international standards, thus increasing migrants' agency and the active participation of the private sector and wider society in contributing to sustainable development processes and outcomes.
- C) Focus on leveraging the Organization's operational strengths within models for innovative, multisectoral programming and policy, with a particular emphasis on enhancing the effectiveness of programming that bridges the humanitarian–peace–development nexus and its contribution towards achievement of the SDGs.

ii. Mobility

In advancing multiple avenues for enhanced protection of migrants and their communities, enhancing pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration and, maximizing the developmental gains of migration, IOM will prioritize actions to:

- A) Invest in and scale up innovative solutions and technologies.
- B) Advance partnership on mobility and work with transnational communities and the private sector.

iii. Governance

IOM will focus on the following priorities:

- A) Advancing its work in supporting good migration governance, strengthening institutions to apply a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach, and further support both horizontal and vertical policy coherence and the implementation of policies that harness the potential of migration for sustainable development;
- B) Supporting governments in adopting policies and effective responses for addressing emerging trends and risks, such as the impact of climate change and disasters on migration; and
- C) Expanding its work in support of migration dialogues and partnerships.

10 IOM, 2019 'IOM Strategic Vision: 2019-2023 Setting a course for IOM' IOM Council 110th Session, 15 Nov 2019, available: <https://governingbodies.iom.int/system/files/en/council/110/C-110-INF-1%20-%20IOM%20Strategic%20Vision.pdf>

11 https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/documents/asia_and_the_pacific_regional_strategy_2020-2024_11nov20_v04.pdf

Section 2

Pacific Regional Context

Mobility to expand social networks is an ingrained part of Pacific histories and cultures. In his much cited essay 'Our Sea of Islands' Epeli Hau'ofa reminds us of the significance of mobility to the history of Oceania and the culture of its people, but also of the importance of the lives and lived experiences of ordinary people: "Views of the Pacific from the level of macroeconomics and macro-politics often differ markedly from those from the level of ordinary people".¹²

This resonates with human mobilities in the region reflecting everyday movement in its non-linear complexity, and the inter-relationships between economic, social, political, environmental, demographic and political factors that influence migration choices.¹³ Examining human mobility also emphasises the impact of mobility on places of origin, transit and destination.¹⁴ The Pacific 'Sea of Islands' (excluding PNG) have a combined land mass of 64,200 square kilometres¹⁵ yet their ocean area covers 15% of the earth surface. The long distances between islands and small land areas make maritime areas difficult to monitor however, with PICs often lacking the resources to effectively monitor borders and enforce national and international law. While many common features of Pacific Islands countries can be identified, a grounded analysis must also recognise the unique social, economic, cultural and physical context of the countries of the Pacific. This analysis examines some of the opportunities and common challenges facing countries in the region, and then examines ten countries in more detail at the national level.

2.1 Overall migration context

This section provides overall context of migration in the Pacific including the macro-trends and drivers of change.

A history of mobility

Human mobility in the Pacific needs to be understood in the context of the long history of migration in the Pacific to diversify livelihoods, as a response to environmental risk and including cases of forced migration in colonial times. Migration has long been a common strategy used by Pacific Islanders to mitigate environmental and economic risks. Human mobility in the Pacific, even in response to changing environmental conditions is not unusual, and is considered to be a necessary aspect of sustainability in many island communities.¹⁶ Connell and Corbett (2016) emphasise the mobile character of Pacific Islanders, viewing migration (supplemented by diasporic arrangements)

as a pragmatic strategy for Pacific governments to improve living standards.¹⁷ While acknowledging the well-established attachment to land in the Pacific, the relatively unbound relationship that Pacific Islanders have with the sea, embodied by thousands of years of migration, also needs to be understood.¹⁸ Migration in this context becomes an important option for livelihood diversification and risk management.

12 Hau'ofa, Epeli (1994) 'Our Sea of Islands', *The Contemporary Pacific* Vol. 6, No. 1 (SPRING 1994), pp. 148-161.

13 Hugo, G. (2011). 'Future demographic change and its interactions with migration and climate change.' *Global Environmental Change* 21: S21-S33

14 Boas, et al (2019). 'Climate migration myths.' *Nature Climate Change* 9(12): 901-903.

15 <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.LND.TOTL.K2?locations=S2>

16 Barnett, Jon and Celia McMichael (2018) 'The effects of climate change on the geography and timing of human mobility', *Population and Environment* 39: 339-356.

17 Connell, J. and J. Corbett (2016). 'Deterritorialisation: Reconceptualising Development in the Pacific Islands.' *Global Society* 30(4): 583-604.

18 Ibid.

Migration is fundamentally important to the economies of the region

Migration is integral to the economies of many Pacific countries. Labour migration makes a substantial contribution to the economies of several Pacific Island nations. For many PICs, the emigration of workers can cause shortages in key professions but results in the benefit of remittances and new skills amongst returnees. For instance, migration by Pacific island health professionals to Australia has worsened shortage of health workers in source countries.^{19,20}

Despite the highest remittance transfers costs worldwide, 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.²¹ 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 the Fiji GDP, and 35% in Vanuatu.²² Even in countries with a relatively small travel and tourism sector such as Kiribati, the contribution at 19% of GDP in 2019 is significant.²³ The relatively large volumes of tourism arrivals place particular demands on migration authorities, many of which are operating under resource (both human and financial) constraints.

Available migration channels

Outside of temporary and seasonal migration schemes Pacific Islands migration is dominated by three subsystems: trans-Tasman migration between New Zealand and Australia, which includes many migrants born in the Pacific, migration from PICs to countries on the Pacific Rim (especially New Zealand, Australia, the United States and Canada) and a significantly smaller flow (by volume) between the different Pacific Island states and territories.²⁴ For the North Pacific, the Compact of Free Association is the main driver of migration from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and the Republic of Palau to the United States. Similarly, the Cook Islands, Tokelau and Niue have open access to New Zealand to live and work. Additionally, small numbers of Pacific Islanders from Tonga, Fiji, Kiribati and Tuvalu can access New Zealand through the Samoan Quota and Pacific Access Category scheme which provides the right to permanent residence. Australia offers only limited permanent migration access for some Pacific Islanders in comparison with New Zealand and the USA. Populations in western Melanesia (Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) have had much less access to permanent residence in Pacific Rim countries, compared with Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu. As a result their diaspora are very small in relation to the sizes of their populations in the islands as compared to other PICs.²⁵

19 Bray, S (2019), 'Could the Step-Up deepen healthcare worker brain drain in the Pacific?' Devpolicy Blog 4 July 2019 [[Governance of the Seasonal Worker Programme in Australia and sending countries \(devpolicy.org\)](#)].

20 Yamamoto, T. S., B.F. Sunguya, L. W. Shiao, R. M. Amiya, Y. M. Saw, and M. Jimba. 'Migration of Health Workers in the Pacific Islands: A Bottleneck to Health Development.' *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health* 24, no. 4 (2012): 697-709.

20 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data>

21 Grounder, R. (2020) 'Economic Vulnerabilities and Livelihoods: Impact of COVID-19 in Fiji and Vanuatu' *Oceania*, Vol. 90, Suppl. 1 (2020):107-113.

23 <https://knoema.com/atlas/Kiribati/topics/Tourism/Travel-and-Tourism-Total-Contribution-to-GDP/Contribution-of-travel-and-tourism-to-GDP-percent-of-GDP>

24 Campbell J., Bedford R. (2014) 'Migration and Climate Change in Oceania.' In: Piguet E., Laczko F. (eds) *People on the Move in a Changing Climate*. Global Migration Issues, vol 2. Springer, Dordrecht.

25 Ibid.

Rural to urban migration

Cities in the Pacific have some of the most rapid rates of urbanisation in the world.²⁶ The Pacific Islands region has diverse patterns of urbanisation. Parts of Polynesia and Micronesia are highly urbanised while in the western Pacific levels of urbanisation remain low but are increasing.²⁷ Across the region, urbanisation is contributing to mounting social and environmental pressures. Rural to urban migration can be a positive strategy for livelihood diversification and resilience building, including among communities facing climate risk in the Pacific Islands region where urban centres and main islands already attract large numbers of people. Some urban migrants channel part of their income towards efforts to build resilience and adaptive capacity in rural and remote areas²⁸. However, there are numerous challenges associated with urbanisation including the growth of informal settlements and a related increasing urbanisation of poverty. People living in informal settlements face additional vulnerability as a result of their occupation of land not being suitable 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 plans, including provision of critical services²⁹. With the expansion of urban populations, settlements encroach onto customary lands in urban and peri-urban areas. While issues of land ownership and tenure can be complex and often contentious, traditional and customary systems have in the past accommodated movement of people, including whole communities, onto land they do not own. This may be movement that is temporary or permanent, though clearly any public policy response must prioritise community participation and consultation. It has been estimated that in the larger Pacific cities and towns (and especially in Melanesia) up to 40-50 per cent of the urban population lived in informal and squatter settlements.³⁰

Demographic change

While demographic change rarely directly drives migration, it is a proximate factor that interacts with other factors (such as livelihood opportunities) to influence migration.³¹ Elements of population size and structure, such as aging, dependency ratios, and population density in cities, are important determinants of environmental burden and risk³² and therefore become important considerations in migration policy. Despite small population numbers, there are places in the Pacific with the highest population densities in the world, such as Ebeye in the Marshall Islands and South Tarawa in Kiribati. In most Pacific countries, urban population growth is much higher than that of the rural population contributing to a “triple jeopardy” of areas of high population growth, climate change “hotspots” and areas of high poverty.³³ 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 23.³⁴ But within these trends there are important nuances that need to be recognised. In some countries populations are projected to decline during the next 30-50 years, due to emigration. While Pacific Island population structures are still young in general, the population aged 60 years and older is projected to increase in most countries between 2015 and 2050.³⁵ The provision of health services and long-term care for the old or persons with a disability and their families will be particularly difficult, especially in rural areas and outer islands and for women who are often the primary care givers. While family solidarity remains strong it is weakening in urban areas.³⁶

26 Connell, J (2017), 'The urban Pacific: A tale of new cities'. Development Bulletin 78.

27 ADBI (2019), 'The Dynamics of Urbanization, Housing, and Land Provision in the Pacific Island Countries'. Policy Brief No. 2019-1 (February). Asian Development Bank Institute. [<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/488221/adbi-pb2019-1.pdf>].

28 Thornton, F., McNamara, K., Dun, O., Farbotko, C., McMichael, C., Yee, M., Coelho, S., Westbury, T., James, S., & Namoumou, F. (2020): 'Multiple Mobilities in Pacific Islands Communities'. *Forced Migration Review*, 64, 32-35

29 Williams DS, Máñez Costa M, Sutherland C, Celliers L, Scheffran J. Vulnerability of informal settlements in the context of rapid urbanization and climate change. *Environment and Urbanization*. 2019;31(1):157-176.

30 Jones, P (2017), 'Urban resilience: Informal and squatter settlements in the Pacific Region' Development Bulletin 78.

31 Hugo (2011), n7.

32 Barnett, Jon and Adger, W. Neil (2018) 'Mobile Worlds: Choice intersection of demographic and environmental change'. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 43: 245-65.

33 Ibid.

34 Wilson, C. (2020), 'Demanding the Future: Navigating the Pacific's Youth Bulge'. Lowy Institute Analysis [<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/demanding-future-navigating-pacific-youth-bulge>].

35 Anderson, I and Irava, W (2017) The Implications of Aging on the Health Systems of the Pacific Islands: Challenges and Opportunities, *Health Systems & Reform*, 3:3, 191-202

36 UNFPA (2014), 'Population and Development Profiles: Pacific Island Countries'. UNFPA Pacific Sub-Regional Office.

Climate change

All PICs are acutely vulnerable to the impacts of environmental and climate change. Climate change undermines development gains and the human security of Pacific Island communities, and will compound environmental risks through increasingly intense storms, droughts and floods, saltwater contamination of fresh water sources, sea level rise and disease.³⁷ The IPCC's projections under different global emissions scenarios conclude that the average global rate of sea-level rise has accelerated in recent decades due in part to increased rates of ice loss.³⁸ Climate change and disasters interact to create cascading and compounding risk to amplify economic, social, and political drivers and stressors of mobility. *In situ* adaptation is clearly the preferred option for all Pacific Island communities and governments, including empowering individuals and communities to participate in decision making processes. Planned relocation is the least preferred response but governments agree that migration linked to climate impacts will become more common as disasters become more severe and impacted areas become less able to support communities. Governments in the region also recognize the need for holistic long-term national risk assessments and the need for flexible and anticipatory approaches to adaptation³⁹. Planned relocation of communities is already taking place in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu (though it needs to be acknowledged that these are not necessarily motivated entirely by climate change). Fiji (2019) and Vanuatu (2018) have developed national frameworks to guide relocation approaches based on international frameworks such as the Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change.⁴⁰

The securitisation of climate change and migration

Climate change has been discussed at open debates at the UN Security Council (UNSC) since 2007⁴¹, and some UNSC members have lobbied for a role of the Council

in addressing the impacts of climate change, including the threats of sea level rise on small island states and addressing the problem of “climate refugees”⁴² (a term that is contested conceptually and under international law)⁴³. Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have lobbied for an expanded role of the organs of the UN system to address the security implications of climate change (see A/RES/63/281) and have called for the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Climate and Security.⁴⁴ At the regional level through the Pacific Island Forum ‘Boe Declaration on Regional Security’ agreed by leaders in 2018 in Nauru, climate change has been recognised as the “single greatest threat” to the security of the people of the Pacific⁴⁵.

There are reasons to be careful about how climate change is framed as a security issue, however. While framing climate change as a security issue may serve the interests of advocates to motivate states to treat climate change more seriously and with more urgency, a security framing could lead to responses that neglect fundamental climate threats or to responses that are maladaptive⁴⁶. A security framing and crisis narratives about “climate refugees” and conflict could distort the provision of development assistance and climate policy and undermine the international cooperation and development initiatives that are required to respond equitably and effectively to climate change. Viewing climate change as national security issue may not lend itself to addressing climate challenges as complex transboundary problems, while climate related mobility risks are not necessarily most effectively addressed using boundary reinforcing problem framings.⁴⁷ Farbotko (2018: 252) concludes that the climate migration risk to national security is driven by politics of fear, and has become “a self-referencing, self-evident claim divorced from science.” In this context, clarity around key concepts and the implications of security discourse (focusing on national security and border protection as opposed to human security for example) becomes important in defining policy responses.

37 Barnett, J. and W. Adger (2003). ‘Climate Dangers and Atoll Countries.’ *Climatic Change* 61(3): 321-337.

38 Masson-Delmotte, Valérie, Panmao Zhai, Hans-Otto Pörtner, Debra C. Roberts, James Skea, Priyadarshi R. Shukla, Anna Pirani et al. “Global warming of 1.5° C: Summary for policy makers.” (2018).

39 Lund, Daniel. (2021). ‘Navigating slow-onset risks through foresight and flexibility in Fiji: Emerging recommendations for the planned relocation of climate-vulnerable communities.’ *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 50, 12-20.

40 Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change; <https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/agenda-protection-cross-border-displaced-persons-context-disasters-and-climate-change>

41 In 2007 (S/PV.5663), 2011 (S/PV.6587), 2018 (S/PV.8307) and 2019 (S/2019/113).

42 Conca, K. (2019). ‘Is There a Role for the UN Security Council on Climate Change?’ *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 61(1): 4-15.

43 See McAdam, Jane and Jonathan Pryke (2020), ‘Climate Change, Disasters and Mobility: A Roadmap for Australian Action’ Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law Policy Brief 10.

44 UN Department of Public Information, New York 21 July 2011 [<https://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10332.doc.htm>] accessed 27 March 2021.

45 Pacific Islands Forum, (2018). ‘Boe Declaration on Regional Security’ [<https://www.forumsec.org/2018/09/05/boe-declaration-on-regional-security/>] accessed on 2 March 2021

46 Hartmann, B. (2010). ‘Rethinking climate refugees and climate conflict: Rhetoric, reality and the politics of policy discourse.’ *Journal of International Development* 22(2): 233-246.

47 Farbotko, C. (2018). ‘Climate change and national security: an agenda for geography.’ *Australian Geographer* 49(2): 247.

2.2 Pacific regional architecture

The region's principle intergovernmental political body is the Pacific Islands Forum, which works to enhance cooperation amongst its member States. The annual Leaders' Summit has been the peak regional political meeting for discussions on regional cooperation and integration, but also provides a platform for advocacy at the global level. Following the 2021 leaders meeting the five Micronesian members of PIF have initiated withdrawal from the Forum. Having only led PIF once in its history the Micronesian countries had announced beforehand that they would all leave the PIF if their candidate for Secretary General Gerald Zackios (from the Marshall Islands) was not elected, arguing that according to an unwritten convention it was their sub-region's turn to fill the position. They have also indicated that they feel marginalised in the PIF more generally. This is likely to have significant implications for Pacific regionalism and will undermine the effectiveness of PIF as an advocacy platform for the Pacific at the global level on regional priorities such as climate change.⁴⁸

Decisions made by the Pacific Islands Forum and coordinated by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat are implemented by the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP). The CROP works to improve cooperation, coordination, and collaboration amongst the various intergovernmental organizations in the region. CROP organizations include the Pacific Community (SPC), which delivers technical assistance, policy advice, training, and research services.

The Pacific Immigration Development Community (PIDC) provides a forum for immigration agencies to discuss issues of mutual interest, promote cooperation and assistance, strengthen borders, enhance entry system integrity, and modernise national immigration legal frameworks. The only regional forum dedicated to migration, membership is open to 21 countries and territories across the Pacific. PIDC publishes policy briefs and reports on an occasional basis, some of which are made available to the public.

Sub-regional processes in the three groupings of Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia are also evolving. Micronesian leaders meet annually at the Micronesian President's Summit and have discussed labour mobility and establishing a Micronesian travel bubble in response to COVID-19. Similarly, leaders of the Polynesian countries meet on an annual basis through the Polynesian Leaders Group. The Polynesian Leaders Group has discussed climate change displacement and security, expressing "deep alarm at the growing number of people displaced by climate impacts" at their meeting in 2018.⁴⁹ The meeting called for a legal regime to protect people displaced by climate change and support for Tuvalu's efforts to seek legal protection for people displaced by climate change through a UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution. The countries of Melanesia are members of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) which has a permanent secretariat in Port Vila, which has developed the Melanesian Free Trade Agreement (MFTA) is a comprehensive and progressive free trade agreement that aims to achieve regional integration of MSG economies, including labour mobility. The MFTA is yet to come into force, requiring ratification by two more members. It is possible that these sub-regional arrangements will gain significance with the fracturing of membership of the Pacific Islands Forum. The MSG 'skills movement scheme' facilitates the movement of skilled professionals in the health, hospitality, education and construction sectors. This is open to citizens from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.

48 See, for example: <https://devpolicy.org/forum-split-international-impacts-20210414-1/>

49 IISD (2018 [<https://sdg.iisd.org/news/polynesian-leaders-issue-declaration-on-climate-change-and-oceans/>])

2.3 Pacific regional policy

Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP)

The Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP)⁵⁰ 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 should ultimately lead to development outcomes that are resilient to climate change and disaster risks. It promotes voluntary commitments on migration, recommending for example that countries and development partners:

- Integrate human mobility aspects, where appropriate, including strengthening the capacity of governments and administrations to protect individuals and communities that are vulnerable to climate change and disaster displacement and migration, through targeted national policies and actions, including relocation and labour migration policies (priority action 1(p));
- Anticipate and prepare for future displacement by integrating human mobility issues within disaster preparedness, response and recovery programmes and actions (Priority action 1(k));
- Support increasing the protection of individuals and communities most vulnerable to climate change and post-disaster displacement and migration through targeted national and regional policies and regional labour migration schemes (Priority action 4(t)).

In 2017 leaders endorsed governance arrangements for the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) to support and facilitate effective implementation of the FRDP. The PRP includes the following:

- Pacific Resilience Meeting
- PRP Taskforce
- PRP Taskforce Support Unit (a collaborative partnership between PIFS, SPREP and SPC)
- Five PRP Technical Working Groups

A Technical Working Group (TWG) on Human Mobility in the context of Increasing Climate and Disaster Risk has been established and brings together multiple stakeholders to enhance coordination, provide expertise, and strengthen efforts to address climate migration, displacement, and planned relocation. It is co-chaired by IOM and GIZ.

Framework for Pacific Regionalism

Framework for Pacific Regionalism⁵¹ was endorsed by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders at their meeting in 2014 to provide the platform for a reinvigorated regionalism through a more open and consultative process of priority-setting. As a result of the Framework's priority setting process at the 2016 Pacific Islands Forum meeting in the Federated States of Micronesia, Forum Leaders recognized the potential for increased regional mobility to "contribute to increased economic integration, greater investment and improved business practices."⁵² Labour mobility in the Pacific region was viewed as a means to relieving social and demographic pressures resulting from saturated labour markets, where shortages relate to skills.

