
ISF Women, Peace and Security Helpdesk

Gender-Climate Nexus in the Pacific

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Direct Audience: Education, Gender and Equalities Directorate at the FCDO and Oceania team

Confidentiality Status: None



Task Overview

Title of Task:

Gender-climate nexus in the Pacific: strategic evidence and donor mapping

Requesting Officer:

Claire Allan, Gender Advisor to the UK Pacific Network

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28/08/2024

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05/05/2025

Terms of Reference:

Background to assignment

The Climate and Oceans are a key priority area in the Pacific region both for Pacific island countries and the UK with relatively significant UK bilateral and multilateral investments in the region. The international community is increasing views of climate change as a crisis hence appropriate for this helpdesk.

International debates, particularly since COP25, on climate have increasingly focused on ensuring the inclusion of women and girls and to a lesser extent people with disabilities. In this region, further work is needed by the UK to fully articulate how we would want to engage on the gender/climate nexus despite some activities already in operation.

As part of the Pacific JACS, the FCDO commissioned a gendered analysis across the region which included climate change. However, this did not go into significant depth and focused more on impacts. Hence, we are looking to expand our understanding of the current landscape, including active development partners, key challenges and opportunities to engage further.

Purpose of assignment

The report would helpfully explore the landscape, barriers, opportunities (including through examples) and suggested interventions in the Pacific region (with focus where possible – not exclusively – on Tonga, Samoa, PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji which are our priority countries) across the following five areas:

1. Government framework and policies across our six priority Pacific island countries. Pls, could we list the depth and scale of mainstreaming on gender and disability within NDC and SAPCC plans alongside any other relevant national policies across our six Pacific priority countries. Pls provide recommendations.
2. Access to Climate Finance with a particular focus on women and girls including those from rural areas, marginalised ethnic groups and disabilities (where possible). This may illustrate the limited access – likely via Pacific CSOs – and the constraints in the enabling environment. For example, this may point to weak financial literacy, access to assets/collateral and/or the necessary information. Language, physical location and social norms may also be factors. As part of this, on interventions what more could the international bodies do to make finance more accessible? Please provide recommendations.
3. Women-led Adaptation, Resilience and Nature-based Solutions Interventions in the blue and land economies, including coastal, fisheries, forestry and agriculture. Pls provide an assessment of overall depth and scale in

the pacific region, including challenges and opportunities plus case studies where appropriate. You may wish to draw comparisons with the Caribbean SIDS if useful although not essential. Beyond access to finance to develop these interventions what are the demand and supply side challenges, for example social norms, lack of visibility, confidence and/or government frameworks and engagement. Pls provide recommendations.

4. International to local climate advocacy landscape by women and on gender equality, including women and girls from marginalised ethnic, remote and disability groups. Pls provide an overview of the current quality and depth of the following two sub stakeholder groups alongside their key development partners, barriers to progress and any standout examples from our six priority countries.
 - I. Government gender/climate nexus network actors including their demands and contributions at the global, regional and national level. As part of this it would be interesting to test if these actors have a strong voice on debates around indigenous rights on the international stage (as seen in Latin America) and present any distinct perspectives. It would also be useful to understand pacific women's representation in both gender specific and broader climate negotiations, including names of any rising or established stars. Pls provide recommendations
 - II. Women-led civil society climate actors with a particular focus on women-led grassroots organisations in the region. How well-coordinated and mature is the movement at the regional and international level. If reasonably so, are there any trends in demands and concerns and who are the key pacific players at the regional and international level. Pls provide recommendations.
5. Inclusive Disaster Risk Management with a focus on women including those with disabilities, remotely based and from marginalised ethnic groups. Due to significant attention already in this area, pls provide a light touch overview which includes breadth and depth of government policies and development partners in this space i.e. do our six priority countries have frameworks in place and to what extent do they consider gender and disability. Pls also include any trends around barriers and opportunities to improve the landscape.

Task presentation

Written report with a presentation to the pacific network if possible

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Introduction

The ongoing climate change crisis poses significant threats to the Pacific region, which is particularly susceptible due to its geographic and socio-economic vulnerabilities. The region is experiencing rising sea levels, increasing temperatures, and more frequent extreme weather events, all of which have profound impacts on the livelihoods, health, loss of biodiversity and security of Pacific Island communities. The purpose of this assignment is to address the urgent need for effective climate action, with a specific focus on the intersection of climate change and gender—a priority area for the United Kingdom's (UK) government.