50 Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) [<https://www.forumsec.org/the-framework-for-resilient-development-in-the-pacific/>].

51 <https://www.forumsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Framework-for-Pacific-Regionalism.pdf>.

52 PIF Leaders Meeting Communique (2016). [http://www.forumsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2016-Forum-Communique_-Pohnpei_-FSM_-8-10-Sept.pdf] accessed 26 May 2021.

Boe Declaration on Regional Security (2018) and Action Plan (2019)

The Boe Declaration recognises climate change as the “single greatest threat” to the security of the people of the Pacific⁵³. The Declaration supports an “expanded concept of security which addresses the wide range of security issues in the region, both traditional and non-traditional” and emphasises Human Security. This includes “humanitarian assistance, to protect the rights, health and prosperity of Pacific people” and environmental and resource security, in addition to addressing transnational crime and enhancing cyber security. It commits PIF member States to strengthening national security approaches through the development of national security strategies. 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’.⁵⁴ The Action Plan makes a clear link to the ‘Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific’ but does not provide any detail on the connections between the human security and climate security approaches or on how these relate to human mobility.

The 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

Pacific Islands Forum Members are currently developing the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, which is based on ‘drivers of change’ that will have the most significant impacts on the future of the region. Led by the Forum Officials Sub-Committee on the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent (chaired by Fiji and Vanuatu), the process will collectively select the drivers that require joint political action and are best addressed at the regional level, and identify which drivers require concerted collective action (such as regional harmonisation or economic integration). Population change, migration and urbanization are being considered as drivers of change which includes focusing on adopting measures to better manage demographic changes and population movements. Labour mobility and remittances are also being considered as drivers of change.

Pacific Islands Trade Agreements

The Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) has been signed by 12 Pacific Island states and territories to enable progressive implementation of free trade measures. This is a step towards building agreement on the Temporary Movement of Natural Persons, which remains under consideration. The Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus is a new regional free trade agreement which came into force in December 2020. Chapter 8 on the Movement of Natural Persons outlines mechanisms regarding the temporary entry of skilled workers. Arrangements for unskilled or semi-skilled workers remain separate, as specified in the agreement called the Labour Mobility Arrangement⁵⁵. As of October 2020, PACER Plus had been ratified by Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Kiribati, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Niue, and Cook Islands; and signed but not yet ratified by Nauru, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Broader Asia-Pacific processes

Pacific countries are incorporated into the wider Asia Pacific region and a most (except for FSM, RMI and Tuvalu) are members of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, which raises awareness of the consequences of people smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crime. Regional follow-up and review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is expected to occur within regional fora in 2021.

53 <https://www.forumsec.org/2018/09/05/boe-declaration-on-regional-security/>.

54 <https://www.forumsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/BOE-document-Action-Plan.pdf>.

55 <https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/in-force/pacer/fact-sheets/labour-mobility-arrangement>.

2.4 International law, national legislation and migration governance

Policy makers face the complex challenge of ensuring that migration takes place in ways that are fair, mutually beneficial and respectful of human rights. The principle of the rule of law and core international human rights instruments and labour standards are critical for effective migration governance. Recognising the numerous different areas of international law, soft law and policy approaches on migration, navigating these and ensuring national legislative compliance and implementation becomes challenging for the (often small) bureaucracies of PICs, where customary law on issues such as land ownership is also recognised. Some measures appreciate the positive contribution of migrants and migration to economic welfare, national prosperity and development. However, other measures react to migration and to migrants as a threat, which can have negative consequences, including violations of the human rights of migrants and their families.

There is a need to put in place appropriate pathways and facilitate safe and regular migration, rule of law and due process so that international migration is governed equitably, predictably and fairly.⁵⁶ All procedures relating to international migrants and migration, including those related to irregular migration, should be based on laws promulgated through regular process, subject to judicial review and appeal; implemented equally, without discrimination; and explicitly aligned with principles of due process.⁵⁷ There is a need to develop legal and policy frameworks to equally protect people who are staying, moving in anticipation of harm, and are displaced.

Labour migration standards

Labour migration within countries as well as voluntary migration overseas has a long history in the Pacific and has been used as an adaptation and resilience strategy against environmental challenges. There is a need to focus on improving working conditions and labour rights that address peoples' vulnerabilities. This should include ensuring flexible arrangements regarding visas for families of some temporary migrants and including families in the shaping of how labour migration is managed.⁵⁸

Labour rights of temporary migrant workers should be fully respected in the labour migration schemes. Migrant workers should have access to social protection and relief measures similar to national workers, including unemployment insurance and income support. Workers should not pay recruitment fees and bear other additional costs (including as a result of the pandemic), as per the International Labour Organization (ILO) Fair Recruitment General Principles and Operational Guidelines. Barriers to equal participation and access to seasonal labour mobility opportunities for women and people with disabilities must be removed. A 'Compendium of Legislation and Institutional Arrangements for Labour Migration in Pacific Island Countries' was developed in 2014⁵⁹ (utilising PACLII)⁶⁰ and could be updated as a step towards improving such legal and policy arrangements.

Human Rights instruments

While there are relatively low rate of ratification of core treaties by Pacific island countries, the situation is improving. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) have been ratified by most PICs and are highly relevant in the context of mobility. Many countries have also ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). While ratification and implementation of the core human rights treaties is widely recognized as a basic requirement for promoting and protecting human rights on the national level, PICs often lack the resources to ensure effective participation in important human rights and other discussions in various United Nations (UN) bodies. Human rights are core and fundamental expression of dignity and agreed norms. States must uphold their obligations under the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and instruments to respect this by regulating private and third-party actors, to protect through avenues for remedies and redress to ensure the accountability of employers for migrant and domestic workers. These are also important for immigration detention facilities to ensure the promotion and resourcing

56 United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (2020). Asia Pacific Migration Report 2020: Assessing Implementation of the Global Compact for Migration (ST/ESCAP/2801).

57 Ibid.

58 For example, see Bedford, C., Bedford, R., and Nunns, R. (2020), 'RSE Impact Study: Pacific stream report' available at [<https://www.immigration.govt.nz/documents/statistics/rse-impact-study-pacific-stream-report.pdf>]

59 Bedford, Richard, Bruce Burson and Charlotte Bedford (2014), 'Compendium of Legislation and Institutional Arrangements for Labour Migration in Pacific Island Countries'. ILO Pacific Office.

60 The Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute (PACLII).

for practices that are inclusive, and in line with human rights agreements, standards, and guidelines. Increasing the uptake of the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families may provide an opportunity to address some of the negative impacts of labour migration and strengthen migration governance in the region.

Although treaties are made to be narrowly interpreted, human rights principles need to be embedded in actions involving people moving in the context of climate change, such as planned relocation, forced evictions and resource allocation. States have the obligation to protect migrants, regardless of their immigration status, due to principles inherent in other human rights treaties that states have already ratified. The broad scope of human rights allows for a rights-based approach to migration governance. In some cases, the obligations and reporting requirements under human rights mechanisms have become a barrier to ratification for the small bureaucracies of PICs. Human rights can be a part of toolkit of protection options, such as implementing a human rights-based approach in planned relocation strategies.

In a 2020 position the UN Human Rights Committee determined that people who flee the effects of climate change and natural disasters should not be returned to their country of origin if essential human rights would be at risk on return.⁶¹ The Committee found that where such risks are imminent, it may be unlawful under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) for governments to send people back to countries where the effect of climate change exposes them to life-threatening risks (article 6) or where they are at real risk of facing cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment (article 7 of ICCPR). The decision was in response to a submission to the Committee by Ioane Teitiota, a national of Kiribati whose application for refugee status in New Zealand was rejected. He claimed that the State party violated his right to life under the Covenant by removing him to Kiribati in September 2015. While the Committee determined that in Mr. Teitiota's case, the State did not violate his right to life, the decision highlights the range of climate-related stressors that prevent people to live with dignity which can lead them to move away from harm and claim protection. Sudden-onset events like storms, floods and droughts related to climate change,

slow-onset processes like sea level rise, longer term shifts in weather cycles and other events can drive cross-border migration of individuals in search of protection from climate-related harm.

International legal instruments and national legislation on human trafficking and modern-day slavery

Few PICs are signatories to the relevant Conventions addressing human trafficking and modern-day slavery (see Annex 2 for definitions). These include the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2003), supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (2000), supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime⁶². Two ILO conventions focus on forced labour or services, these are the ILO Forced Labour Convention (Convention No. 29 of 1930) and its Protocol which defines forced or compulsory labour, and the ILO Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (Convention No. 105 of 1957).

States that are signatories are obligated to align their national legislation and revise their legal frameworks as needed. Many of the PICTs still need to ratify and implement key international legal tools. For many PICTs, the legal systems are not well equipped to deal with the magnitude or types of crimes taking place within their jurisdictions. For example, some crime classifications are yet to be included in national legislation. As a result, transnational organized crime-related legislation across several of the PICTs is outdated and inconsistent with international standards and norms, which limits the capacity of national and regional authorities to effectively deal with these challenges.⁶³ In some instances, reforming legislation to address transnational and organised crime is not a priority and can be perceived as an externally imposed rather than an important internal concern.⁶⁴ The Pacific Islands Development Community (PIDC) Secretariat hosted an Executive Seminar in 2019 to Combat Human Trafficking and People Smuggling from which a regional framework was proposed.⁶⁵

61 CCPR/C/127/D/2728/2016.

62 UNODC (2016) 'Transnational Crime in the Pacific: Threat Assessment', United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Bangkok.

63 Ibid.

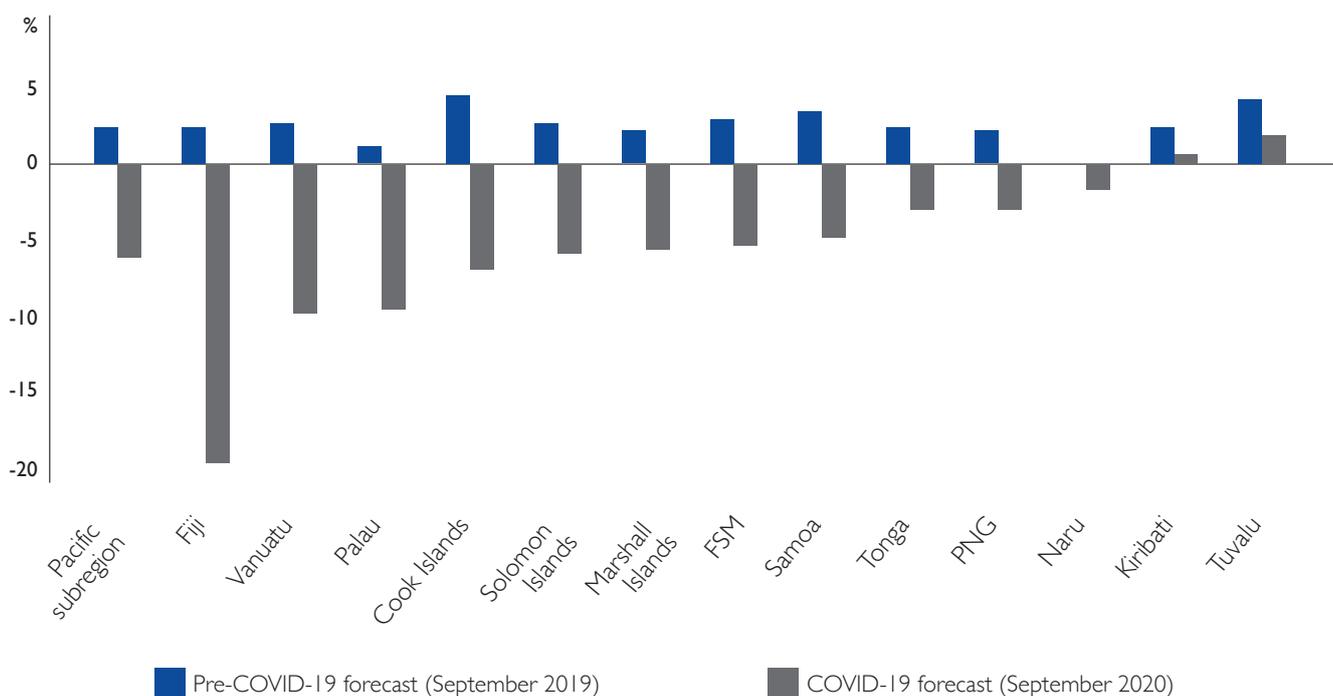
64 Watson, Danielle and Jose Luis Sousa-Santos (2021), 'Transnational and organised crime in Pacific Island Countries and Territories: Police capacity to respond to the emerging security threat', Development Bulletin Issue 82 February 2021.

65 <https://www.pidcsec.org/news/pidc-regional-immigration-human-trafficking-and-people-smuggling-framework/>.

2.5 Impact of COVID-19 on migration in the Pacific

The COVID-19 crisis has abruptly disrupted labour migration flows and has revealed a major limitation of immigration policies in the region. All countries in the Pacific have adopted strict border measure including closing airports and seaports and introducing strict quarantine measures. While these approaches have successfully reduced transmission it has come at significant cost. The region’s economy is heavily dependent on labour mobility and international tourism. For example, Fiji’s visitor numbers are down by approximately 80,000 per month, with tourism earnings drastically reduced. COVID-19 is likely to result in income loss amongst migrant workers due to reduced work hours, loss of employment, and possible infection. Migrant workers and tourism dependent households could emerge as newly vulnerable groups. All Pacific countries expect significant drops in GDP due to the pandemic (see Figure 1). Kiribati and Tuvalu are likely exceptions to this as tourism industries in both countries are relatively small. Even with increased development assistance and the maintenance of some remittances, Pacific economies will suffer until international travel is restored. The most effective measures for growth are border re-openings but these will be necessarily gradual. With the establishment of the Australia-New Zealand travel bubble in April 2021, the chances of this being extended to cover some PICs offers some hope for the tourism, education and labour mobility sectors. The five COVID-free countries in Micronesia are also working towards a similar ‘travel bubble’. In the meantime, the most effective tools Pacific governments have to cushion the COVID-19 economic blow are through stimulating internal mobility and other economic stimulus measures.⁶⁶ The progressive strengthening and reopening of labour migration opportunities should also provide an important economic lifeline for Pacific economies.

Figure 1: Impact of COVID-19 on Full-Year 2020 Gross Domestic Product Growth Forecasts in the Pacific



Source: ADB Pacific Monitor (December 2020)

66 Howes, Stephen and Sherman Surandiran (2020) ‘COVID-19: economic damage and Pacific strengths.’ DEVPOLICY Blog, August 18, 2020, Australian National University (ANU).

The COVID-19 crisis has impacted labour mobility and diaspora groups from the Pacific, with consequent reductions in remittances. Many Pacific workers find employment in Australia under the Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) and Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS), and in New Zealand under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme. As a result of COVID-19, new arrivals under such schemes initially reduced significantly particularly to Australia. Pacific Islanders who are working in Australia and New Zealand under longer-term visas also face higher unemployment risk as host economies are affected by the pandemic. Workers have experienced much uncertainty with their employment, reduced hours, not being able to return to their families due to border closures and relocating to new regions and workplaces.⁶⁷ Both Australia and New Zealand are taking steps being taken to revitalise labour migration schemes. The New Zealand government has announced border exceptions for Pacific seasonal workers under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme permitting up to 2,400 workers to enter up to March 2022.⁶⁸ Recognising the demand for Pacific workers in critical sectors Australia re-commenced SWP and PLS recruitments in August 2020 and 7,000 workers have arrived in Australia under the restart.

According to the World Bank (2020), moderating the employment and livelihoods impacts of COVID-19 across the Pacific requires supportive policy responses from governments, potentially including support to affected populations, support to businesses, safeguarding cash-flow through tax and import duty relief, and exploring opportunities for direct cash transfers and social assistance to vulnerable populations⁶⁹. The crisis has hit existing vulnerable populations particularly hard, with youth and women disproportionately affected, exacerbating existing

inequalities. Additional measures that could be considered (based on analysis undertaken by IOM in 2020⁷⁰) include:

- Scale up provision of information and support during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Increase understanding of social impacts of COVID-19 on migrant sending households, including on education and food security implications for families.
- Studies on the use of remittances to examine, for example, whether remittances assist families become more self-reliant and resilient.
- Provide digital financial education and literacy support.
- Encourage diaspora community investments in their source countries.
- Establish long-term safety nets to provide relief during disasters.

A key policy opportunity exists to address the vulnerable positions of temporary migrants at times of crisis to stimulate action on a more realistic and effective temporary visa architecture for Pacific labour migration. Migrants will be crucial to longer-term recovery, and their contributions should be recognised and valued. Every migrant, regardless of their status, has human rights and this perspective must be central to COVID-19 response and recovery plans.⁷¹ Moreover, migrants should be eligible and encouraged to receive vaccinations, and access related health care.

67 Bailey, Rochelle (2020), 'Stuck in New Zealand: the experiences of Pacific seasonal workers.' DEVPOLICY Blog <https://devpolicy.org/stuck-in-new-zealand-the-experiences-of-pacific-seasonal-workers-20200721/> Date downloaded: April 12, 2021

68 Bedford, C. (2021), 'Pacific seasonal workers to New Zealand: slow progress' DEVPOLICY Blog 15 June 2021.

69 World Bank (2020) 'Pacific Island Countries in the Era of COVID-19' World Bank, Sydney December 2020. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/835131608739709618/pdf/Pacific-Island-Countries-in-the-Era-of-COVID-19-Macroeconomic-Impacts-and-Job-Prospect.pdf>.

70 IOM (2020) 'Rapid Assessment of the Socioeconomic Impacts of COVID-19 on Labour Mobility in the Pacific Region'. IOM Suva. [<https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom-rapid-assessment-report.pdf>].

71 ESCAP (2021), n36 above.

Section 3

Regional Priorities

This section examines regional migration issues that are common to most PICs, and which would benefit from collaboration between countries.

3.1 Climate change and Disaster Preparedness and Response

According to a recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) “small island developing States (SIDS) are expected to experience challenging conditions at 1.5°C warming due to increased risk of internal migration and displacement and limits to adaptation.”⁷²

Climate change and disasters are already having an impact on mobility in the Pacific, compounding existing drivers of mobility and potentially contributing to:

- Migration undertaken voluntarily in support of employment, access to education, or better access to services, (either internal or cross-border);
- Displacement, or forced movement, where people are compelled to move, predominantly internally but also voluntarily across borders; and
- Planned relocation of communities or individuals, through a permanent movement of communities and their assets in another location.⁷³

There is a clear need for all countries in the region to adopt measures to avoid the worst impacts of unplanned

movement. While the risks faced by communities in SIDS are real and recognised with high confidence by the IPCC, including risk of “death, injury, ill-health or disrupted livelihoods”⁷⁴ there is a pressing need to avoid the realisation of these impacts through timely and proactive policy responses including *in situ* adaptation measures. Aside from the risk of displacement, environmental factors linked to climate change are already increasing vulnerability of affected populations and are becoming drivers of migration. These include regular exposure to flooding, increasing scarcity of potable water and declining land productivity. Socio-economic threats and vulnerabilities that contribute to displacement or poorly planned relocation can exacerbate and lead to other vulnerabilities, such as movement to informal urban and peri-urban settlements, disaster prone areas or areas with few livelihood opportunities.⁷⁵ Migration is just one potential response to environmental change, with *in situ* adaptation the preferred option for many communities reflecting a social and cultural attachment to place. Importantly, migration may not be possible for the most vulnerable including the poor, disabled, elderly and women and children.

72 IPCC (2018:5–452).

73 PCCM-HS (2020) ‘Background Paper’ for the Regional Policy Dialogue. IOM, Suva.

74 IPCC (2014) ‘Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’ [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Meyer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland.

75 Islam, Rezaul and Niaz Ahmed Khan (2018). ‘Threats, vulnerability, resilience and displacement among the climate change and natural disaster-affected people in South-East Asia: an overview’. *Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy*, 23:2, 297-323.

Displacement and relocation

Disaster displacement is one of the region's most significant humanitarian and sustainable development challenges, and climate change and patterns of unplanned urbanisation will exacerbate the problem. Planned relocation is recognized as a tool for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and potentially a durable solution to disaster displacement.⁷⁶ However, the process can also undermine socio-economic prosperity, cultural practices and can increase vulnerability. Planned relocation can be a very positive strategy as long as the community concerned makes the decisions.

National frameworks for guiding adaptation at the community-level should seek to prioritise approaches that enable and recognise agency and participation, in addition to the current priority accorded to the establishment of standardised procedures, assessment methods, and protocols. Human mobility should also be addressed in important related policy processes such as national adaptation planning (NAPAs, JNAPs etc.).

There is documented experience in the Pacific of population displacement. Cases involving permanent displacement internally (such as the resettlement of communities from the Carteret Islands in Papua New Guinea), and regionally (e.g. resettlement of population of Banaba island to Rabi Island) reinforce the need for legal protection for displaced populations as part of overall social, economic and cultural welfare, and the importance of integrated land use planning in receiving communities to prevent conflict. This requires careful policy attention as even with legal protection (such as extraordinary citizenship and parliamentary representation arrangements) there can be intergenerational issues of deprivation and inequity.⁷⁷

Localised and regional responses (within the Pacific) are likely to be better placed than wider international movement to respond to the needs of displaced persons due to geographical, cultural, demographic and other factors. Further, structured community engagement approaches can help replace or supplement efforts to pre-determine a standard approach to the assessment of adaptation options.⁷⁸ However, there remains a need for better understanding of the relationship between mobility and adaptation to discern how and when forms of human mobility are positive or negative for those who move and for communities of origin and destination.

What is *displacement* associated with disasters and the risk associated with it?

Disaster displacement refers to situations where people are forced to leave their homes or places of habitual residence as a result of a disaster or in order to avoid the impact of an immediate and foreseeable natural hazard. Such displacement results from the fact that affected persons are (i) exposed to (ii) a natural hazard in a situation where (iii) they are too vulnerable and lack the resilience to withstand the impacts of that hazard.

Disaster risk refers to the potential loss of life, injury, or destroyed or damaged assets which could occur to a system, society or a community in a specific period of time, determined probabilistically as a function of hazard, exposure, vulnerability and capacity.

'Sudden-Onset Hazards and the Risk of Future Displacement in Fiji'
IDMC (2020)

76 See, for example, Connell, J. and Lutkehaus, N. (2016) 'Another Manam? The forced migration of the population of Manam Island, Papua New Guinea, due to volcanic eruptions 2004–2005. International Organisation for Migration (IOM). [<https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/another-manam-forced-migration-population-manam-island-papua-new-guinea-due-volcanic-eruptions-200-0>].

77 McAdam, J. (2016) 'Under Two Jurisdictions: Immigration, Citizenship, and Self-Governance in Cross-Border Community Relocations' 34 *Law and History Review* 281-333.

78 Lund (2021), n19.

Translating global approaches into local action

A number of global policy frameworks on climate change, migration and disaster risk reduction highlight the unique human rights challenges that movement in the context of climate change and disasters creates and make recommendations for governments to pursue action at national and regional levels. These include:

- Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (2018)
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (including, for example, Target 10.7: Safe, orderly and responsible migration)
- UNFCCC Paris Agreement, and the WIM Taskforce on Displacement
- Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998)
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) and UNDRR ‘Words into Action’ Guidelines
- ‘Protection Agenda’ for the protection of cross-border displaced persons in the context of climate change and disasters, and the Platform on Disaster Displacement

Many countries in the region face challenges to implement international commitments and guidance at the national level. The implementation process must be a priority to ensure that international commitments are translated into real actions in each Pacific state.

Vulnerable groups, immobile and ‘trapped’ populations

People affected by climate change, particularly the most vulnerable and socially excluded, will often have no access to mobility. Migration as a response to environmental change is less available to socially marginalised populations with economic, health, social, political and geographic factors playing a role in limiting migration choices. This may create “poverty immobility”⁷⁹ traps, leading to further poverty due to deteriorating ecosystem services. Cultural attachment to place may also contribute to voluntary immobility. In this context there is a need to focus on reducing the drivers of vulnerability. Migration therefore should be a choice that optimises benefits and minimises risk, highlighting the need to focus on reducing the drivers of vulnerability with the upholding of rights and freedoms to stay in place (rather than migrate) as important as upholding rights and freedoms to move.

Climate Change, Migration and Land

“Over 90 per cent of land in Pacific Islands is held in a range of customary forms of communal ownership, belonging as much to past and future generations as it does to the present. In most cases it cannot be bought or sold although some countries have provisions for long-term leases. Land is a critical component of Pacific Island societies and in most places the people and their land are mutually constituted. One cannot be considered complete without the other. Climate change poses two broad problems in relation to this union. First, it may damage the land so that its ability to support its people is curtailed or even destroyed. This will not only have serious implications for the material security of the affected communities but may also affect their emotional and spiritual wellbeing. It is likely that many people will be induced or forced to leave their ancestral lands and find new homes. Second, relocation and resettlement of individual families, and in some cases whole communities, will require new land to be found, a task that will be made difficult because other communities are unable to sell or give their land away. Where there has been significant in-migration to areas in the region, tensions and conflict have often arisen, frequently with land as a significant underlying issue. Finding durable solutions for climate change migrants is likely to be a critical issue in the future.”

John Campbell (2019) ‘Climate Change, Migration and Land in Oceania’ Policy Brief No. 37, Toda Peace Institute, Tokyo.

⁷⁹ Barnett, Jon and Adger, W. Neil (2018) ‘Mobile Worlds: Choice intersection of demographic and environmental change’. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 43: 245-65.

Common national challenges

At the 2020 'Regional Policy Dialogue'⁸⁰ Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCM-HS) programme, the following issues were identified for the attention of national policy makers and development partners on climate related mobility:

A) Challenges for national policy frameworks

- Identification of durable solutions for displaced communities, including comprehensive policies on migration, displacement and relocation.
- Establish and maintain strong interlinkages at the national level across policy arenas through a risk-informed approach in all development policies including land use planning, social protection, disaster response and climate change adaptation.
- Safety nets considering different climatic scenarios need to be in place.
- Need to link to relevant regional and global frameworks, such as human rights conventions.
- Development of management plans for public assets (infrastructure) to factor in climate change to ensure resilience in the long term.

B) Capacity constraints

- Capacity at national and provincial levels to adequately plan for and accommodate climate mobility into development approaches.
- Support for linking climate change adaptation and mobility.
- Including indigenous knowledge Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and adaptation policies and frameworks

C) Land, land use and access

- Land issues related to land ownership, customary land tenure and land use.
- Limited availability of land as an obstacle to relocation, including little ownership of land by government.
- Identification of vulnerable sites including coastal mapping and zoning.
- Climate change is exacerbating existing urbanisation challenges.

D) Challenges for public financing

- Financial constraints for adaptation, relocation and resettlement.
- Vertical funds such as the GCF and GEF do not support planned relocation activities.

E) 'Evidence-based' policy

- Challenges in predicting and quantifying data to assess the impact of climate change on mobility, due to a lack of resources to track and establish a sound database.
- Monitoring and evaluation frameworks are still lacking and need to be scaled up to measure the impact of climate change on community performance and livelihoods, such as social cohesion, housing, community structure, education and health.

F) Addressing the needs of vulnerable and potentially 'trapped' populations

- Inter-island and external migration resulting in smaller population (including women, children and the elderly) left behind in outer islands and remote areas.
- Support for livelihood change (and changes to social and daily norms for both immobile populations as well as those relocated).

G) Creating safe migration pathways and managing migration

- Lack of support services for migrant workers.
- Addressing 'brain drain' and loss of technical expertise.
- Minimising potential conflict between host community and settlers.

H) Maintenance of culture and identity

- Cultural and traditional ties, loss of culture and tradition (identity and practices) and connection to land.

I) Service provision

- Existing pressure on social and physical infrastructures including education and health services, housing.
- Provision of emergency response services including essential life-saving services and post-emergency and recovery support including education, health care, food, access to employment, housing etc.
- Need for safeguards for Internally displaced persons lacking documentation (National ID etc).

80 https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/2021-03/PCCM-HS_Regional_Policy_Dialogue_Report.pdf

Priorities for regional cooperation

The 2020 'Regional Policy Dialogue' identified the following potential focus areas where a regional framework could add value:

- i) Protecting vulnerable groups and ensuring safe migration pathways:** A legal and political framework for human mobility to assist in strengthening national policies and legislation, including contextualised guiding principles on Internally Displaced Persons, national and cross-border relocation and flexible labour mobility strategies.
- ii) Dialogue and sharing experiences:** to encourage intra-Pacific dialogue on climate mobility; capacity building through sharing experiences, lessons learned and good practices medium whereby experiences and lessons learnt pertaining to climate mobility can be shared.
- iii) Strengthened regional and global advocacy:** To support enhanced political will to address internal and cross-border challenges in the context of climate mobility; joint-advocacy on key issues for the Pacific Islands, including access to finance; developing and promoting international law.
- iv) Alignment and policy coherence:** To provide a strategic focus and structures for policies at the national level and allow for strengthened connections among existing regional, sub-regional platforms.
- v) Building the evidence base and guiding support:** To increase understanding of the issue through research and improved data.

3.2 Migrant assistance and protection

Migrants are most vulnerable to abuse and exploitation in situations and places where the authority of the State and society is unable to protect them, either through lack of capacity, applicable laws or simple neglect. The long distances between islands make maritime areas difficult to monitor, while all PICs lack the resources to effectively monitor borders and enforce national and international law. The pandemic may have worsened the situation. According to a policy brief by the Asia and the Pacific Policy Society (2020):

One of the major features of the Pacific security environment – increasingly visible over the last five years – is the rising sophistication, range and number of transnational and local organised crime actors operating within the region. This has led to the growth of illicit shadow economies and power structures which have responded to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by adapting with the aim to benefit from it. Moreover, there is a blurred line between licit industries and illicit activities such as human trafficking in industries like logging, mining and fishing.⁸¹

The term 'modern-day slavery' as an umbrella term, which encompasses human trafficking, forced labour, slavery and the worst forms of child labour (with definitions established under international law, see Annex 2).

Human trafficking

The Pacific is a source, transit point and destination for human trafficking. The scale of the problem is very difficult to determine due to a lack of overall awareness and knowledge, and a related paucity of information due to limited targeted research and data collection as well as the insidious nature of the crime.⁸² Human trafficking remains a misunderstood and hidden phenomenon. The Pacific is vulnerable to exploitation by human traffickers, yet few resources are directed towards countering human trafficking.

81 Sousa-Santos, Jose (2020) 'Profiteering from the pandemic COVID-19, crime and vulnerability in the Pacific.' Policy Forum, 31 July 2020, Asia and the Pacific Policy Society [<https://www.policyforum.net/profiteering-from-the-pandemic/>].

82 UNODC (2016), n40 above.

- In the Solomon Islands, logging operations and related mobility dynamics combine with pre-existing localized factors to create risks of human trafficking, sexual exploitation and forced marriage for local women and girls. The dynamics created by logging camps in remote areas, along with limited industry accountability and few formal protective policies, as well as restricted access to service provision and protective services, leads to an environment where the drivers of vulnerability can go unchecked.⁸³
- In March 2019, authorities Vanuatu arrested four Bangladeshi nationals for their role in a forced labour case involving 101 Bangladeshi victims and initiated court proceedings (the first trafficking prosecution in the country's history) against the four suspects.
- Fiji, as a major regional hub has become a source, transit and destination country for cross-border trafficking and also experiences domestic human trafficking. Thai and Chinese women have been trafficked to Fiji under the promise of employment, to be forced into sex work under debt bondage.
- In the Marshall Islands, women have been reportedly recruited with promises of legitimate work and are forced into sex work subsequent to paying considerable recruitment fees⁸⁴. Traffickers also exploit some foreign fishermen in conditions indicative of forced labour on ships in Marshallese waters and on Marshallese flagged ships.

Issues underpinning the vulnerability of children, young people and females in the Pacific region in general include financial hardship, limited employment opportunities and limited legislation related to domestic and child trafficking. LGBTQ individuals are generally at higher risk of modern slavery, particularly trafficking for sexual exploitation but this remains an under-researched issue in the Pacific and elsewhere.

'Murky waters: A qualitative assessment of modern slavery in the Pacific region' (2020)

Key findings:

- Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) exists among widespread sexual exploitation of children, underpinned by cultural norms about women, girls and children.
- Forced labour and trafficking for labour exploitation are increasingly being recognised across the region, particularly among migrants and in the fishing and construction sectors, though significant gaps in understanding and relatively low awareness remain.
- An influx of foreign investment projects in the PICs has led to increased risk of forced labour and forced sexual exploitation of Asian migrant workers in high-risk sectors in the PICs.
- Vulnerabilities linked to migration and discrimination against women are likely to be exacerbated by increasing effects of climate change in PICs.
- Labour mobility scheme workers and their families are vulnerable to modern slavery through family breakdown, child protection issues, and gender-based violence.

'Murky waters: A qualitative assessment of modern slavery in the Pacific region' (2020). The Minderoo Foundation, 2020. <https://respect.international/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Walk-Free-Foundation-Pacific-Report-03-2020.pdf>

83 IOM (2019) 'Community health and mobility in the Pacific: Solomon Islands Case Study.' International Organization for Migration (IOM), Honiara.

84 Transnational Crime Pacific Threat Assessment (2016), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Forced labour: Abuses in the fishing industry

While the fisheries sector counts among the most important economic sectors providing income, food security and employment in the Pacific, studies have revealed that fishers, many of them migrant workers, are often subjected to extreme forms of human rights abuses, including forced labour and human trafficking.⁸⁵ 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.⁸⁶ Many fishing fleet operators rely heavily on rural, migrant workers (often from South East Asia) and it is these men and boys who bear the brunt of much of the abuse in distant-water fleets. At sea, flag States have primary responsibility under international law to ensure compliance with international and national laws on board vessels flying their flag, which presents a formidable challenge to countries with limited regulatory capacity.⁸⁷ The Marshall Islands, for example, has the second largest ship registry in the world, and yet limited human resources to oversee this registry.

Priorities for the region

- Enact legislation, or strengthen existing legislation, to ensure that all forms of human exploitation are criminalised and penalties for crimes associated with modern slavery are appropriate to the severity of the crime.
- PICs should implement a coordinated and focused regional response to successfully combat these crimes with support from development partners and the UN should expand support to increase access and strengthen victim support services.
- Provide emergency care and long-term reintegration support to all victims of modern slavery, including men and migrant workers. Build upon existing systems where suitable, such as services for victims of gender-based violence.
- Capacity development on trafficking laws and victim identification procedures to immigration officials, law enforcement officers, and social service providers, including at the provincial level.
- Support for victim protection, including through the allocation of funding to trafficking-specific shelter services benefiting both male and female victims.
- Strengthen climate change resilience and minimise the number of those forced to migrate. This must be joined by action on the root causes of climate change and the provision of safe, orderly, and dignified migration pathways for climate migrants.

85 ILO (2013) 'Caught at sea: forced labour and trafficking in fisheries' International Labour Office, Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour, Sectoral Activities Department (SECTOR). - Geneva: ILO, 2013.

86 Minderoo Foundation (2020) 'Murky waters: A qualitative assessment of modern slavery in the Pacific region' The Minderoo Foundation, 2020. <https://respect.international/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Walk-Free-Foundation-Pacific-Report-03-2020.pdf>

87 ILO (2013), n54 above.

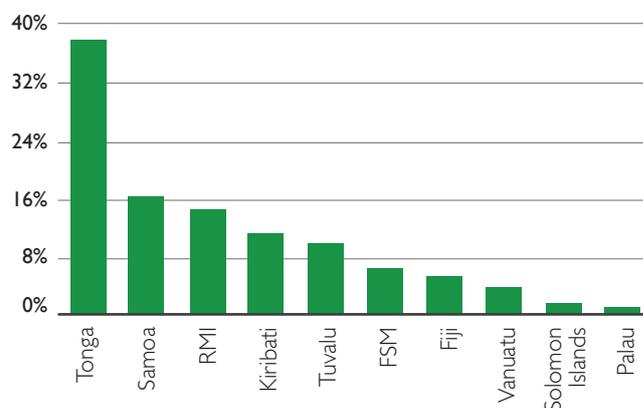
3.3 Labour mobility and human development

Labour mobility has a long history and is well established in PICs. International labour migration for most Pacific people remains a key strategy to improve livelihoods. Often cited benefits include:

- **Remittances** are fundamentally important for household resilience and national economies. Remittances represent significant portions of the GDP of most PICs (up to 37% in Tonga but above 5% for most economies).
- **Skills, knowledge and technology transfer.** Migrants can generate social capital in home communities by increasing the transfer of ideas, innovations, knowledge, information and skills (such as financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills).
- **Reduced pressure on resources at origin.** Migration can act as a “pressure release valve”, reducing demands on resources, particularly where these may be compromised by environmental degradation and/or increasing population pressure.⁸⁸

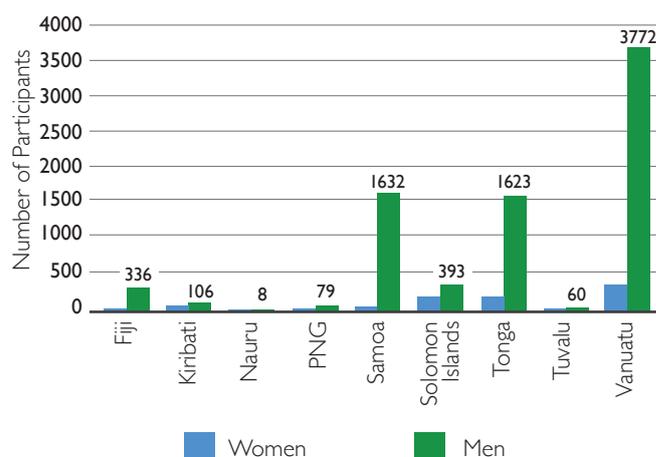
But labour mobility is not a panacea and has economic and social costs, including the gendered impact on sending communities as well as loss of potential economic productivity and long-standing concerns about ‘brain drain’⁸⁹ Exploitation by employers and lack of social safety nets in destination countries are also possible problems. The social impacts of labour migration remain in need of further research, including on how ‘left-behind’ household members cope economically and emotionally with the departure of a family member. The effects of family separation and the psychological impacts on migrant workers, their spouses and children can be significant.⁹⁰ This will differ between household members, so it becomes crucial to understand how the gender, age and relationship of workers and household members influence coping strategies.⁹¹ Labour migrants can also be particularly vulnerable to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁹² This has, however, been accompanied by some measure that have addressed the needs of migrant workers caught up in the pandemic, such as the Australian government’s enhanced flexibility around visas.

Figure 2: Remittance inflows as a percentage of GDP (2019).



Source: World Bank (2020)

Figure 3: Female Participation in the RSE 2017-2018.



Source: Connell and Petrou (2019)

88 Campbell, John and Olivia Warrick (2014) ‘Climate Change and Migration Issues in the Pacific’, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). Pacific Office August, 2014.

89 Curtain, R. (2018), ‘Promoting migration while combatting the brain drain: monitoring issues’ DEVPOLICY Blog 14 May 2018.

90 Voigt-Graf, C. (2017), ‘Temporary migration reservations’ DEVPOLICY Blog 21 August 2017.

91 Connell, John and Kirstie Petrou (2019) ‘Pacific Labour Mobility: Towards a future research agenda’ The University of Sydney, July 2019.

92 See World Bank (2020), n44 above.

Labour mobility schemes in the Pacific have been dominated by males, in part due to in-country selection processes, as well as employer demands and preference for male agricultural labourers over females. A World Bank study found that the female workers that do participate in the SWP earn slightly less than men, although they remit more than men.⁹³ Across the Pacific, women's access to independent income is limited and combined with the high participation of men in labour migration programs many women remain left behind, which confines them to traditional gender roles (such as care giving) often limiting any opportunity to seek paid employment or wage labour.

There has been increased labour migration in the Pacific. Many Pacific workers find employment in Australia under the Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) and Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS), and in New Zealand under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme. Many Pacific Islanders also migrate to Australia and New Zealand outside of labour mobility programs, including other formal pathways. While all PICs are destination countries for some skilled, professional, and managerial workers, the largest number of foreign workers (not only from the Pacific) are employed in Papua New Guinea and Fiji while the proportion of migrant workers in terms of the local labour force is largest in Palau.⁹⁴

Expanding opportunities for labour mobility

Ensuring labour mobility schemes provide opportunities to develop new skills, and aligning skills investment with demand, will be important in improving access to more productive and higher paying jobs. Concerted effort to reducing the cost of sending remittances to the Pacific remains vital to ensuring the success of labour mobility initiatives. There are a number of barriers to maximizing labour migration opportunities for PICs:⁹⁵

- There is a lack of skills and qualification recognition to facilitate migration. For instance, skills training that is not sufficient to meet the standards required for skilled migrant entry into Australia or New Zealand.

- Related to this, the expanding of labour migration programs (RSE, PLS, SWP) into additional categories, reflecting the size and depth labour market points to a need to support and finance Pacific island training institutions to ensure they remain aligned with market needs (beyond domestic markets).
- The geography and remoteness of some PICs, which entail not only higher travel costs (which some donors and others have tried to compensate for with subsidy programs) but limited availability of relevant information, result in uneven access to migration opportunities.
- The existing trade agreements, namely the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) and the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), have not made significant impact on maximizing migration opportunities. The Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus included regional labour migration as a core component of free trade negotiations and a non-binding side-arrangement on labour mobility was agreed with the aim of strengthening labour migration cooperation between the parties.⁹⁶
- While many employers in labour-receiving countries use employment agents to recruit workers, few agencies have offices in PICs and few Pacific Islanders have registered in their databases, which limits their chances of being recruited.⁹⁷
- The quality of labour market information systems within PIC governments needs improvement to enhance the collection of labour market information to support greater market access for Pacific labour.
- Some PICs have not had a chance to build networks and a good reputation in major destination countries other than Australia and New Zealand, which disadvantages them against workers from other countries.
- Within the region, skill shortages exist largely in the same areas across most PIC.