Women in the Pacific are disproportionately affected by climate change due to existing gender inequalities that limit their access to resources, decision-making processes, and economic opportunities. Recognising the critical importance of addressing these gendered dimensions, the UK government has prioritised the integration of gender considerations into climate policies and interventions. This assignment sought to conduct a targeted mapping of evidence and donor interventions related to the climate–gender nexus in the Pacific, with the objective of identifying opportunities for more effective, gender-responsive climate action. This desk review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge and interventions concerning climate change and gender in the Pacific region. The findings will inform future policies and programmes, ensuring they are inclusive, equitable, and capable of addressing the unique challenges faced by women and other marginalised groups in the context of climate change.

This assignment involved conducting a thorough desk review, utilising a systematic approach to collect and analyse relevant data from a variety of sources. These sources included government documents, civil society reports, academic publications, and case studies that provided insights into the climate–gender nexus in the Pacific region. Additionally, the review included some interviews or consultations with regional bodies, civil society organisations (CSOs), and academic experts. These consultations helped gather first-hand information and perspectives, thereby validating the findings from the desk review and offering deeper insights into the challenges and opportunities within the Pacific context. The collected data was analysed to identify key themes, trends, and gaps in the existing evidence and interventions. This comprehensive approach ensures the findings are robust, credible, and reflective of the diverse experiences and perspectives within the Pacific region.

The assignment focused on six Pacific countries (Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea [PNG], and Vanuatu) where the UK has a presence. Following initial feedback from FCDO on emerging findings, deep dive analysis was conducted on three of the six countries (PNG, Fiji, and Tonga). Case studies from the three selected countries provide insights into the challenges and opportunities of integrating gender and climate change into national policies and programming. Insights from other Pacific Island countries were also included for a comprehensive understanding of the climate–gender nexus. This broader perspective from key actors¹ provides a more comprehensive understanding of the climate–gender nexus across the region and ensures the findings are applicable to a wider range of contexts. This inclusive approach identified common themes and best practices that can inform regional and international efforts to promote gender-responsive climate action in the Pacific.

¹ Light touch interviews were conducted with a total of nine key actors, consisting of: four representatives from three regional multilateral agencies; one representative of a national government agency; two Pacific Island academics; and two representatives from local NGOs.

National Government Policies on Gender and Climate Change in Pacific Countries

Overview

The following is a snapshot of the existing key climate and gender national government policies of the six selected Pacific countries—Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea (PNG), and Vanuatu—and is an assessment of the effectiveness of these policies in mainstreaming gender consideration into climate change policies.

All six countries have developed Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as part of their commitments to the Paris Agreement, outlining their climate actions and targets. Additionally, all six countries have National Action Plans (NAPs) that outline their strategies to address vulnerabilities to climate change, with some focusing on specific sectors such as agriculture, food security, water and sanitation, human settlements, and health by integrating adaptation measures into these sectors. **All countries also have specific climate change and gender policies, however only PNG has a gender mainstreaming policy for climate financing too.** An analysis of how these countries consider gender in their policies and plans will be discussed in this report.

Tonga

Tonga is highly vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, facing frequent threats from tropical cyclones, tsunamis, volcanic activity, and droughts. The country experiences significant economic and social impacts during climate change and natural disasters, with over 40 per cent of the population affected and economic losses equivalent to 14 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).² The catastrophic Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai volcanic eruption in 2022, which caused a tsunami and ashfall, exemplifies the severe challenges Tonga faces, resulting in damages amounting to approximately 18.5 per cent of its GDP. Tonga operates as a constitutional monarchy with a relatively stable political structure, which provides a solid foundation for implementing gender mainstreaming policies. The Tongan government is actively working to enhance climate and disaster resilience through various initiatives and international support, with guidance from key national policies.

Policy (Links are active)	Analysis of integration of gender and social inclusion/climate change considerations
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² [Tonga | Climate Change Knowledge Portal | World Bank](#)