93 World Bank (2017) 'Maximizing the development impacts from temporary migration: Recommendations for Australia's Seasonal Worker Programme' (Washington, DC).

94 ILO (2019) 'Labour Mobility in Pacific Island Countries'. ILO Pacific, 2019.

95 Ibid.

96 See Kautoke-Holani, Alisi (2017) 'Labour Mobility in the PACER Plus' Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 90–101.

97 For further information see Curtain, R. (2020), 'Reforms to improve Vanuatu's seasonal labour recruitment system' DEVPOLICY Blog 20 November 2020.

The following recommendations emerge from the above:⁹⁸

1. Improving labour migration governance

A clear, coherent and comprehensive national migration policy framework is essential for effective governance of migration to ensure appropriate regulation, integration of migrants in labour markets and communities, and to maintain social cohesion. As it is in the interest of PICs as migrant-sending nations to ensure safe migration and fair work for their migrant workers, it is recommended that they consider signing and ratifying the ILO Conventions governing labour migration, especially the:

- i. Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1947 (No. 97)
- ii. Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143); and
- iii. Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), viii

The IOM IRIS Standard supporting ethical recruitment and Montreal Recommendations on Recruitment also provide an opportunity to enhance in labour migration governance. The consists of seven principles of ethical recruitment. The IRIS Standard consists of seven principles of ethical recruitment:

- Respect for Laws, Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- Respect for Ethical and Professional Conduct
- Prohibition of Recruitment Fees to Jobseekers
- Respect for Freedom of Movement
- Respect for Transparency of Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Respect for Confidentiality and Data Protection
- Respect for Access to Remedy

The 'Montreal Recommendations on Recruitment: A Road Map towards Better Regulation'⁹⁹ provides policymakers with guidance and suggestions to improve regulation and oversight of international recruitment and protection of migrant workers. PICs can develop national labour migration policies based on lessons from the experiences of Kiribati, Tonga, and Tuvalu with developing and implementing their national labour migration policies.

2. Improving existing temporary and seasonal schemes

- Pacific Island governments could advocate for including opportunities for seasonal and temporary workers to change employers in Australia and New Zealand, with the view of reducing workers' dependence and vulnerability.
- The Kiribati and Tuvalu governments could advocate for the consideration of "vulnerability to climate change or natural disasters" within the selection process for the RSE, and Pacific Labour Scheme, giving workers from these countries a small advantage.
- To improve labour governance in origin countries, research studies could determine what sort of reintegration assistance for returned workers would be most useful (e.g., training, micro-credits, savings schemes, or others) to assist returned workers to build sustainable livelihoods in their island countries without the need to return to Australia or New Zealand for many seasons. This would limit the negative social impacts of repeated absences on themselves and their families and would create opportunities for newcomers to participate in seasonal work schemes.
- There is a need for greater focus on up-skilling and upgrading skills of migrants while in countries of destination. Documenting this capacity building information (including qualifications for example) as part of labour mobility programs would also benefit labour migrants.

3. Moving to new destination countries and into new occupational areas

- PIC governments, in collaboration with the UNCT, could instigate a public debate involving social partners over the preferred levels and types of labour migration in all PICs.
- After determining the preferred levels and types of labour migration, Pacific Island governments could become more active in gathering and disseminating information on labour migration opportunities in non-traditional destinations and in new occupational areas. They could proactively negotiate bilateral labour agreements/memoranda of understanding with potential destination countries.
- After identifying overseas employment opportunities, training efforts have to be concentrated in areas of labour demand. This would benefit from linkages to Pacific training college curricula so ensure skill development is linked to labour markets.

⁹⁸ Based on ILO (2019), Connell and Petrou (2019), World Bank (2020) and Curtain and Howes (2020)

⁹⁹ See [<https://publications.iom.int/books/montreal-recommendations-recruitment-road-map-towards-better-regulation>].

- Support for governments in their identification of overseas employment opportunities and their negotiations with destination countries.
- The guide on overseas employment for I-Kiribati developed by the ILO (2015)¹⁰⁰ represents a good practice, and similar guides could be developed either for individual PICs or for the region as a whole. Guides could focus on skilled work (as in the case of Kiribati) or could also include semi- and low-skilled work

4. Increasing understanding of the social impacts of migration

- Given the lack of understanding of the social impacts of seasonal and temporary migration on migrants, their families and their communities, further research into this area could be undertaken.
- Comprehensive research study on intra-regional migrant domestic workers from Pacific countries is important as this is a gap.
- There are important dynamics to understand in order to avoid unintended consequences from seasonal labour mobility, such as increased domestic violence due to conflict over remittance use.¹⁰¹
- Reintegration of workers post-labour mobility is poorly understood. It is likely that reintegration will be most difficult for workers who are away for an extended period (but research is needed to confirm this). It will be important to consider the kinds of 'social remittances' (positive and negative) that workers bring back with them.¹⁰²
- Better understanding of the impact parental migration has on children who are left behind is also required.

5. Collecting consistent labour migration data to ensure evidence-based policymaking

- Using the International Labour Migration Statistics (ILMS) template from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, a similar database could be developed for the Pacific region.
- Support could be provided to line ministries (Labour, Immigration) to enable them to make better use of the data that is collected by these Ministries.

6. Increasing intra-Pacific labour migration and localizing selected positions

- Research into the labour markets of the main Pacific migrant receiving countries (such as Palau, Papua New Guinea) to explore opportunities for (a) localization; and (b) Pacific Islanders from neighbouring countries taking up these positions rather than migrants from more distant countries.

7. Towards gender equality

Improving women's participation in labour mobility schemes presents an opportunity to increase the low rates of access to independent income that women face in the Pacific¹⁰³.

- Low participation by Pacific women in seasonal labour mobility requires research to understand the barriers in both sending and receiving nations.
- Improving working relationships between Pacific labour-exporting countries and employers, to identify safe, culturally appropriate employment opportunities for Pacific women, should be given priority.
- To increase participation of women in seasonal work schemes, PICs could try to learn from good practices in the region.

100 See: <https://www.unescap.org/resources/my-guide-overseas-employment>.

101 Ball, R., Bailey, R., Haley, N., and Keen, M. (2015) 'Pacific Labour Mobility: Removing the Gender Blinkers'. In Brief 2015/51, The State, Society & Governance in Melanesia Program (SSGM), Australian National University (ANU).

102 Connell and Petrou (2019), n 53 above.

103 Ball et al. (2015), n90.

3.4 Migrant health

Migrants experience multiple barriers to public and health services, including insecure legal status, restrictive policies and limited knowledge of health systems. Migrants also experience multiple risk factors for COVID-19 exposure, including often poor living conditions, employment in informal roles, sparse access to adequate sanitation and hygiene services.¹⁰⁴ The pandemic and its socio-economic fallout pose great risks to migrants in the Pacific. They are more likely to be exposed to the virus, face barriers to health care and other essential services, and have been stranded in countries without work.¹⁰⁵ As migrants are often essential workers and sources of remittances, migrants are also key to recovery in the region. Migrants in irregular situations and those in temporary status or in non-standard forms of employment face severe constraints to accessing health care and services.

The interaction of migrant and mobile populations with local communities at places such as ports, logging sites, construction sites, informal settlements, areas of conflict and environmentally related displacement, and mines creates a fluid social environment in which social norms regulating behaviour may not be followed or known, and migrants may feel a sense of anonymity and limited accountability, which can lead to high risk behaviour. Potential health issues arising in the context can be exacerbated by isolation from health services, which tend to be highly centralised in many PICs.

Potential areas for support from development partners include:

- Support for immigration, health and quarantine services to effectively manage border health measures.
- Support for the development and delivery of community health policies and programmes that are sensitive to gender and mobility.
- Governments and international agencies to provide ethical and feasible migrant health policies to ensure quality health care.
- The working environment should be decent, safe and healthy for all migrant workers. Measures domesticating and implementing relevant ILO Conventions need to be adopted to ensure that all migrant workers benefit from decent working conditions as well as Work Health Safety (WSH) protection in law and practice.¹⁰⁶
- Recognizing and effectively protecting the human rights, including labour rights, of all migrants is a necessary foundation for all national and local law, policy and practice regarding migration. Incorporate fully international standards into national legislation, and engage in support, advocacy and training to implement international standards and relevant national legislation 'on the ground'.¹⁰⁷
- Pursue an integrated approach to health and the realization of health-related rights, including with respect to education, prevention, care, treatment and support.¹⁰⁸

104 Al-Oraibi, Amani, Martin, Christopher A, Hassan, Osama, Wickramage, Kolitha, Nellums, Laura B, & Pareek, Manish. (2021). 'Migrant health is public health: A call for equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines.' *The Lancet. Public Health*, 6(3), E144.

105 ESCAP (2021), n36 above.

106 ILO (2016) 'Promoting a Rights-based Approach to Migration, Health, and HIV and AIDS: A Framework for Action' International Labour Office, Geneva: ILO, 2016.

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid.

3.5 Cross-cutting themes

Participation of women

Mobility in the Pacific has very clear gender dimensions across the broad domain of migration issues. Gender inequality can be a powerful factor driving migration, given existing inequalities that reinforce economic, political, socio-cultural challenges. Despite the potential benefits that migration may offer, many women migrant workers can end up in unregulated workplaces in the informal economy. Women migrant workers routinely lack access to labour and social protection, including protections under labour laws and employment contracts, leaving them vulnerable to abuse (such as harsh working and living conditions, low wages, illegal withholding of wages and travel documents and premature termination of employment).¹⁰⁹ Evidence shows that due to pre-existing inequalities, women and marginalised and vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, and are also less capable of responding and adapting to, preparing for, and recovering from disasters.¹¹⁰

Continued discrimination, violence and exploitation of women migrant workers, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), violates their fundamental human rights, and also limits productivity and economic growth. The worst abuses see women trafficked, smuggled or migrating under unsafe, insecure conditions. Labour mobility schemes in the Pacific have been dominated by males, which has denied women opportunities for employment and access to economic and social development opportunities. In order to promote inclusive economic recovery, there is a need to integrate women migrant workers as rights holders who are essential to the region's sustainable development. A whole of society approach is required for more assertive and collective efforts to promote migrant-inclusive and gender-responsive measures.

Data and Statistics

While progress continues to be made in statistical methodologies and the cost effectiveness of conducting statistical collections in the region, many challenges continue to be faced by PICTs in the production, dissemination and use of statistics. The need to understand and monitor the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economies and people of the region has led to a significant increase in the demand for reliable and timely data, adding to the burden of meeting the regular statistical needs of national governments for SDG reporting requirements and for the reporting on many regional and global commitments.¹¹¹ Financing gaps exist for PICs to undertake core statistical collection and for general statistical development, and are particularly acute for the small island states. PICs have limited resources to invest in comprehensive migration records and often rely on censuses or manual data collection methods to compile migration data, affecting data quality and reporting regularity.

Statistics and other information that are required to develop, monitor and evaluate migration policies are often lacking in many PICs. While data may be regularly collected it is often scattered across different sources. Better coordination, dissemination and analysis of statistics is needed, including in areas such as the information on the occupations of emigrants (e.g. for permanent residence access such as Samoa Quota and PAC) and the impacts of migration (for example on labour migrants and households, communities and countries of origin). To produce meaningful analysis, all parts of the statistical system must use consistent concepts and definitions that follow international standards. Common definitions are the backbone for integrating data from different sources, for comparisons across time and for regional and international comparison.¹¹² Potential areas for support include: harmonisation of definitions and indicators; improve administrative data collection and analysis; better use of census and survey data; support for national planning processes to better utilise data and statistics in national planning and budgetary processes; and targeted research on areas such as human trafficking where considerable knowledge gaps exist. The pandemic has significantly increased demand for development microdata to establish socioeconomic baselines and to guide COVID-19 impact evaluation.

109 UN Women (2012) 'Factsheet: Gender aspects of migration'. UN Women.

110 UN Women (2016), 'Time to Act on Gender, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction' UN Women, New York. [<https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/11/time-to-act#view>].

111 PIFS (2020) 'Information Paper No. 8: Regional Statistics'. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS).

112 Kagan, Sophia and Jillian Campbell (2015) 'International Labour Migration Statistics: A Guide for Policymakers and Statistics Organizations in the Pacific'. ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries, Suva. ILO 2015.

Section 4

Country Specific Migration Trends and Needs

This section assesses specific migration trends and needs in the ten countries covered in this report. Additional national information is provided in country profiles in Annex 1 to this report. As a desk-based process this analysis should be recognised as limited to the information readily available and should be supplemented with national level discussions with all relevant stakeholders.

4.1 Fiji

Labour mobility is an important source of foreign income and skills development for Fijians, but also contributes to loss of skills, absence of prime working-age people in local communities, and some loss of productivity growth in the economy. Fiji has the highest inflows of international remittances among PICs in volume (nearly 5 per cent of GDP in 2018). For Fiji to realize the benefits of labour emigration it is critical to invest in workforce planning, including matching skills development with forecasted demand. Fiji's 2017 National Development Plan (NDP) focuses on generation and retention of qualifications in the domestic labour market and recognises development opportunities enabled through remittances from overseas employment. It also notes the possibilities of seasonal migration to reduce pressures on the domestic labour market and lower unemployment.

In 2018 the Fijian Government issued its National Climate Change Policy (2018-2030) and Planned Relocation Guidelines and drafted its first Climate Change Bill in 2019 (still under consideration). It includes reference to climate migration and displacement, including proposing to establish a Fiji Taskforce on Relocation of Communities Vulnerable to the Impact of Climate Change. In early 2019, Fiji issued *Displacement Guideline in the Context of Climate Change and Disasters*,¹¹³ to complement its earlier Relocation Guidelines. The Fijian government has also set up a Climate Relocation and Displaced People's Trust Fund (launched at the UN General Assembly in 2019), which is the world's first relocation fund for people who are displaced or who relocate due to climate change impacts.¹¹⁴

Fiji allows nationals of 132 countries to enter without acquiring a visa; combined with Fiji's role as a regional transportation hub, this possibly contributes to reports of Fiji being a key Pacific transit point for human trafficking, particularly in Asian trafficking routes. Workers from several countries in East and South-East Asia have – reportedly – been deceptively recruited in their home countries and transited through Fiji or boarded vessels via Fijian waters and ports. Such individuals endure poor living conditions, work for limited or no compensation on foreign fishing vessels in Pacific waters and accrue debt.

UNODC Pacific Transnational Crime Threat Assessment (2016)

Fiji is a source, destination and transit country for men, women and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour. Cases have involved luring foreign nationals (often Bangladeshi, Chinese, Thai and Indians) to Fiji with the false promise of jobs and forcing them to work under exploitative conditions, including on small farms, factories and fishing vessels and international sex trafficking to Fiji (domestic sex trafficking in Fiji is also a concern). Fiji is also a transit country for trafficking in persons as noted by UNODC above. Child sex trafficking remains a serious problem in Fiji (US State Department, 2020). Children may be exploited by taxi drivers, foreign tourists, businessmen, and crew on foreign fishing vessels. Despite the magnitude of this problem, few victims have been identified by the government and there were only two convictions for child sex trafficking between 2014 and 2019.

113 Ministry of Economy, Republic of Fiji, *Displacement Guidelines: A Framework to Undertake Climate Change Related Relocation* (2018). <https://www.pacificclimatechange.net/sites/default/files/documents/Displacement%20Guidelines.%20In%20the%20context%20of%20climate%20change%20and%20disasters.pdf>

114 Thornton, F. et al (2020). Multiple Mobilities in Pacific Islands Communities. *Forced Migration Review*, 64, 32-35.

Potential areas for support include:¹¹⁵

1. Facilitating safe and inclusive labour mobility:

- Enhance collection and analysis of data on migration to and from Fiji, with a particular focus on return migration
- Improve collaboration on the collection and use of migration information and data across government ministries and institutions in Fiji
- Take a strategic approach to labour migration as a tool for development.
- Encourage skills development that benefits the domestic labour market while meeting overseas qualification standards and sectors of labour demand.
- Invest in workforce planning, including matching skills development with forecasted demand.
- Explore initiatives to support and incentivize productive reintegration of returning Fijian migrants into the domestic labour market.
- Promote circular labour mobility as a means to reduce dependence on social protection programmes in Fiji while ensuring protections for families staying behind.

2. Addressing irregular migration

- Identify and address the causes of irregular migration in Fiji.

3. Harness the benefits of immigration for sustainable development and ensure protection of migrant rights

- Extend social protections to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Fiji to the extent they can maintain a good standard of living and more effectively contribute to the development of Fiji.

4. Combat human trafficking

- Increase services and protections for victims of trafficking in persons.
- Align national legislation on counter-trafficking in persons.

5. Enhance implementation of policy, legal and institutional frameworks addressing climate change and disaster-related migration, displacement and planned relocation.

Including:

- develop relevant legal frameworks, divisional or subnational level strategies and programmes, and standard operating procedures to support vulnerable communities that are impacted by climate change and disaster events.
- establish mechanisms to improve coordination of services and protection for displaced people living in communal settings (e.g. evacuation centres).
- strengthen community resilience to help prevent risks of climate change and disaster induced migration by building on the Integrated Rural Development Framework, including market oriented skills development and livelihood support for communities that are vulnerable and exposed to the impacts of climate change and disaster events and at risk of being displaced; and
- develop a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework which applies a Pacific approach to ensure that lessons learned from implementing these activities are captured, and innovative ways forward for future programmes are identified that could be shared across all sectors.

¹¹⁵ Summarised from: International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2020. Migration in the Republic of Fiji: A Country Profile 2020. IOM. Geneva.

4.2 Federated States of Micronesia

Livelihoods in FSM are increasingly threatened by climate change, overfishing and vulnerability to natural disasters and sudden shocks like COVID-19. The 2020 Voluntary National Review (VNR) reported that support for developing social protection and preparedness and recovery will be needed, particularly in the areas of health, sanitation, waste management, education, gender, and critical water and food security. According to the ADB¹¹⁶, complex decision-making processes, rooted in the loosely federated political structure and the geographical distances between the small island states, make it difficult for policy makers to coordinate, and achieve consensus on, national reforms and programs. Lengthy delays in economic reforms, caused by a lack of coordinated decision-making and capacity constraints in government agencies, hamper the effective use of development partner funds. The FSM's main development challenges are stimulating economic growth through private sector development and attaining long-term fiscal sustainability, particularly in light of negotiations of the Compact grants currently due to expire at the end of 2023. Coupled with the impact of COVID-19 the medium-term economic situation of FSM appears challenging. Lack of economic development within the FSM has been identified as a major push for people (particularly young people) to leave the country for jobs, with the attractiveness of the outside world has been enhanced by free entry into the US and its territories.¹¹⁷ FSM has a large diaspora, with the emigrant population constituting 39.2% of the overall population¹¹⁸. Despite this, in 2019 remittances represented less than 7% of GDP in 2019 (compared for example to 36% for Tonga) and these are expected to drop further due to the impacts of COVID-19.¹¹⁹

Climate change is an existential threat to the remote low-lying atolls of FSM where uncertain food and water security is a harsh reality. Despite this, internal and international migration is attributed more to employment opportunities (mostly unskilled people), education and health care than climate change at this stage. Pohnpei and Chuuk face particular challenges including negative population growth (especially on remote low-lying islands) as well as spikes in incidence of Non-communicable

Disease (NCDs) due to dependence on processed food. While there are multi sectoral policies that touch on migration, relocation and/or displacement, there is no dedicated policy or strategy.

According to the 2020 TIP Report, human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in the FSM, and traffickers exploit victims from FSM abroad. Sex traffickers exploit Micronesian women and girls through commercial sex with the crewmembers of docked Asian fishing vessels, crewmembers on vessels in FSM territorial waters, or with foreign construction workers. The report notes that FSM had not fully met the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so.

Potential areas for support include:¹²⁰

1. Improving data on migration

- immigration registration system, including data collected at borders, residence and work permits and a clear definition on terminology (such as immigration, emigration and Micronesian diaspora).

2. Policy focus on vulnerable migrants

- The extensive issues relating to human trafficking, migrant smuggling, immigration status and detention of irregular migrants point to the need for a comprehensive national approach to a protection framework.

3. Recommendations regarding international treaties

FSM could consider becoming parties to the following treaties:

- Parties to 1951 Refugee Convention and/or 1967 Protocol
- Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air. The Federated States of Micronesia is not a party to the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
- 1954 Convention Relating to the Statelessness and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

116 ADB (2020) 'Asian Development Bank and the Federated States of Micronesia: Fact Sheet'. [<https://www.adb.org/publications/federated-states-micronesia-fact-sheet>].

117 Presentation by Micheal J. Levin to the 2016 Pacific Update Conference

118 World Bank 2020, 'Pacific Labour Mobility and Remittances in Time of COVID-19' Interim Report.

119 Ibid.

120 Summary from the following report but crossed referenced with cited studies to ensure relevance: International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2016. Migration in the Federated States of Micronesia: A Country Profile 2015. IOM. Geneva.

4. Combating human trafficking and smuggling

- Pending legal amendment and review of the human trafficking law, regulations anticipated under the legislation should be developed as a priority.
- The misuse and withholding of passports or other forms of identification should be made illegal as one of the primary means of control employed by human traffickers and people smugglers.
- A separate law dealing with human smuggling should be drafted, recognizing that human trafficking and human smuggling are very different crimes with different elements necessary for prosecution and different services required for victims. This should also refine and narrow the definition of human smuggling to avoid overly broad application to unintended circumstances.
- A special new immigration status and category should be envisaged to provide legal immigration status for victims of trafficking, aggravated human smuggling, any witnesses in related cases, and otherwise on humanitarian and compassionate grounds relating to human trafficking and/or human smuggling.

5. Building resilience to the impact of climate change and natural hazards

- Support safe migration for sustainable development and as adaptation strategy to climate change.
- Support community based DRR interventions to build resilience of vulnerable communities and continue strengthening government capacities to prevent, prepare, respond and recover from natural disasters.
- Prevent forced migration through livelihood diversification and community-based post COVID economic recovery.
- Ensure women and girls play a greater role in disaster planning and decision-making around natural disasters.
- Ensure inclusive protection after disasters.

4.3 Kiribati

Kiribati is among the countries considered to be most vulnerable to climate change. Climate change related impacts are already affecting many households in Kiribati.¹²¹ Coupled with this i-Kiribati have few opportunities to migrate overseas to live and work. Future migration flows are likely to be increasingly motivated by climate change, but large numbers may be unable to benefit from migration, with migration most often constrained by a lack of money.¹²² Significant population growth is projected in Kiribati and will near 180,000 people in 2050. Population growth is likely to be concentrated in the main urban area on South Tarawa, as people in outer islands who largely depend on subsistence livelihoods are pushed to migrate due to population pressures and environmental changes. Resource constraints mean that South Tarawa is unlikely be able to support this population growth.¹²³ The Kiribati 20-year Vision (2016-36) recognises that secure access to land can contribute to social and economic development and guarantees tenure. Land scarcity, squatting, contesting of land ownership titles and policy requirements for subleasing Government leased lands in regard to landowner consent are obstacles to private sector development in urban areas and to a lesser extent, expansion of public services.¹²⁴ The *Kiribati Climate Change Policy* (2018) notes broadly that its response to what otherwise amounts to 'unavoidable migration' should be the integration of coastal security measures in its long-term development planning, in an effort to support a growing population and its development needs, acknowledging also its existing lack in coastal engineering capacity.

121 Oakes, R., Milan, A., and Campbell J. (2016). Kiribati: Climate change and migration – Relationships between household vulnerability, human mobility and climate change. Report No. 20. Bonn: United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS).

122 Ibid.

123 Curtain, R. and Dornan, M. (2019) 'A pressure release valve? Migration and climate change in Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu' Development Policy Centre Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU, Canberra.

124 <http://president.gov.ki/images/kiribati-20-year-vision-2016-2036%E2%80%A2sept.final.pdf>.

The unemployment rate in Kiribati is high, particularly in youth unemployment. Kiribati has a long history of labour migration. Kiribati's National Labour Migration Policy (2015) promotes overseas employment and protection of workers while abroad. The government has established strategic partnerships with overseas employment countries and agencies with a view to expanding employment opportunities through the overseas employment markets. The current overseas employment schemes include the Recognised Seasonal Employers (RSE) Scheme, Seasonal Workers Programme (SWP) and the Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS). Few i-Kiribati have migrated abroad permanently with most overseas opportunities under these schemes consisting of temporary or seasonal employment opportunities as seafarers, fishermen, and agricultural workers.¹²⁵

Kiribati has a relatively high level of awareness regarding potential climate change impacts as a result of the significant number of studies and adaption projects that have provided opportunities to consult with the general population. The Government's focus is on building resilience, adaptive capacity and strengthening adaptation measures *in situ*. It favours greater access that allows for voluntary migration by members of their communities seeking opportunities for work and residence that can be accommodated within the immigration policies of other countries, and do not wish to be treated as 'refugees' fleeing hopeless economic and environmental situations.¹²⁶ A greater understanding of the relationships between net migration and population growth in these countries is essential to avoid reactive policies to resettle communities experiencing severe hardship linked with environmental degradation.¹²⁷

Kiribati has been a source country for girls subjected to sex trafficking within the country and visiting ship crew members are reported to exploit children and some women in commercial sex.¹²⁸

Potential areas for support include:

1. Support the development of policy options that enhance migration that builds resilience and reduces vulnerability.

- Increase understanding of the relationships between net migration and population growth to avoid reactive policies that resettle communities experiencing severe hardship linked with environmental degradation.
- The integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures should continue in development planning and processes.
- Mainstreaming mobility into plans, policy, legislation, and regulations.

2. Address urbanisation and rural-urban migration challenges

- Strengthen land use planning and administration to create transparent procedures for obtaining land for social development and strengthening the national land policy and legislative framework.

3. Strengthen labour migration arrangements

- Continued focus on increasing labour mobility and migration, including expansion of good practices such as the Government's 2015 labour migration policy.

4. Improve understanding of the scale of human trafficking in Kiribati

- Strengthen capacity to understand, investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases.
- Enact legislation, or strengthen existing legislation, to ensure that all forms of human exploitation are criminalised and penalties for crimes associated with modern slavery are appropriate to the severity of the crime.

125 Voigt-Graf, C and Kagan, S (2017) "Migration and labour mobility from Kiribati," Development Policy Centre Discussion Paper #56, Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University, Canberra.

126 Bedford, Richard & Bedford, Charlotte & Corcoran, John & Didham, Robert. (2016). Population Change and Migration in Kiribati and Tuvalu, 2015–2050: Hypothetical scenarios in a context of climate change. *New Zealand population review / New Zealand Demographic Society (Inc).* 42. 103-134.

127 Ibid.

128 State Department, 2016 *Trafficking in Persons Report - Kiribati*, 30 June 2016.

4.4 Palau

Heavily reliant on foreign tourism, Palau effectively closed its borders at the beginning of April 2020, with projections that GDP would fall by 9.5% in FY2020, with a further fall of 12.8% in FY2021 (an overall decline of 21.1 percent), and projected job losses of over 3,100 full-time equivalent positions (27% of those formally employed in Palau prior to the pandemic).¹²⁹ These projected job losses exceeds anything Palau has previously experienced, but as employment is largely concentrated in the public sector overall job loss is mitigated overall.¹³⁰ Weak labour support services for Palauan workers have been highlighted as contributing to both out-migration and dependence on foreign workers¹³¹. Improved job placement services and labour laws that protect citizens from exploitive labour practices are needed to better support Palauan workers.

In response to climate change, and associated disaster risks, government priorities include climate proofing infrastructure, relocating communities and building human capital. The government has acknowledged that many Palauans potentially face displacement which has become a challenge due to convergence of multiple factors including competition for land from foreign investors, conversion of residential units to tourist facilities, land disputes, and climate-driven sea level rise¹³². Palau's population is highly urbanised. Through the Koror-Babeldaob Urban Development and Strategic Plan the government has initiated residential subdivisions and single-family homes to help meet demand for affordable housing (also

encouraging overseas Palauans to return home and for Koror residents to relocate to their home villages) and build climate resilience by building in upland locations protected from coastal flooding and tropical storms¹³³. Relocation approaches are facing financial constraints and also require supportive zoning and building codes. Land disputes are common, and privatization of public spaces results in exclusion and marginalization of populations, including those who are most vulnerable. At the same time, land pressures resulting from climate induced sea level rise are becoming evident¹³⁴.

The prevalence of human trafficking in Palau is not known but disproportionately affects migrant workers (approximately one third of the total resident population). In May 2019, Palau acceded to the United Nations Transnational Organized Convention, "Palermo Convention" and its three instruments, allowing more opportunity to work with the international community to combat human trafficking and smuggling. While Palau has taken several important steps towards developing a coherent counter-trafficking approach, more work is still needed (as underscored by a rapid assessment undertaken by IOM in 2018). With the creation of the Special Presidential Task Force as a catalyst, Palau adopted its National Action Plan (NAP) to Combat Trafficking in Persons, although there have been challenges related to its implementation due to lack of resources and a systematic monitoring framework¹³⁵.

129 EconMAP (2020) 'Where Do We Go from Here? Updating the Economic Impact of COVID-19 and Strategies for Mitigation in the Republic of Palau' Technical Note August 16, 2020 [https://www.theprif.org/sites/default/files/documents/Palau_COVID_EconImpact_v2_Aug2020.pdf]

130 Ibid.

131 Ibid.

132 Government of Palau Voluntary National Review (VNR), June 2019.

133 State of Republic Address 2019, Government of Palau [<https://www.palau.gov.pw/document-category/state-of-the-republic-address/>].

134 VNR, 2019.

135 Third cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Palau, UNOHCHR, 2018.

Potential areas for support include:

1. Migrants and communities throughout Palau benefit from migration as a sustainable development and climate change adaptation strategy.

- Support for examining options to support planned internal migration and labour mobility as a climate change adaptation and human development strategy.
- For migrants, their families and the communities affected by migration in Palau to continue to benefit from the socioeconomic and cultural benefits of migration.

2. Protection for displaced persons and affected communities and development of resilience in the context of natural disasters and climate change.

- National and local authorities effectively prevent and manage displaced persons.
- Displacement associated with climate change, land degradation and resource constraints exacerbated by urbanization.
- Ensure that humanitarian preparedness and response planning include provisions to address the special needs of women in emergency situation, including the increasing risk of gender-based violence.

3. Labour laws and job placement

- Enact and implement laws that comply with international standards to protect workers from exploitation in the workplace and provide an accessible mechanism for redressing complaints.
- Strengthen job placement services for Palauans (helping to slow out-migration).
- Consider ratifying key ILO Fundamental Conventions, Governance Conventions which are the foundation of ILO Member States' national ratification records and consider ratifying the ILO Technical Conventions and Protocol on OSH.

4. Combatting human trafficking

- Address gaps in victim protection and assistance
- Establish standardized indicators and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to identify victims of trafficking, and train relevant stakeholders on victim identification.
- Strengthen the law enforcement capacity to investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases through capacity-building support.
- Continue awareness-raising campaigns and outreach missions on human trafficking, with particular focus on migrant communities.

4.5 Marshall Islands

The RMI is acutely vulnerable to sea level rise and flooding, heat, drought, storms, typhoons, and the associated impacts on freshwater supplies. RMI declared a State of Disaster in 2013 and 2016 as a result of prolonged and unseasonal droughts. Infrastructural and environmental problems and natural disasters interact with climate change as migration ‘push’ factors, in addition to challenges in seeking adequate health care, employment, education, and social services¹³⁶. While people are moving for a variety of reasons, education dominates. One of the biggest factors pulling people to the capital Majuro is access to education¹³⁷. Healthcare and employment were also important to many people’s decisions, yet a large portion of internal migrants were neither working nor seeking work. Health reasons are more often a factor for older people than younger people and family reasons are more often a factor for women than men¹³⁸. The result may suggest that there is an opportunity for development and adaptation efforts to reduce migration pressures in outer islands by increasing opportunities for education.

The National Strategic Plan (2020-2030) recognises that rural-urban disparities continue to exist. Majuro and Kwajalein atolls are home to three quarters of the RMI population. The Strategic Plan notes that outer island economies have not fundamentally changed over the past century, while urban economies remain non-diversified and remain heavily reliant on public sector employment. Marshallese live in urban areas of Majuro, Kwajalein and Ebeye causing high population density in these locations, with approximately 1,502 people per square kilometres. Ebeye, in particular, has a population of approximately 15,000 residing on 0.360 square kilometres of land resulting in population density of 41,667 per square kilometre (one of the highest population densities in the world).

There are no national policies or legislative frameworks on migration, displacement, or relocation, but the government is developing a National Adaptation Plan and

is examining options including integrating displacement plans into existing disaster response/ management plans. The National Strategic Plan establishes the facilitation of “orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people”. A better understanding of the experiences of internal migrants, especially in consideration of land tenure, would provide valuable insight for policy including the National Adaptation Plan. Planned resettlement as a long-term adaptation option independently, or concurrently with other efforts to maintain its territory. One of the major obstacles to resettlement (aside from establishing viable host communities) is a lack of available finance for the cost of a relocation. Resettlement is also not widely supported by the Marshallese.¹³⁹ Voluntary migration is already happening, and new Marshallese communities are emerging in the United States¹⁴⁰. Migration outcomes tend to be negative when people are forced to migrate or are displaced without enough time to adequately prepare. Marshallese migration experience and networks can facilitate future migrations in the context of climate change that are more pro-active and planned and less forced.

Human trafficking is a problem in the Marshall Islands, including as a destination country for young girls and women from East Asia subjected to human trafficking for sexual exploitation.¹⁴¹ For example, Chinese women have been reportedly recruited with promises of legitimate work and are forced into sex work subsequent to paying considerable recruitment fees¹⁴². According to the 2020 TIP Report traffickers also exploit some of these foreign fishermen in conditions indicative of forced labour on ships in Marshallese waters, and compel foreign women (most of whom are long-term residents of RMI) into commercial sex in establishments frequented by crewmembers of Chinese and other foreign fishing vessels. The government has not convicted any traffickers since 2011.

136 Morris, K., Burkett, M., and Wheeler, B. (2019). Climate-Induced Migration and the Compact of Free Association (COFA): Limitations and Opportunities for the Citizens of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Policy Brief of the Marshall Islands Climate and Migration Project. University of Hawai’i at Mānoa. Available at www.rmi-migration.com.

137 IOM (2019a) ‘Navigating Internal Migration: The case of the Republic of the Marshall Islands’.

138 Ibid.

139 Sancken, L., Jayawardhan, S., and Wheeler, B.L. (2021). Climate Finance and the Marshall Islands: Options for Adaptation. Policy Brief of the Marshall Islands Climate and Migration Project. University of Hawai’i at Mānoa. Available at www.rmi-migration.com.

140 van der Geest, K., Burkett, M., Fitzpatrick, J., M. Stege, and Wheeler, B. (2019). Marshallese Perspectives on Migration in the Context of Climate Change. Policy Brief of the Marshall Islands Climate and Migration Project. University of Hawai’i at Mānoa. Available at www.rmi-migration.com.

141 State Department (2020).

142 Transnational Crime Pacific Threat Assessment (2016), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Potential areas for support include:

1. Building resilience to the impact of climate change and natural hazards

- Support community based DRR interventions to build resilience of vulnerable communities and continue strengthening government capacities to prevent, prepare, respond and recover from natural disasters.
- Prevent unplanned through livelihood diversification and community-based post COVID economic recovery.
- Ensure women and girls play a greater role in disaster planning and decision-making around natural disasters.
- Build capacity to monitor internal mobility patterns.
- Support urban planning and addressing the needs of internal migrants.
- Adaptation options that preserve existing territory in the short term must be explored even while strategizing around other adaptation responses such as resettlement.

2. Combatting human trafficking¹⁴³

- Increase efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers.
- Disseminate and employ proactive procedures to identify trafficking victims among all vulnerable groups, such as women in commercial sex and foreign fishermen, and train officials on their use.
- Train law enforcement and prosecution officials to implement the anti-trafficking laws.
- Implement the revised National Action Plan
- Develop and conduct anti-trafficking education and awareness-raising campaigns.
- Undertake research to study human trafficking in the country.

3. Policy and legislative frameworks

- Measures to implement the National Strategic Plan goal, including consideration of dedicated policies on internal migration and relocation in the context of urbanisation, disaster displacement and climate change vulnerability.
- Accede to the 2000 UN Trafficking In Persons Protocol
- Consider ratifying key ILO Fundamental Conventions, Governance Conventions which are the foundation of ILO Member States' national ratification records and consider ratifying the ILO Technical Conventions and Protocol on OSH

143 Recommendations based on those included in the 2020 State Department Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP) for the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

4.6 Samoa

Whilst the nature of the topography may mean that Samoa is not affected by climate change as severely as some lower-lying Pacific nations, there is evidence of increasing temperatures, rising sea level, increasing rainfall and persistent dry spells that coincide with El Niño periods. The inherent vulnerabilities therefore will continue to be a challenge to SDG implementation and development prospects. Relative to the domestic population, the Samoan diaspora is one of the largest not only in the Pacific but in the world. Samoa's diaspora of around 124,400 migrants in 2019 (some 60% of its domestic population) is concentrated in New Zealand, Australia, mainland USA, and American Samoa.¹⁴⁴ Despite the importance of remittances to the Samoan economy, there is currently no labour mobility or broader migration policy in place. Samoa's *National Disaster Management Plan* (2017) noted that displacement solutions must be 'durable', broadly identified as 'return to places of origin, local integration or resettlement',¹⁴⁵ and that relocation must be based upon the formulation of public policy.¹⁴⁶

The 2020 VNR reported that unemployment levels are rising especially for women and youth and income inequality is significant with the top 10% of the population earning more than the combined earnings of the bottom 30%, while men outnumber women 3 to 1 in the labour force and formal employment and women's unemployment level is double that of men. While the 2020 VNR reported that Samoa had no recorded cases of human trafficking and people smuggling, in July 2020 a New Zealand-based Samoan chief has been found guilty of human trafficking and using 13 of his countrymen as slaves over a 25-year period. Samoa has a multi-agency Transnational Crime Unit, National Security policy and committee and Guidelines for the Management of the Transnational Crimes of Trafficking and Smuggling.

Migration, displacement and relocation are not prominent in national planning and policy making processes (or in UN programming for the Samoa including the UN Pacific Strategy 2018-2022).

Potential areas for support include:

1. Mainstreaming of migration into national development and climate change planning

- Integrate migration and displacement strategies into national policy including measures to address risks faced by the most vulnerable.

2. Policy and legislative frameworks

- Measures to implement national commitments under international law.
- Consider dedicated policies on internal migration and relocation in the context of urbanisation, disaster displacement and climate change vulnerability.
- Support for collaboration and information-sharing between government agencies on national security issues (as articulated in the National Security Strategy (2018) including human security and migration, and more generally the absence of a deep-rooted whole-of-government culture.

3. Strengthened urban planning and addressing the needs of internal migrants

- Utilizing sustainable urban design, government mitigation strategies, disaster management, and education awareness Apia has significant potential to improve its resilience to climate change.

4. Facilitating safe and inclusive labour mobility

- Improve collaboration on the collection and use of migration information and data across government ministries and institutions.
- Take a strategic approach to the development of a labour migration strategy as a tool for development, including expanded participation in the RSE and SWP.

5. Protection for displaced persons and affected communities and development of resilience in the context of natural disasters and climate change.

- Support national and local authorities to effectively manage displaced situations.
- Ensure that humanitarian preparedness and response planning include provisions to address the special needs of women in emergency situation, including the increasing risk of gender-based violence.

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates19.asp>.

¹⁴⁵ Government of Samoa (2017).

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

4.7 Solomon Islands

Of all the countries examined in this analysis of the Pacific, the Solomon Islands has the most severe challenges in addressing human trafficking. According to the 2020 Trafficking in Persons report, the Solomon Islands is a source, transit, and destination country for local and Southeast Asian men and women subjected to forced labour and forced prostitution, and local children subjected to sex and labour trafficking. Labour traffickers exploit men from Indonesia and Malaysia in the logging, fishing, and mining industries. Fishermen from Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, North Korea, and Fiji have reported situations indicative of labour trafficking, including non-payment of wages, severe living conditions, violence, and limited food supply, on Taiwan-flagged fishing vessels in the Solomon Islands' territorial waters and ports¹⁴⁷. The Solomon Islands Immigration Division within the Ministry of Commerce, Industries, Labour and Immigration is the primary entity dealing with migration, and it includes officials dedicated to counter-trafficking and smuggling. The 2016 UNODC Transnational Crime Threat Assessment highlighted potentially strong links between the logging industry and commercial sexual exploitation of children in the Solomon Islands.