<u>Tonga's Second Nationally Determined Contribution (2020)</u>	Tonga's second NDC highlights the importance of including women in the planning process and prioritises gender considerations. However, it lacks detailed information on specific gender-responsive actions . This limits its effectiveness in ensuring gender equity in climate action. The NDC could be improved by outlining clear, actionable steps for gender responsiveness, such as specific programmes or initiatives to ensure women's active participation and leadership in climate action.
<u>Tonga Climate Change Policy (2016) by Department of Climate Change</u>	This policy effectively incorporates gender considerations by recognising the unique vulnerabilities and contributions of women in the context of climate change. It emphasises gender equality and the need for women's active involvement in adaptation and mitigation efforts. However, the policy lacks detailed implementation plans and specific measures to support women's empowerment and participation . The policy could benefit from more detailed implementation plans and specific measures to support women's empowerment and participation, ensuring that gender perspectives are fully integrated into all climate-related actions.
<u>National Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga Policy and Strategic Plan of Action 2019-2025</u>	Priority Policy Outcome 5 of the policy aims to create equal conditions for responding to natural disasters, environmental challenges, and climate change. The policy demonstrates successful gender mainstreaming in various projects and post-disaster responses . However, several challenges remain. Stakeholders identified barriers such as exclusion from government services, uncooperative and biased behaviour from town officers, duplicated response efforts, and inconsistent communication and data sharing, highlighting the need for improved coordination in disaster preparedness and response. Addressing these barriers through improved communication, data sharing, and inclusive strategies can enhance the effectiveness of gender-sensitive approaches in climate resilience.
<u>Tonga Energy Road Map 2021-2035</u>	The Energy Road Map outlines key targets and actions to reduce fossil fuel dependence and deliver an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable energy system by 2035. It actively addresses gender equity with a goal of achieving gender equality by 2035. The strategy includes interventions at all levels to support women's participation in technical roles and leadership positions . While the policy is comprehensive, continuous monitoring and evaluation is needed to ensure the effectiveness of gender inclusion measures.

<u>Joint National Action Plan 2 on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management 2018-2028</u>	This Joint National Action Plan 2 (JNAP 2) outlines the country's strategy to enhance resilience to climate change and disaster risks. The plan emphasises an inclusive, participatory approach based on good governance, aiming for a resilient Tonga by 2035. Gender considerations are integral to JNAP 2, promoting gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) for resilient development. The plan highlights the importance of gender-sensitive planning, capacity building, and the active participation of women in decision-making processes.
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Samoa

Natural hazards significantly impact the country's economy and society, with over 40 per cent of the population affected during disaster years, and significant harm to human well-being and natural ecosystems in Samoa.³ The Samoan government has taken proactive steps to address gender and climate change through various policies, including the Samoa Climate Change Policy 2020-2030 and National Policy on Gender Equality and Rights of Women and Girls (2021-2031).

Policy (Links are active)	Analysis of integration of gender and social inclusion/climate change considerations
<u>Samoa Nationally Determined Contribution (2022)</u>	Samoa's policies demonstrate a strong commitment to integrating GEDSI into climate change strategies. The NDC report highlights active stakeholder engagement and incorporates gender-responsive considerations through guidelines promoting GEDSI. However, it lacks depth in analysing or integrating these aspects into targeted areas and detailed action plans. ,
<u>Samoa Climate Change Policy</u>	This policy provides a comprehensive framework that explicitly addresses the intersection of gender and climate change, recognising the unique vulnerabilities and contributions of women. It emphasises the importance of integrating gender perspectives into all climate-related actions and calls for targeted measures to support women's empowerment and participation. Despite this, the policy could benefit from more specific implementation plans and measures.

³ [Climate Risk Country Profile - Samoa | World Bank](#)

<u>National Policy on Gender Equality & Rights of Women and Girls (2021-2031)</u>	<p>This policy addresses the intersection of climate change and gender by emphasising the integration of gender considerations into climate resilience and disaster risk management efforts. It promotes women's leadership and equal access to resources, information, and decision-making processes. The policy also calls for gender-responsive budgeting and the collection of sex-disaggregated data to inform more effective and equitable responses. While these policies are comprehensive, there are gaps in detailed implementation plans and specific measures to ensure effective integration of GEDSI into climate change strategies.</p>
<u>National Adaptation Programme of Action Samoa</u>	<p>Samoa's National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) outlines the country's strategy to address its vulnerabilities to climate change, focusing on key sectors such as agriculture, water resources, health, and infrastructure. The NAPA emphasises the importance of integrating gender considerations into climate adaptation efforts. It provides, for example, various guiding principles including community participation approaches through women's committees or women's councils. Samoa's <i>Faa-Samoa</i>, or Samoan culture, is emphasised as a key factor in delivering the adaptation framework. It also includes the utility of social security systems that provide cohesion in communities. This approach guides the identification, selection, prioritisation and the key adaptation activities for NAPA</p>

Fiji

Fiji is particularly vulnerable to climate change due to its geographical location and economic reliance on climate-sensitive sectors like tourism, agriculture, and fisheries. Rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and extreme weather events such as cyclones and floods pose significant threats to the nation. For instance, the village of Vunidogoloa became the first in Fiji to relocate due to sea-level rise. Additionally, the intrusion of saltwater into farmland disrupts agriculture, leading to economic damages estimated at up to \$52 million per year, or 4 per cent of Fiji's GDP.⁴ These climate threats exacerbate poverty and food insecurity, making climate resilience a critical priority for Fiji. The Fijian government has implemented several initiatives to address climate change and integrated gender considerations into its policies.

Policy (Links are active)	Analysis of integration of gender and social inclusion/climate change considerations
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⁴ [How Fiji is Impacted by Climate Change | UNFCCC](#)

<u>Fiji's Nationally Determined Contribution</u>	Fiji's NDC planning process is guided by the principle of gender-responsiveness, emphasising the importance of considering gender issues in all adaptation and mitigation approaches. It calls for improved gender balance in decision-making processes, promotes gender-equitable benefits, and ensures that gender is a key consideration in programming finance and capacity building . However, the NDC lacks a detailed analysis of the gender–climate nexus, which limits its effectiveness in fully integrating gender considerations into climate strategies. There is an opportunity to enhance the NDC by providing a more comprehensive analysis of how gender dynamics influence vulnerability to climate change and by outlining specific, actionable steps to ensure gender equity in adaptation and mitigation efforts.
<u>National Climate Change Policy 2018-2030</u>	This policy places a strong emphasis on gender responsiveness across several key areas, including gender-responsive planning and implementation, capacity building and empowerment, gender-equitable benefits, data collection and analysis , and gender mainstreaming. It ensures that women and men benefit equitably from climate actions and promotes the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data to understand the differentiated impacts of climate change . The government also supports initiatives that enhance women's capacity to respond to climate impacts, such as training programmes and community-based adaptation projects. While the policy is comprehensive, it could benefit from more specific guidelines and actionable steps for implementing gender-responsive measures . Ensuring continuous monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming efforts across all sectors could enhance the policy's effectiveness.
<u>Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy and Action Plan (2021-2024)</u>	The plan further emphasises the integration of gender considerations into climate resilience and disaster risk management efforts, promoting gender-responsive budgeting and ensuring equal access to resources and decision-making processes for women and marginalised groups, including LGBTQ+ individuals and groups ⁵ . Despite these comprehensive frameworks, there are gaps in detailed implementation plans and specific measures to ensure effective integration of GEDSI into climate change strategies.
<u>Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting Manual (GRPB)</u>	The GRPB Manual 2024 for Fiji outlines strategies to integrate gender considerations into planning and budgeting processes. It addresses gender and climate change by emphasising the need for gender-responsive, evidence-based approaches in climate change adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk reduction, ensuring that policies and actions consider the different impacts on men and women and promote gender

⁵ In Fiji, LGBTQ+ groups or organisations such as Diverse Voices and Action (DIVA) for Equality, the Rainbow Pride Foundation, the Amithi Fiji Project, SAN Fiji, and the Drodrolagi Movement are recognised and active in advocating for the rights and protections of their members.

	equality. This initiative is supported by the Gender Transformative Institutional Capacity Development Initiative (ICD) led by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection (MWCSP).
<u>Fiji National Adaptation Plan</u>	This plan outlines a comprehensive strategy to enhance the country's resilience to climate change by integrating adaptation measures across various sectors. It emphasises the importance of gender considerations, recognising the unique vulnerabilities and contributions of women in the context of climate change. The plan promotes gender-responsive actions, ensuring that adaptation strategies are inclusive and equitable . It highlights the need for gender-sensitive planning, capacity building, and the active participation of women in decision-making processes to foster resilience and address the specific needs of all community members.
<u>Planned Relocation Guidelines</u>	<p>The Fijian Government developed Standard Operating Procedures in 2012 and updated in 2024, to support the operationalisation of the Planned Relocation Guidelines. They provide structured processes to ensure adherence to the principles of planned relocation as defined in the guidelines and the provisions under section 77 of the Climate Change Act for relocating at-risk communities.</p> <p>The SOPs were developed through extensive consultations with various stakeholders, including governmental agencies, NGOs, CSOs (including gender and LGBTQI representatives), academic institutions, the private sector, regional organisations, and international development partners. More details on the SOP are discussed in subsequent sections of the report.</p> <p>The guidelines were developed under the guidance of the Ministry of Economy with support from GIZ.⁶</p>

Solomon Islands

Approximately 65 per cent of Solomon Islands population lives less than one kilometre from the sea, making them particularly susceptible to the impact of climate change. The degradation of marine habitats, including mangroves, river estuaries, and coral reefs, further exacerbates the vulnerability of communities that rely heavily on fishing and harvesting invertebrates for food and income. The Solomon Islands faces challenges related to land loss and increased salinity of water supplies, which threaten livelihoods and food security.