The Solomon Islands has been defined as a low-mobility country with emigrants accounting for 0.3 per cent of the population.¹⁴⁸ However, there is increasing participation in seasonal work programmes and other labour mobility schemes which present an opportunity for sustainable development. Rapid population growth has led to serious problems with unplanned urban expansion, which harms urban communities through housing pressure, public health risks and community tensions. The government is focused on improving rural living standards, to “discourage migration, and helping those in squatter settlements to get better opportunities through better access to basic services, adult education and skills training”. Rapid population growth additionally impacts social and economic conditions of people, including income equality, high unemployment rates and access to basic services like housing, education and health.¹⁴⁹

National Security Strategy (2020):

Solomon Islands is increasingly exposed to opportunities and risk associated with increased international and regional trade, the ease of mobility for people and capital in the region, greater accessibility through technology and modernisation. Solomon Islands, with its porous borders, is vulnerable to illegal activities such as human trafficking, poaching of natural resources, movements of small arms, drug smuggling/contrabands and armed incursion. On this premises, it is important that Border Agencies must work to address insecurities and illegal activities. Protecting our borders is essential to national security, development and economic prosperity.)

The National Security Strategy (2020) recognises Climate Change as the number one security risk facing the Solomon Islands, including sea level rise, increasing intensity of cyclones, droughts and floods and temperature rise. This risk is “already eventuating and lives of citizens are being affected especially on low-lying atolls, small islands, and artificial islands.” The Strategy also recognised an “Influx of Foreigners” as a risk: “Over the years the movement of people across borders has grown exponentially within the Solomon Islands. Given the risk associated with such mix migration, our border control must be vigilant. Solomon Islands also needs to strengthen our immigration, customs and biosecurity policies in order to defend our country from illegal entries of any kind. This effort will contribute to protecting our sovereignty.”¹⁵⁰

147 United States State Department (2020), ‘Trafficking in Persons Report 2020’. U.S. Department of State. 2020.

148 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). International Migration Report 2017: Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/404).

149 Solomon Islands VNR Report (2020).

150 Solomon Islands National Security Strategy (2020), Ministry of Police, National Security and Correctional Services, Government of the Solomon Islands.

Potential areas for support include:

1. Building resilience to climate change

- Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.
- Integrate climate change measures into Solomon Islands Government policies, strategies, and planning.
- Improve education, awareness, and capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning systems.
- Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth, and local and marginalised communities.

2. Support border management, including the implementation of the National Border Strategy

- Improve and strengthen the capabilities of law enforcement agencies.
- Enhance cooperation with regional and international communities in addressing mutual border security issues.

3. Combat human trafficking¹⁵¹

- Investigate and prosecute both sex trafficking and labour trafficking offenses.
- Support for increased efforts to identify Solomon Islander and foreign victims of sex trafficking and labour trafficking within the country (including in agriculture, the fishing, logging, and mining industries) and in relation to illicit commercial activities.
- Increase efforts to collect data on trafficking trends in the Solomon Islands and disseminate among interagency anti-trafficking stakeholders.
- Institute a campaign to raise public awareness of trafficking, including among remote logging communities.
- Increase funding to relevant ministries to implement the national action plan for combating trafficking in persons.
- Accede to the 2000 UN TIP Protocol.

4. Mainstreaming of migration into national development and climate change planning

- Integrate migration and displacement strategies into national policy including measures to address risks faced by the most vulnerable.

¹⁵¹ Some recommendations sourced from 2020 TIP Report supported by UNODC analysis.

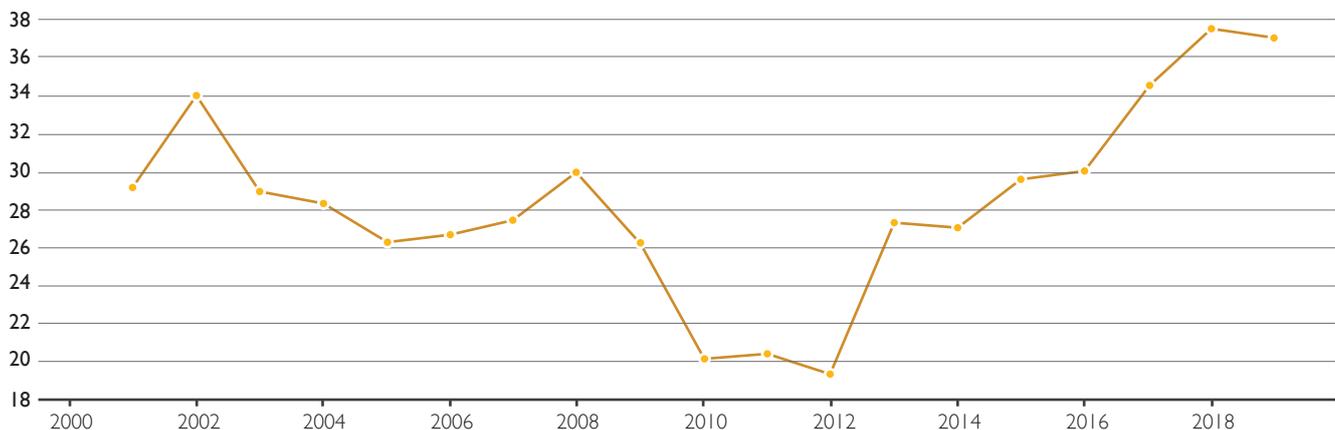
4.8 Tonga

Labour migration contributes a greater portion of GDP to the Tongan economy than any other Pacific Island country, up to 37% of GDP in 2019¹⁵². It is estimated that the Tongan diaspora is as large in number than the population of Tongans residing in country¹⁵³. Lack of employment and education opportunities in the outer and rural islands have led many Tongans to move to larger towns and the capital city, as well as overseas, in search of employment opportunities. However, labour mobility is not gender neutral with labour migration schemes attracting far more men than women. This absence of men not only places a greater burden of work on the women who have been left behind, but also confines them to their traditional gender roles, often limiting any opportunity to seek paid employment or wage labour¹⁵⁴. The 2019 VNR highlights the Government's priority accorded to enhancing the effective use of remittances in economic development through the policy 'Diaspora Engagement for Inclusive Economic Development Reform: a strategy to harness diaspora investments and remittances for inclusive economic development'.¹⁵⁵ In February 2021, the Government of Tonga launched its first Labour Mobility Policy which aims to maximize the development impact of circular labour mobility in Tonga.

Nearly three-quarters of Tonga's entire population lives on the main island of Tongatapu where natural hazards and the effects of climate change pose a significant threat. Tonga's location makes it vulnerable to cyclones and earthquakes. Internal migration and displacement associated with extreme weather events are increasing in Tonga¹⁵⁶, which is placing additional pressure on urban infrastructure, service provision and emergency response capacities as well as increasing challenges over land use and land ownership. The 2019 VNR recognised that climate change poses serious threats to the environment and livelihood of the people of Tonga and the National Climate Change Policy and Joint National Action Plan 2018-2028 have been put in place in addition to a Climate Change Trust Fund has been established "to strengthen coping capacities of all vulnerable communities".

Human trafficking is not considered to be as significant a problem in Tonga as other countries in the Pacific, though some Tongan and foreign individuals are vulnerable to trafficking in Tonga, and some Tongans are vulnerable to trafficking abroad, and Tongan adults working overseas may be vulnerable to labour trafficking¹⁵⁷.

Figure 4: Remittances as a share of GDP (%) 2001-2019



Source: Source: World Development Indicators, the World Bank.

152 <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=TO>

153 IOM (2017), 'Strengthening diaspora engagement and remittances in the Kingdom of Tonga'. IOM.

154 Chatter, Priya. (2019). Beyond development impact: Gender and care in the Pacific Seasonal Worker Programme. *Gender and Development*, 27(1), 49-65.

155 Kingdom of Tonga (2019), 'Voluntary National Review' Report. P.31.

156 IDMC (2021), <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/tonga>.

157 State Department (2019), 'Trafficking in Persons Report – Tonga 2019.'

Potential areas for support include:

1. Mainstreaming of migration into national developments and climate change planning

- Integrate migration and displacement strategies into national policy including measures to address risks faced by the most vulnerable.
- Support for equal opportunities for all, in particular vulnerable and marginalized groups, to access employment and social services.

2. Support the development of policy options that enhance migration that builds resilience and reduces vulnerability

- Consider the development of dedicated policies that address mobility (for example on Displacement or Planned Relocation).
- Incorporate human mobility (including internal migration) into national planning and budgetary processes.

3. Enhance implementation of policy, legal and institutional frameworks addressing climate change and disaster-related displacement

- Develop relevant legal frameworks or subnational level strategies and programmes, and standard operating procedures to support vulnerable communities that are impacted by climate change and disaster events.
- Consolidate mechanisms to improve coordination of services and protection for displaced persons.

4. Facilitating safe and inclusive labour mobility

- Support the implementation of the Labour Mobility Policy.
- Improve collaboration on the collection and use of migration information and data across government ministries and institutions.
- Take a strategic approach to labour migration as a tool for development.
- Increasing the participation of women in labour mobility

5. Urban planning and addressing the needs of internal migrants

- Support for sector-wide urban planning including planning for resilient urban infrastructure, service provision and emergency response capacities.

4.9 Tuvalu

Tuvalu's National Strategy for Sustainable Development (the "Te Kete") for the period 2021-2030 recognises that "Our fragile and highly vulnerable atoll environment makes us among the first nations to disappear under the rising seas. Thus, we seek greater degree of security not only from climate change but also disaster by increasing our adaptive capacity". The plan includes the development of a long-term national adaptation strategy, including a staged land reclamation programme, that "takes into account a worse-case scenario of sea level in Tuvalu rising by one meter by year 2100." It also includes Key Strategic Actions to strengthen access to labour mobility schemes; develop effective frameworks for disaster risk and resilience management; and implement a land rehabilitation and reclamation. A comprehensive study published in 2016¹⁵⁸ found that:

- Climate related environmental hazards are already affecting households and livelihoods in Tuvalu. People living on the outer islands were more likely to have been affected than people living in Funafuti.
- Both internal and international migration is a common experience in Tuvalu. Some migration is triggered by environmental risks.
- Migrant households are less vulnerable than non-migrant households. This could relate to the importance of remittances enabling adaptation.

Policy action can reduce the number of vulnerable and trapped people. Not being able to migrate has the potential to lead to a vicious circle in which households

cannot benefit from a diversification of livelihoods, boost incomes through remittances or generate funds needed to adapt to changing environmental conditions. This challenging situation is likely to intensify as climate change impacts worsen. Projected population change in Tuvalu suggests that with high rates of natural increase and limited access to residence and employment overseas, the country faces some major challenges when it comes to providing rural and urban livelihoods.¹⁵⁹

Tuvalu has a long tradition of labour migration, notably through seafaring and participation in seasonal worker schemes, with labour migration increasing steadily in recent years. Labour mobility and remittances are important to the economy of Tuvalu and for household income. The 2015 National Labour Migration Policy aimed to provide Tuvaluan citizens with support for opportunities to work abroad. Specific objectives include facilitating the movement of citizens, reducing the cost of remittances and engaging and encouraging inter-agency cooperation and capacity building. International migration from both Funafuti and the outer islands has great potential for relieving social and environmental problems in the capital. This calls for measures that would improve the capacity of Tuvaluans to compete in international labour markets. Expanded bilateral agreements that would facilitate higher rates of international mobility should also be explored.

158 Milan, A., Oakes, R., and Campbell, J. (2016). 'Tuvalu: Climate change and migration – Relationships between household vulnerability, human mobility and climate change Report No.18.' Bonn: United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS).

159 Bedford, Richard, Bedford, Charlotte, Corcoran, John, & Didham, Robert. (2016). 'Population Change and Migration in Kiribati and Tuvalu, 2015-2050: Hypothetical scenarios in a context of climate change'. *New Zealand Population Review*, 42, 103.

Potential areas for support include:

1. Strengthen Tuvalu's existing labour migration arrangement while seeking new opportunities for labour mobility

- Consider the development of national assessments for monitoring labour market demand.
- Strengthen labour migration information systems.
- Review the 2015 National Labour Migration Policy and consider updating the policy based on implementation gaps.
- Consider support services for Tuvaluans working abroad.

2. Develop national legislative frameworks and promote international law

- Assistance with legislative compliance with obligations under international law
- Consider legislation on trafficking in persons and human smuggling (under the Counter Terrorism and transnational Organised Crime Act of 2009).
- Support (as requested) for the Government's draft UN resolution 'Providing legal protection for persons displaced by the Impacts of Climate Change.'

3. Support the development of policy options that enhance migration that builds resilience

- Support for the continued integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures in development policies and processes.
- Support collaboration with civil society, the private sector and the diaspora in agenda-setting for migration-related issues.
- Consider strengthening border information management.
- Develop relevant legal frameworks and subnational level approaches to support vulnerable communities that are impacted by climate change and disaster events.

4. Urban planning and addressing the needs of internal migrants

- Support for urban planning including for resilient urban infrastructure and service provision.
- Focus attention on urbanisation challenges, particularly considering climate change drivers of internal migration.

4.10 Vanuatu

Vanuatu is considered to be one of the most at-risk countries in the world to natural disasters and has considerable experience in dealing with disaster risk management and disaster displacement. Vanuatu has recognised climate change as a threat to national security and sustainable development, and has prioritised disasters and climate change resilience, justice and human rights, and human security in its National Security Strategy (2019). Vanuatu has a strong policy framework to address displacement and support the integration of human mobility across policy arenas. Relevant national approaches include the National Aid Management Policy (2019), National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (2018), National Planning Framework (2018) and National Disability Inclusive Development Policy (2018-2025).

Vanuatu has also established a National Human Rights Committee. The Vanuatu National Sustainable Development Plan 2016 to 2030 (the “People’s Plan”) does not address human mobility in a comprehensive way but does aim to increase labour mobility nationally and internationally, including through the collection and analysis of comprehensive labour market data. The *National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement* (2018) focuses on system-level interventions including institutions and governance; evidence, information and monitoring; safeguards and protections; and capacity-building, training and resources. It also addresses sectoral-level interventions including safety and security; land, housing, planning and environment, health, nutrition and psycho-social well-being; education; infrastructure and connectivity; agriculture, food security and livelihoods; traditional knowledge, culture and documentation; and access to justice and public participation. The policy suggests that displacement and human mobility more broadly should be mainstreamed into policy planning and implementation at all levels. Key to the success of the policy framework will be implementation, monitoring and review, and sustained levels of adequate financing. Financing in the medium term will be a particular challenge given the economic impact of COVID-19 on Vanuatu’s tourism industry and significance of seasonal labour mobility to national and household income.

Human trafficking and forced labour are problems in Vanuatu, and anecdotally appear to be increasing (see Box, below). As note earlier, in March 2019, Vanuatu authorities arrested four Bangladeshi nationals for their role in a forced labour case involving 101 Bangladeshi victims and initiated court proceedings against the four suspects which represents the first trafficking prosecution in the country’s history.

2020 State Department Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report:

Human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Vanuatu, and traffickers exploit victims from Vanuatu abroad. Labor traffickers exploit individuals from China, Thailand, Bangladesh, and the Philippines in Vanuatu. Traffickers target migrant women in the hospitality and tourism sectors and low skilled foreign workers in high-risk sectors, such as agriculture, mining, fishing, logging, construction, and domestic service. Chinese and South Asian migrant women are particularly at risk for labor trafficking in bars, beauty salons, and massage parlors. Bangladeshi criminal groups have reportedly lured Bangladeshi individuals with false promises of high-paying job opportunities in Australia, transported them through Fiji, India, and Singapore, and then subjected them to forced labor in the construction industry in Vanuatu. Some of the victims take out loans averaging \$30,000 to pay relevant travel expenses, which the traffickers exploit through debt-based coercion. Foreign fishermen working on board Vanuatuan-flagged, Taiwan-owned vessels have experienced indicators of forced labor, including deceptive recruitment practices, abuse of vulnerability, excessive overtime, withholding of wages, physical and sexual violence, and abusive living and working conditions on board.

Women and girls may also be at risk of debt-based coercion in sex trafficking and domestic servitude via the customary practice of bride-price payments. The incidence of bride-price payments is linked to broader economic hardship and vulnerability, particularly in the context of the country’s frequent natural disasters. There were reports of children exploited in commercial sex facilitated by taxi drivers. Forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation of children occur on fishing vessels in Vanuatu. Foreign tourists aboard boats reportedly approach remote Vanuatuan communities and offer money in exchange for marriage with underage girls as a ploy for short-term sexual exploitation. Locals onshore, acting as recruiters, also reportedly take underage girls aboard vessels and subject them to commercial sexual exploitation by foreign workers, often for weeks at a time.

Potential areas for support include:

1. Support for the continued mainstreaming of human mobility across relevant policy areas, including national planning and implementation

- Support the implementation and coherence of policies that address different aspects of human mobility and their effective implementation through budgetary processes, as well as monitoring and reporting.

2. Support for the implementation of national commitments under international humanitarian and human rights law

- Assess gaps in national laws related to humanitarian and human rights law.
- Accede to the 2000 UN TIP Protocol

3. Facilitating safe and inclusive labour mobility

- Improve collaboration on the collection and use of migration information and data across government ministries and institutions
- Take a strategic approach to labour migration as a tool for development, including strengthening the Labour Mobility Policy.
- Encourage skills development that benefits the domestic labour market while meeting overseas qualification standards and sectors of labour demand.

4. Combating human trafficking

- Amend anti-trafficking legislation to remove sentencing provisions that allow for the payment of fines in lieu of imprisonment for sex trafficking offenses.
- Increase efforts to prosecute and convict traffickers under anti-trafficking laws and sentence convicted traffickers to adequate penalties, which should involve significant prison terms.
- Allocate increased resources for and implement victim protection benefits.
- Develop and implement standard operating procedures (SOPs) for victim identification, referral, and protection.
- Provide training on victim identification and anti-trafficking legislation for all relevant officials.
- Improve anti-trafficking coordination with international partners, including by increasing information sharing with sending countries and instituting standard repatriation procedures.

5. Protection for displaced persons and affected communities and development of resilience in the context of natural disasters and climate change

- Support national and local authorities to effectively manage displaced situations including the implementation and adequate financing of the *National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement* (2018)
- Ensure that humanitarian preparedness and response planning include provisions to address the special needs of women in emergency situation, including the increasing risk of gender-based violence.

Section 5

Concluding remarks

Migration and human mobility more broadly are an integral part of the lived experiences of Pacific Islanders, and have a rich history in the social, cultural and economic fabric of the region, enabling diversification of livelihoods and risk management. Pacific Islanders are considered to be one of the most mobile groups in the world. Migration provides critical income for many households across the Pacific, and remittances represent a significant portion of the GDP of most PICs. Migration is increasingly considered in policy processes at the national level, such as disaster displacement and planned relocation, and labour mobility policies and guidance. But mobility can also lead to vulnerability and must be considered in the context of existing mobility and demographic patterns including urbanisation. Climate change is likely to become an increasing driver of migration and displacement and will act as a threat multiplier affecting multiple dimensions of human development and security. Human trafficking and other forms of modern-day slavery appear to be increasing in the Pacific (though the evidence of this is mostly anecdotal) but there are large gaps in the understanding of the scale of the problem in the region and in protection regimes at the national and regional levels.

Despite the significance of migration in the Pacific it has not been considered in detail in UN regional processes in the region to date. Increasing attention to migration challenges such as those posed by climate change and COVID-19 by governments, regional organisations and development partners should also be recognised in UN analysis and programming processes. Migration is central to the principles of the CCA as described by UNSDG, including the 'leaving no one behind', human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment and resilience. Migration is also important when considering the risks outlined by the UNSDG that could affect the development trajectory of all countries in the region such as climate and disaster risk, disease outbreaks, rapid urbanisation, displacement and economic shocks. This reinforces the importance of examining migration in a comprehensive way in the CCA analysis and in common country programming for the UNSDCF. These areas also resonate with the strategic priorities (and operational strength) of the UN system in the region, in prioritising the building of resilience, supporting mobility and enhancing pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration, and migration governance. Recommendations for the consideration of the UN Country Team in the UNSDCF are contained in the Executive Summary to this report.

113 Ministry of Economy, Republic of Fiji, Displacement Guidelines: A Framework to Undertake Climate Change Related Relocation (2018). <https://www.pacificclimatechange.net/sites/default/files/documents/Displacement%20Guidelines.%20In%20the%20context%20of%20climate%20change%20and%20disasters..pdf>

114 Thornton, F. et al (2020). Multiple Mobilities in Pacific Islands Communities. *Forced Migration Review*, 64, 32-35.

Country profiles

This Annex provides country profile for the ten countries covered in this report, including demographic, physical and migration data, key relevant policy documents as well as Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 'Progress wheels'.