In the 1960s, worsening environmental conditions led British colonial government to evacuate people from the Phoenix Islands in Kiribati and resettle them in the Solomon Islands. This migration resulted in vibrant Micronesian communities in both Western Province and the nation's capital.⁷ The Solomon Islands Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology, has taken several steps to

⁶ [Climate Change-Induced Community Relocation in Fiji: Challenges and Ways Forward | Toda Peace Institute](#)

⁷ [Climate change and conflict in Solomon Islands | Anouk Ride \(2023\)](#)

address climate change and integrate gender considerations into its policies, particularly the National Climate Change Policy 2023-2032.

Policy (Links are active)	Analysis of integration of gender and social inclusion/climate change considerations
Solomon Islands Nationally Determined Contribution	The NDC mentions gender, highlighting disparities in access to education and health services between females and males . It acknowledges that women face significant barriers, particularly in rural areas, where access to secondary and tertiary education, as well as health and family planning services, is limited. However, the NDC does not provide a comprehensive analysis or integration of gender considerations into broader climate adaptation and mitigation strategies . The focus is more on institutional and economic challenges rather than explicitly addressing how gender dynamics influence vulnerability to climate change. There is an opportunity to develop a more robust framework that explicitly integrates gender considerations into climate action strategies.
Solomon Islands National Adaptation Programmes of Action (2008)	The Solomon Islands NAPA outlines the country's strategy to address its vulnerabilities to climate change, focusing on critical areas such as agriculture, food security, water supply, sanitation, human settlements, and health. While the NAPA emphasises the importance of integrating gender considerations into climate adaptation efforts, for instance, the inclusion of women and youth into planning or decision-making processes, it does not clearly articulate actionable plans as to how it will do this.
National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) 2023-2032	The Solomon Islands NCCP 2023-2032 demonstrates a growing recognition of the importance of integrating gender considerations into climate action. While the policy outlines various strategies for mitigation and adaptation, it often lacks a comprehensive framework that explicitly addresses the unique vulnerabilities and contributions of women and marginalised groups in climate resilience efforts . The policy could benefit from more targeted actions and measures that empower women and ensure their active participation in decision-making processes.

Papua New Guinea

PNG faces significant challenges due to climate change, including rising sea levels, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and deforestation. The country experiences landslides, loss of biodiversity, and changes in rainfall patterns, which impact agriculture and water resources. For example, the sinking of the

Cataract Islands and the increased intensity of droughts and floods highlight the tangible impacts of climate change in PNG. These environmental changes threaten the livelihoods and well-being of its people, particularly those in coastal and rural areas. The Climate Change and Development Authority (CCDA) leads the PNG government's policy efforts in addressing climate change and enhancing resilience.

Policy (Links are active)	Analysis of integration of gender and social inclusion/climate change considerations
<u>Papua New Guinea's Enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution 2020</u>	<p>PNG's NDC demonstrates a commitment to gender responsiveness by promoting women's leadership in environmental management and ensuring that both genders engage in decision-making processes related to climate action. This approach acknowledges the unique roles of women in communities and aims to create more equitable and effective solutions to combat climate change. However, the NDC lacks a detailed analysis of the gender-climate nexus, which limits its effectiveness in fully integrating gender considerations into climate strategies. There is an opportunity to enhance the NDC by providing a more comprehensive analysis of how gender dynamics influence vulnerability to climate change and by outlining specific, actionable steps to ensure gender equity in adaptation and mitigation efforts.</p>
<u>GGGI Papua New Guinea Country Planning Framework</u>	<p>The Planning Framework addresses the nexus between gender and climate change by emphasising the differentiated impacts on women and men. It advocates for the inclusion of GESI considerations in all climate action initiatives and highlights the importance of involving women and men in decision-making processes. The framework promotes women's empowerment through access to renewable energy and education, aiming to enhance their participation in the energy sector and improve their livelihoods. While the framework is comprehensive, it could benefit from more targeted actions and measures that explicitly address the unique barriers and contributions of women and marginalised groups. Ensuring that interventions do not compromise women's safety and well-being and promoting gender-responsive budgeting and resource allocation are key areas for improvement.</p>