1. Fiji
2. Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
3. Kiribati
4. Palau
5. Marshall Islands (RMI)
6. Samoa
7. Solomon Islands
8. Tonga
9. Tuvalu
10. Vanuatu

Data Sources:

Population data (including population pyramid):

- SPC Statistics for Development Division [<https://sdd.spc.int/topic/population>]

Physical Information:

- Pacific Data Hub [<https://pacificdata.org/data/dataset/pacific-island-countries-and-territories-exclusive-economic-zones>]
- DFAT Country Briefs [<https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/pages/country-briefs>]

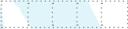
Migration information

- Migration rate: UN Data [<https://data.un.org/>]
- World Bank Data [<https://data.worldbank.org/country/S2>]

SDG 'Wheels':

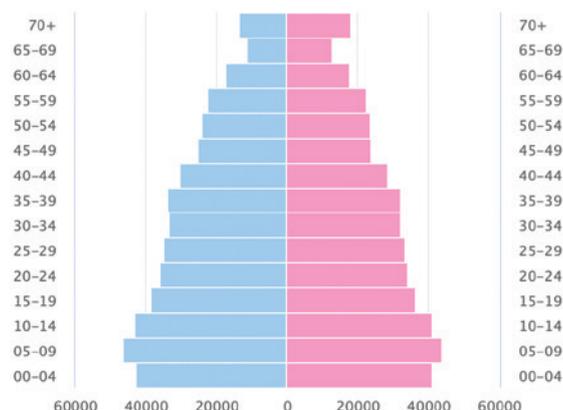
- Sourced from Pacific Data Hub [<https://mg.pacificdata.org/dashboard/17-goals-transform-pacific>]
1. All indicators presented in this dashboard reference the official United Nations SDG indicator list.
 2. SDGs in the Pacific Booklet details the 132 indicators selected for Pacific regional reporting.
 3. These progress wheels were designed by the Pacific Community (SPC) and UNDP.

To be read as follows:

	Bar Type	Value
	Grey Bar	Tier 3 indicator. No established methodology
	Dashed Bar	None, or insufficient country data
	No colour bar	No achievement against the goal
	20% of colour bar shaded	Minimal achievement
	40% of colour bar shaded	Some achievement
	60% of colour bar shaded	Average progress
	80% of colour bar shaded	Good progress
	Full colour bar	Goal is fully achieved

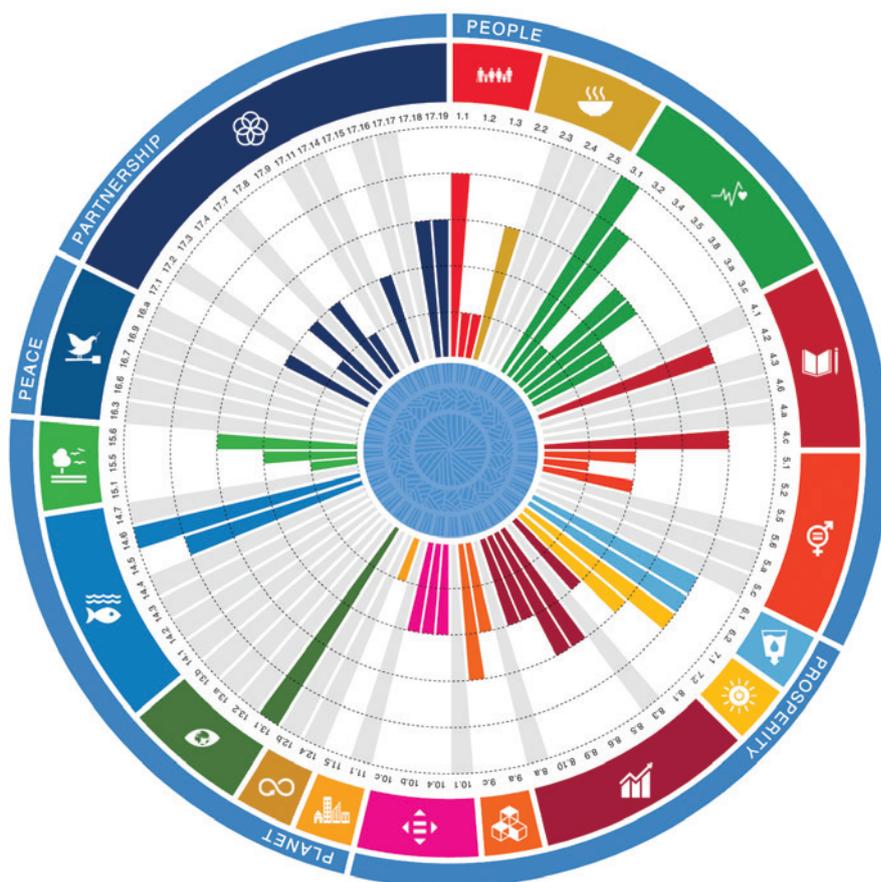
Fiji

Population data	Population (2020)	894,960
	Population density	49
	Population growth (2020)	+0.41%
	Projected population (2050)	948,300
	Urban population (% in 2020)	61
	HDI ranking (2019)	93
Physical information	Total land area (km ²)	18,333
	Dominant land types	High islands
	Highest elevation (m)	1,324
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	1,290,000
	Climate 'hotspots'	River deltas
		Low-lying areas
Urban areas		
Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)	-7.027
	Access to international migration	Limited
	Labour migration schemes	SWP (Australia) RSE (NZ)



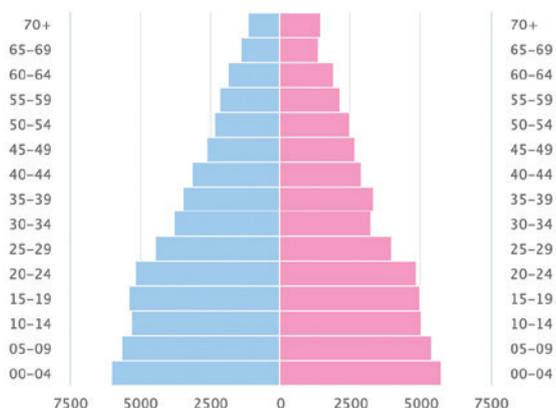
National policy context

- Climate Change Policy (2018-2030)
- Planned Relocation Guidelines (2018)
- Displacement Guidelines (2019)
- National Development Plan (2017-2036)
- National Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Strategy (2019-2025)
- National Adaptation Plan (2018)
- Voluntary National Review (2019)



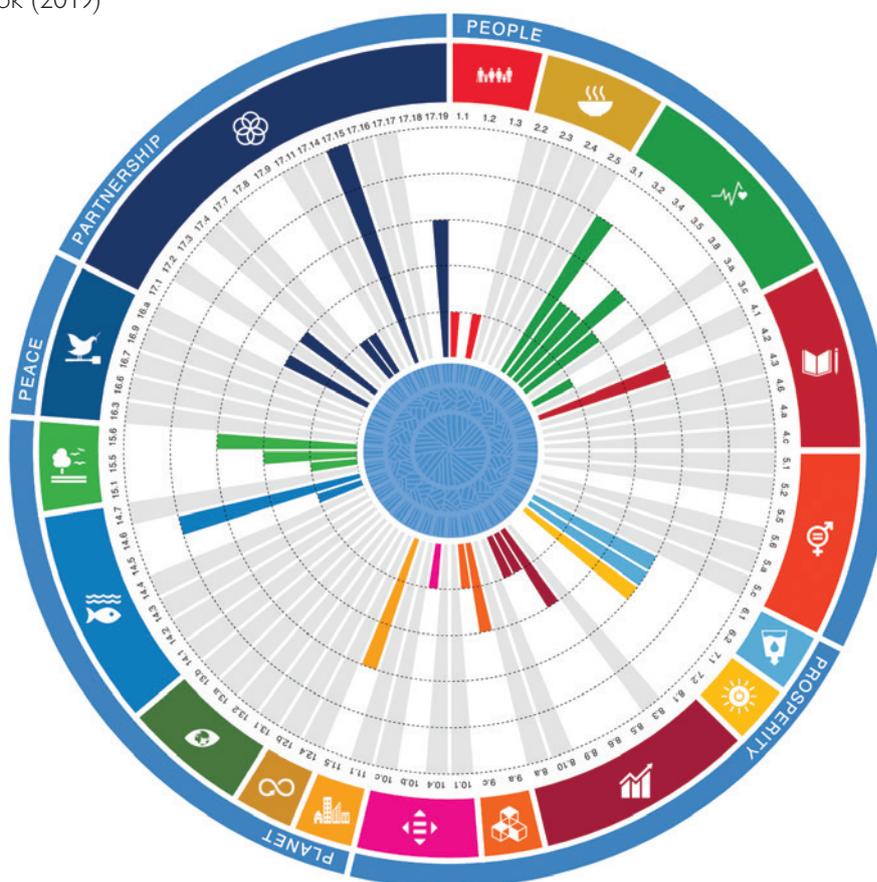
FSM

Population data	Population (2020)	105,503
	Population density	151
	Population growth (2020)	+0.26%
	Projected population (2050)	98,667
	Urban population (% in 2020)	19
Physical information	HDI ranking (2020)	136
	Total land area (km ²)	701
	Dominant land types	Volcanic high islands Atolls
	Highest elevation (m)	791
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	2,780,000
	No. of islands (inhabited)	607 (65)
	Climate 'hotspots'	Atolls, coastal areas
Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)	-5.357
	Access to international migration	USA (Compact of Free Association)
	Labour migration schemes	None



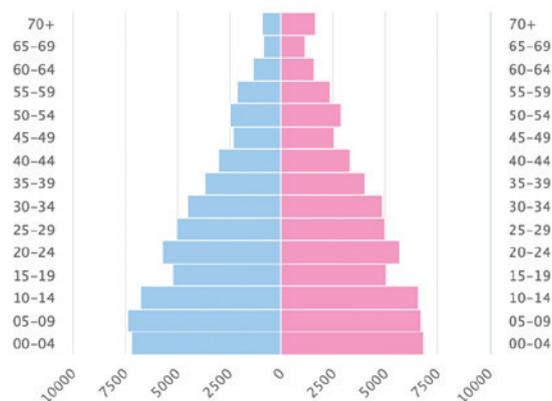
National policy context

- Disaster Management Reference Handbook (2019)
- Strategic Development Plan (2004-23)
- Voluntary National Review (2020)



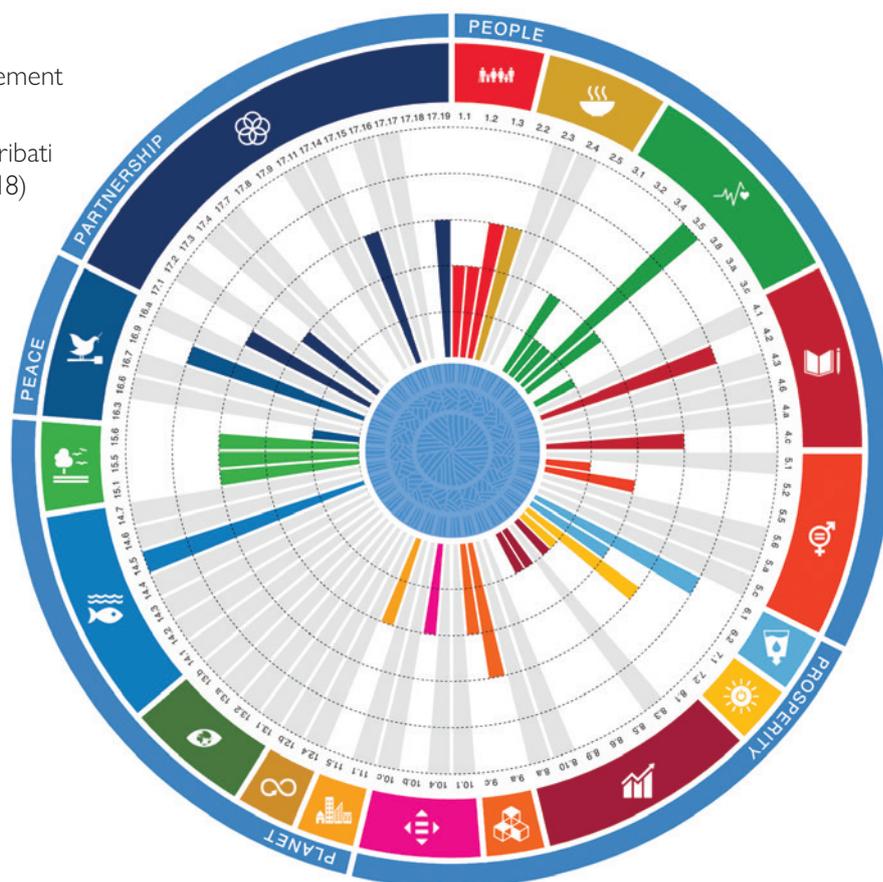
Kiribati

Population data	Population (2020)	118,744
	Population density	146
	Population growth (2020)	+1.69%
	Projected population (2050)	181,848
	Urban population (% in 2020)	53
	HDI ranking (2020)	134
Physical information	Total land area (km ²)	726
	Dominant land types	Atolls
	Highest elevation (m)	87 (Banaba Is)
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	3,550,000
	No. of islands (inhabited)	32 (19)
	Climate 'hotspots'	All islands
	Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)
Access to international migration		PAC (New Zealand)
Labour migration schemes		SWP and PLS (Australia)
		RSE (NZ)



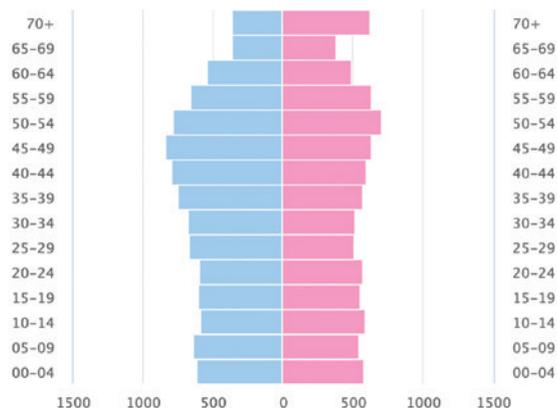
National policy context

- National Labour Migration Policy (2015)
- Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (2019-2028)
- Kiribati Voluntary National Review and Kiribati Development Plan Mid-Term Review (2018)
- Climate Change Policy (2018)
- Kiribati 20-year Vision (2016-2036)



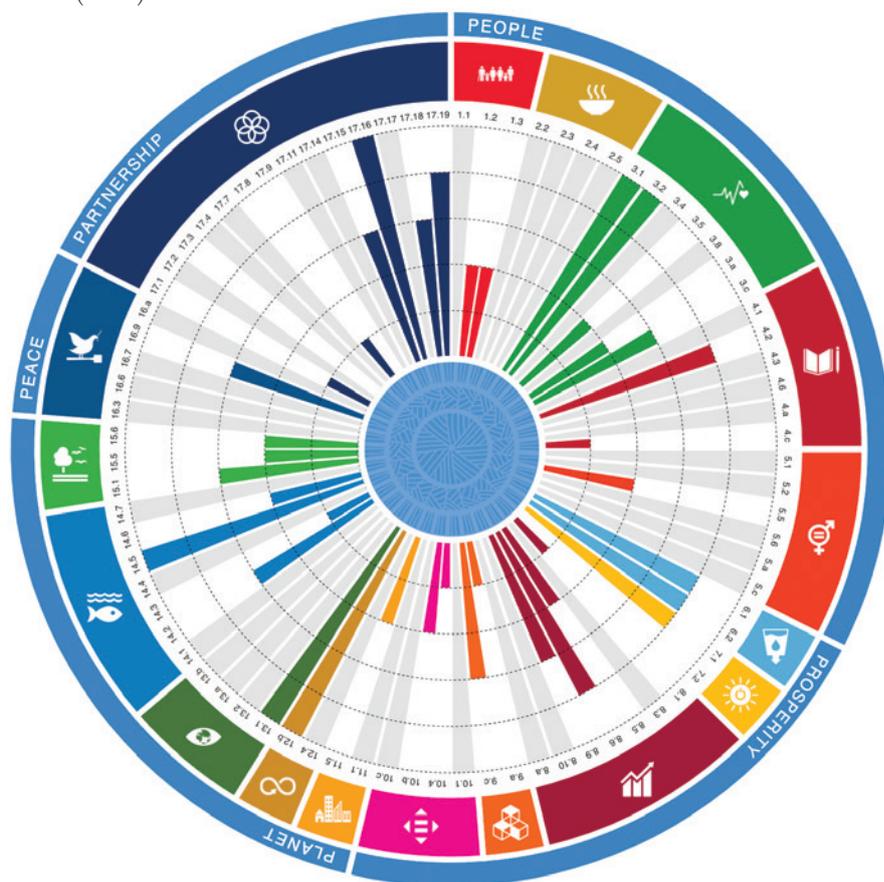
Palau

Population data	Population (2020)	7,930
	Population density	40
	Population growth (2020)	+0.21%
	Projected population (2050)	16,441
	Urban population (% in 2020)	66
	HDI ranking (2020)	50
Physical information	Total land area (km ²)	444
	Dominant land types	Volcanic high islands Atolls
	Highest elevation (m)	242
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	629,000
	No. of islands (inhabited)	340 (8)
	Climate 'hotspots'	Coastal zone
Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)	0.0
	Access to international migration	USA (Compact of Free Association)
	Labour migration schemes	None



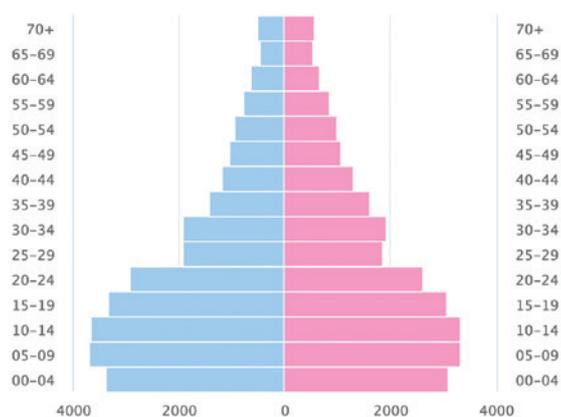
National policy context

- National Disaster Risk Management Framework (2016)
- Climate Change Policy (2015)
- Voluntary National Review (2019)
- Palau Climate Change Profile (2019)



Marshall Islands (Republic of)

Population data	Population (2020)	54,590
	Population density	331
	Population growth (2020)	-0.08%
	Projected population (2050)	52,460
	Urban population (% in 2020)	74
	HDI ranking (2020)	117
Physical information	Total land area (km ²)	113
	Dominant land types	Atolls
	Highest elevation (m)	10
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	1,990,530
	No. of islands (inhabited)	34
	Climate 'hotspots'	Atolls, urban areas
Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)	-4.5 (estimate)
	Access to international migration	USA (Compact of Free Association)

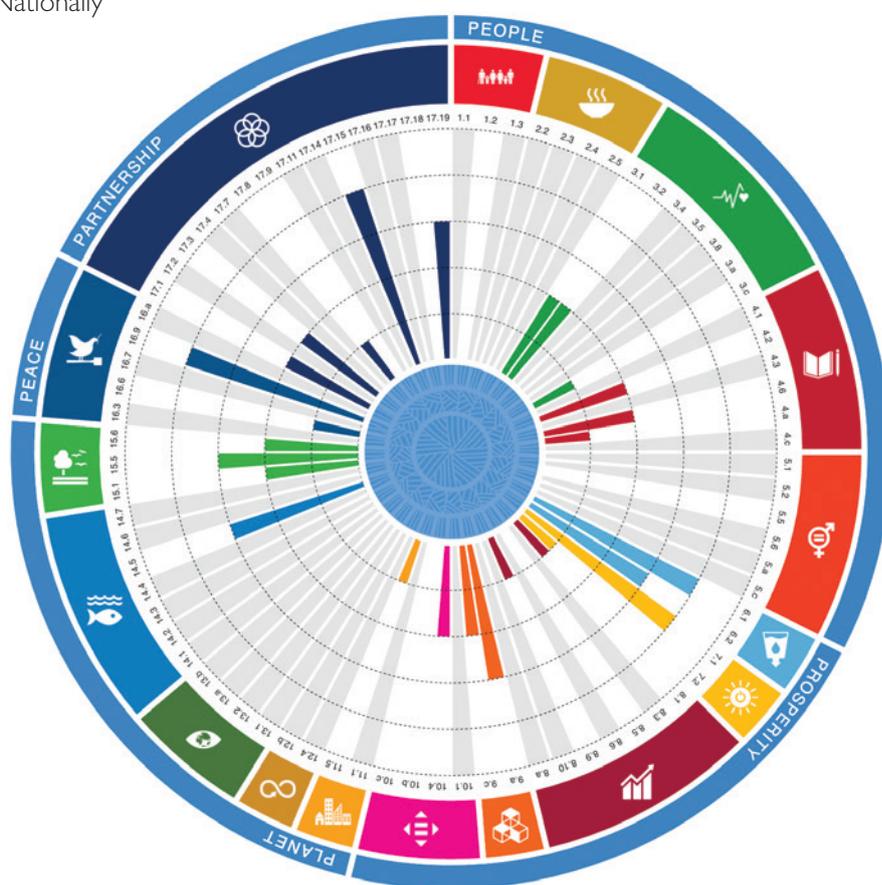


National policy context

National Strategic Plan (2020-2030)

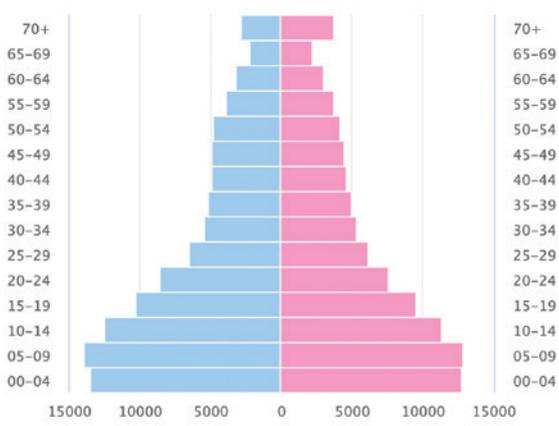
The Republic of the Marshall Islands 2nd Nationally Determined Contribution (2018)

2050 Climate Strategy (2018)



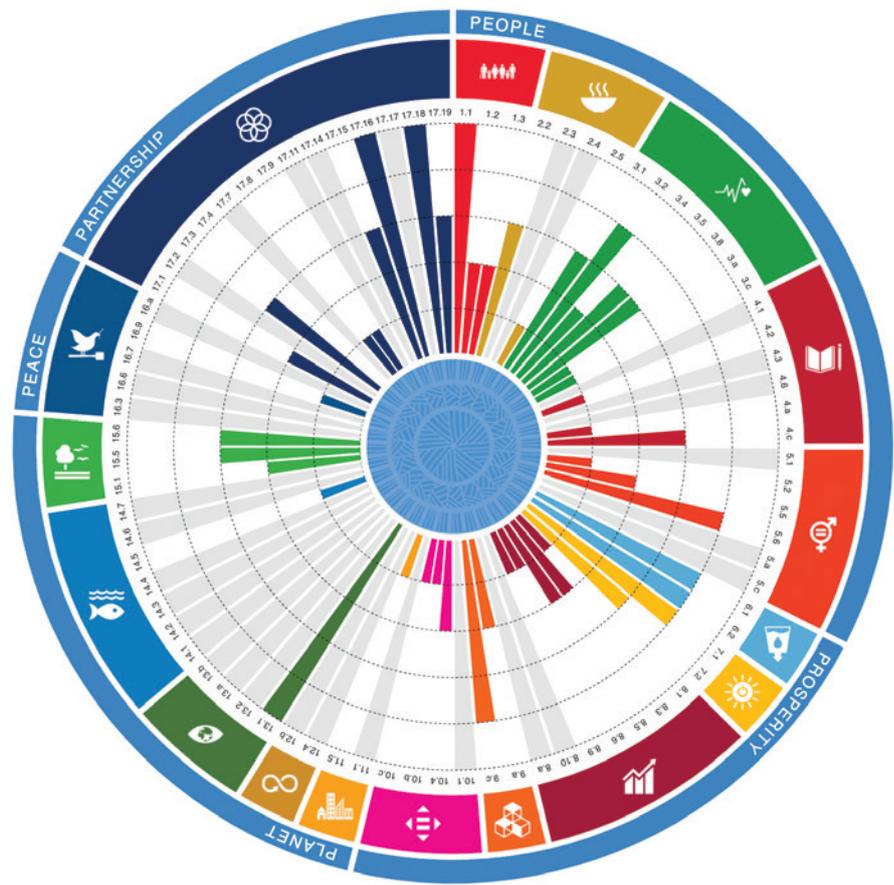
Samoa

Population data	Population (2020)	198,646
	Population density	70
	Population growth (2020)	+0.58
	Projected population (2050)	231,449
	Urban population (% in 2020)	51
	HDI ranking (2020)	111
Physical information	Total land area (km ²)	2,934
	Dominant land types	Volcanic high islands
	Highest elevation (m)	1,857
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	12,000
	No. of islands (inhabited)	9 (4)
	Climate 'hotspots'	River deltas Coastal zone
Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)	-14.302
	Access to international migration	NZ Samoan quote RSE (NZ)
	Labour migration schemes	SWP (Australia)



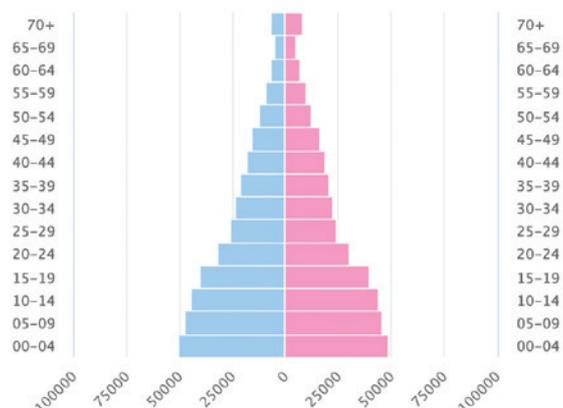
National policy context

- Voluntary National Review (2020)
- Samoa Climate Change Policy (2020)



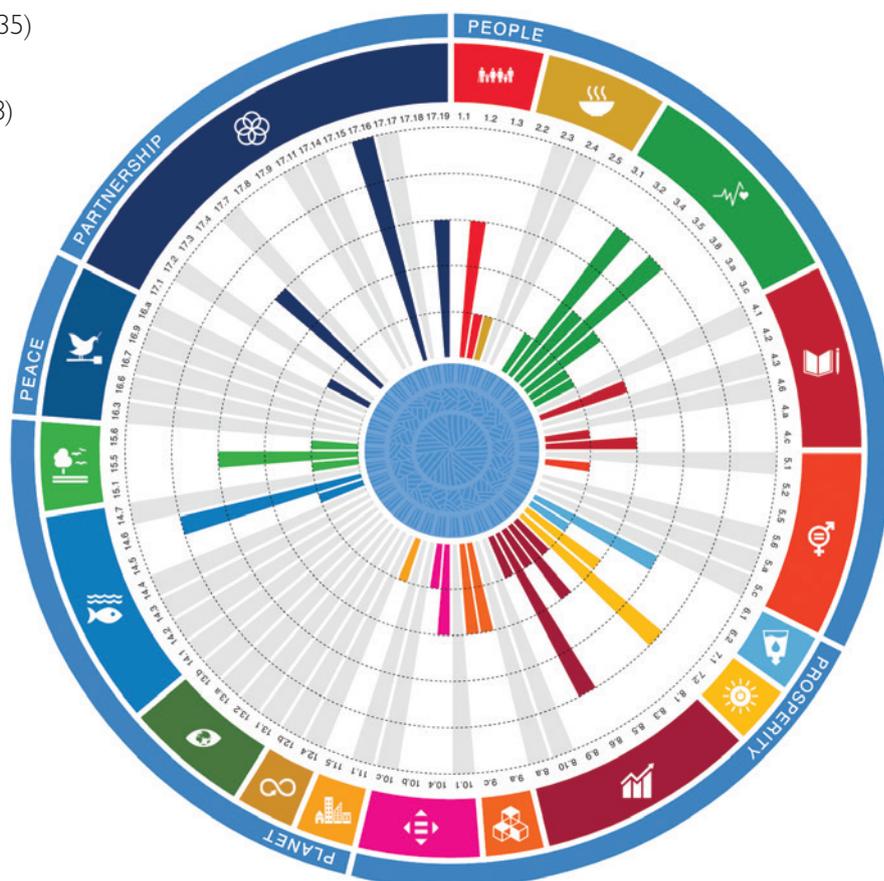
Solomon Islands

Population data	Population (2020)	712,071
	Population density	23.77
	Population growth (2020)	+2.24
	Projected population (2050)	1,333,614
	Urban population (% in 2020)	14
	HDI ranking (2019)	151
Physical information	Total land area (km ²)	28,370
	Dominant land types	Plate boundary islands
	Highest elevation (m)	2,447
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	1,589,477
	No. of islands (inhabited)	998
	Climate 'hotspots'	Atolls and reef islands
Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)	-2.48
	Access to international migration	Limited
	Labour migration schemes	SWP (Australia)
		RSE (NZ)



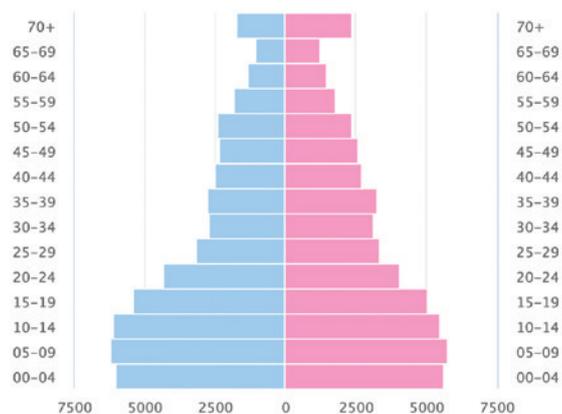
National policy context

- Solomon Islands Voluntary National Review (2020)
- National Development Strategy (2016-2035)
- National Security Strategy (2020)
- National Disaster Management Plan (2018)



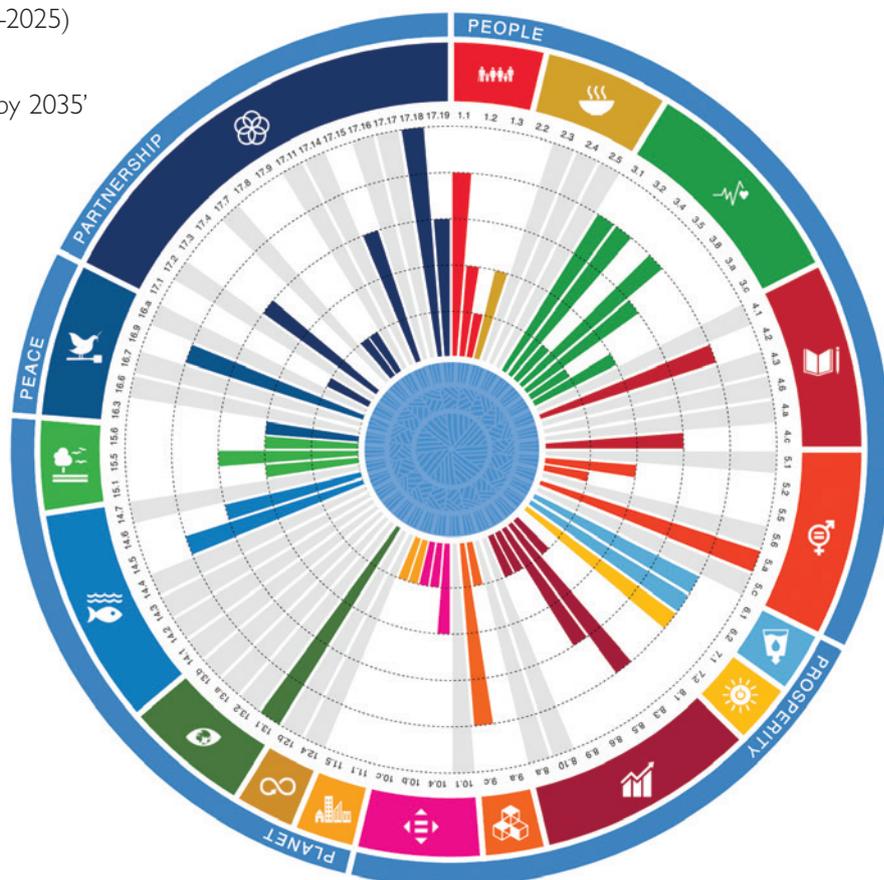
Tonga

Population data	Population (2020)	99,790
	Population density	147
	Population growth (2020)	-0.28%
	Projected population (2050)	93,310
	Urban population (% in 2020)	23
	HDI ranking (2020)	104
Physical information	Total land area (km ²)	749
	Dominant land types	Volcanic high islands Atolls
	Highest elevation (m)	1,033
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	700,000
	No. of islands (inhabited)	176 (36)
	Climate 'hotspots'	Funafuti
Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)	-7.607/1000
	Access to international migration	PAC (New Zealand)
	Labour migration schemes	SWP (Australia) PLF (Australia)



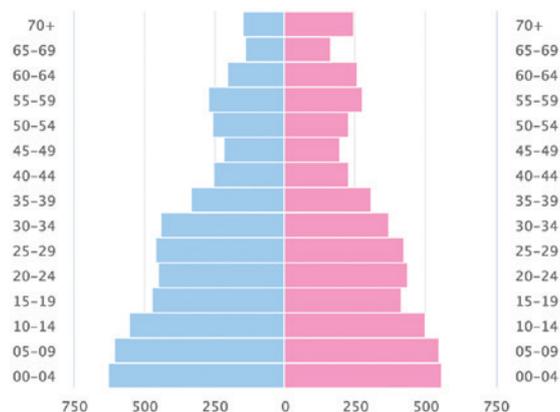
National policy context

- Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2019
- Strategic Development Framework (2015-2025)
- JNAP (2018-2028)
- Climate Change Policy 'A Resilient Tonga by 2035'



Tuvalu

Population data	Population (2020)	10,580
	Population density	393
	Population growth (2020)	+0.80%
	Projected population (2050)	11,839
	Urban population (% in 2020)	64
	HDI ranking (2020)	-
Physical information	Total land area (km ²)	26
	Dominant land types	Atolls
	Highest elevation (m)	6
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	900,000
	No. of islands (inhabited)	9
	Climate 'hotspots'	Funafuti, all atolls
Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)	-
	Access to international migration	PAC (New Zealand)
	Labour migration schemes	SWP (Australia)
		PLF (Australia)
	RSE (NZ)	

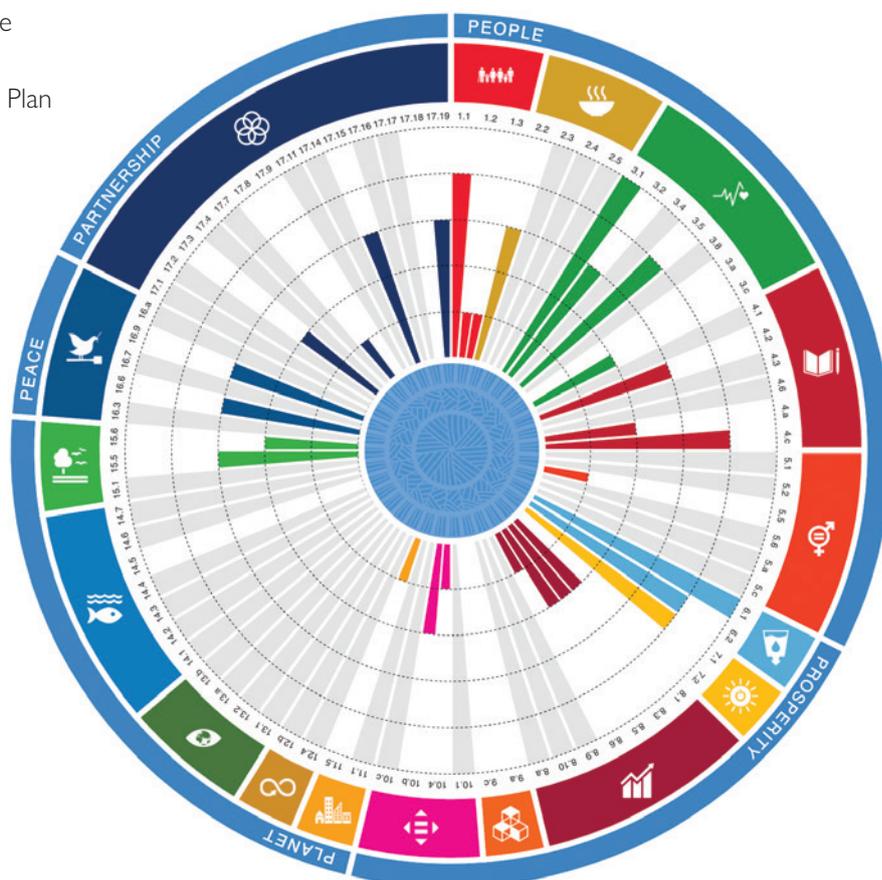


National policy context

“Te Kaniva” Tuvalu Climate Change Policy (2012-2021)

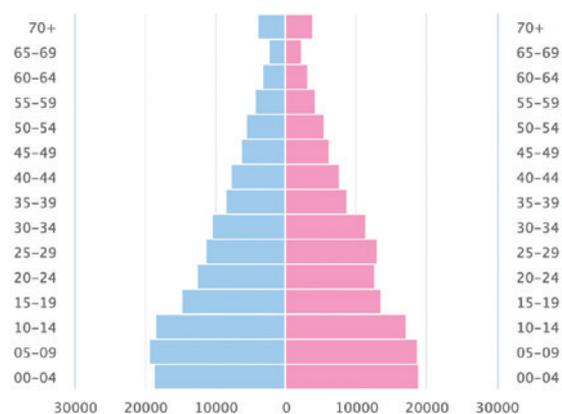
“Te Kete” National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2021-2030

Tuvalu National Infrastructure Investment Plan (2016-2025)



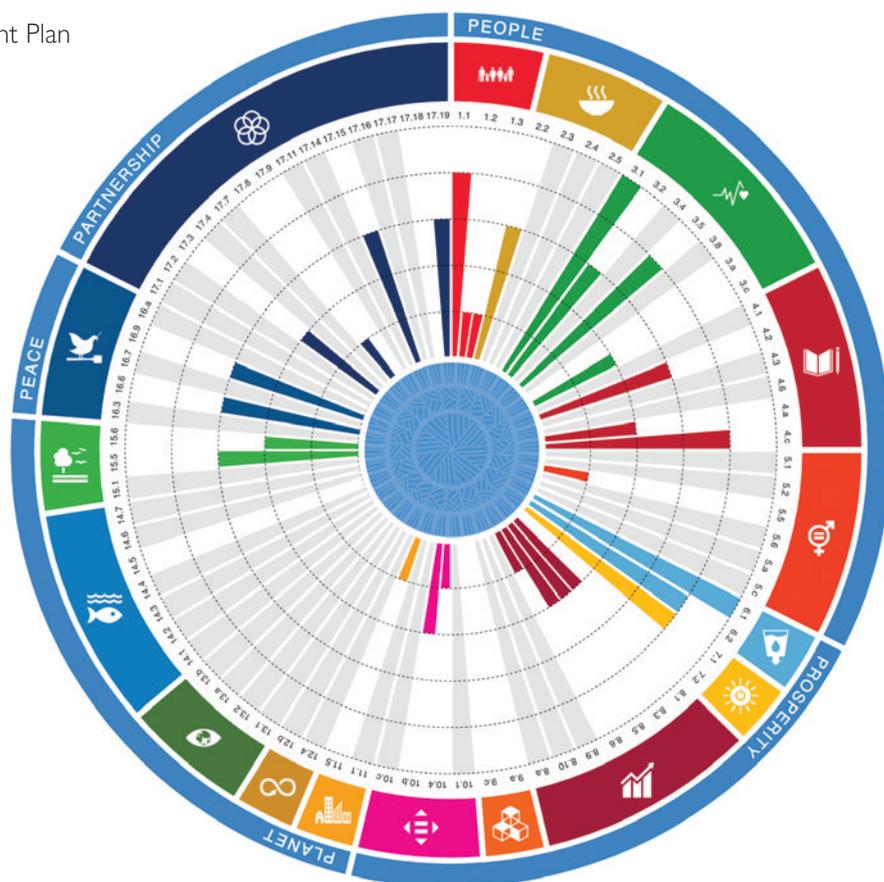
Vanuatu

Population data	Population (2020)	294,688
	Population density	25
	Population growth (2020)	+2.27%
	Projected population (2050)	508,113
	Urban population (% in 2020)	25.4
	HDI ranking (2020)	140
Physical information	Total land area (km ²)	12,190
	Dominant land types	Plate boundary islands
	Highest elevation (m)	1,879
	Exclusive Economic Zone (km ²)	663,251
	No. of islands (inhabited)	83
	Climate 'hotspots'	Coastal and urban areas
Migration information	Net migration rate (2015-2020)	+0.415
	Access to international migration	Limited
	Labour migration schemes	RSE (New Zealand) PLS (Australia) SWP (Australia)



National policy context

- Voluntary National Review (2019)
- Vanuatu National Sustainable Development Plan (2016-2030)
- Vanuatu Climate Change and Disaster Reduction Policy (2016-2030)
- National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement (2018)
- National Security Strategy (2019)



Terminology associated with 'Modern day slavery'

Human trafficking is defined in the *UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons* as: the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organ.

Forced labour is defined in the International Labour Organization (ILO) *Convention on Forced Labour*, 1930 (No. 29) as: all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.

Slavery is defined in the 1926 *Slavery Convention* as the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised. In a later treaty, States agreed that there are also certain "slavery-like practices": debt bondage, forced or servile marriage, sale or exploitation of children (including in armed conflict), and descent-based slavery.

The worst forms of child labour draws on the ILO *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention*, 1999 (No. 182), the term comprises:

- A) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.
- B) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography, or for pornographic performances.
- C) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties.
- D) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

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