<u>National Adaptation Plan 2022-2030</u>	<p>PNG's first Adaptation Plan is designed as a strategic framework to support efforts led by PNG's CCDA to address climate change impacts. It defines a series of cross-cutting strategies to strengthen institutional capacities and the ability to effectively maintain climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management in priority sectors. These include sectoral and provincial planning and instruments. It also establishes sectoral strategic actions to be implemented through sectoral Climate Change Action Plans in accordance with the Climate Change Management Act 2022 (Amended).</p> <p>The plan integrates gender responsive approaches throughout, including in its monitoring and evaluation framework. It emphasises the importance of vulnerability and gap assessments, the importance of women's representation and participation, and the importance of having access to financial resources and other benefits from climate financing for climate adaptation.</p>
<u>Papua New Guinea and the Green Climate Fund: Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines for Project Implementation (CCDA)</u>	<p>This guideline is part of a broader effort to address gender inequalities in climate change interventions in PNG. It focuses on achieving inclusivity and participation across the assessment, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation stages of climate-related actions. While primarily tied to the Green Climate Fund process, it can inform any climate change or development project in PNG. The principles of human rights, inclusion, and respect for equal participation also support the broader inclusion of marginalised groups, contributing to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.</p>

Vanuatu

Vanuatu faces significant challenges due to climate change, including rising sea levels, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and coastal erosion. The country is highly vulnerable to cyclones, with Cyclone Pam in 2015 being a notable example, affecting 60 per cent of the population and 64 per cent of the economy, and destroying 96 per cent of food crops.⁸ Rising ocean temperatures also threaten marine fisheries, which are crucial for food security and livelihoods.

Additionally, sea-level rise and coastal erosion are causing the loss of habitable land, leading to displacement of communities. Recently, Vanuatu was struck by back-to-back Tropical Cyclones Judy and Kevin in March 2023 and Paul in 2024, impacting more than 80 per cent of the population and causing widespread destruction.⁹ The Vanuatu government has implemented several policies to deal with climate change and environmental disasters, emphasising community resilience.

Policy (Links are active)	Analysis of integration of gender and social inclusion/climate change considerations
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⁸ [Following the 7.3 magnitude earthquake near Port Vila on December 17, 2024, Vanuatu faced significant health challenges, including damage to homes and health facilities, increased disease outbreak risks, and the need for enhanced disease surveillance and rapid response efforts.](#)

⁹ [ABC News Nick Sas, Jordan Fennel and Melissa Maykin \(Monday 6 March 2023\)](#)

<p><u>Vanuatu's Revised and Enhanced 1st Nationally Determined Contribution 2021-2030</u></p>	<p>Vanuatu's NDC demonstrates a strong commitment to integrating gender considerations into its climate actions. It emphasises the inclusion of women in decision-making processes, gender-responsive adaptation measures, capacity building, and gender-sensitive data collection. The NDC also addresses gender-responsive climate finance, ensuring women have equal access to financial resources for climate adaptation and mitigation projects. While the NDC outlines several gender-responsive measures, it could benefit from more detailed implementation plans and specific actions to ensure these measures are effectively carried out. Enhancing the monitoring and evaluation of gender-responsive initiatives can further strengthen the NDC's impact.</p>
<p><u>National Gender Equality Policy 2020-2030</u></p>	<p>This policy emphasises the integration of gender considerations into climate and disaster resilience efforts. It promotes women's leadership and participation in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction initiatives. The policy calls for gender-responsive budgeting, resource allocation, and the collection of sex-disaggregated data to inform more effective and equitable responses. The policy could be strengthened by providing more specific guidelines and actionable steps for implementing gender-responsive measures. Ensuring continuous monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming efforts across all sectors can enhance the policy's effectiveness.</p>
<p><u>Vanuatu National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-induced Displacement (2018 – present)</u></p>	<p>This policy comprehensively addresses gender by emphasising the inclusion of women in decision-making processes at both community and sectoral levels. It highlights the need for gender-responsive approaches in all aspects of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The policy also calls for the collection of sex-disaggregated data to better understand the differentiated impacts of climate change and disasters. While the policy demonstrates a strong commitment to gender equality, it could benefit from more detailed implementation plans and specific measures to ensure the effective integration of gender considerations. Enhancing support for women's leadership and participation in climate resilience efforts can further improve the policy's impact.</p>
<p><u>Vanuatu Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy (2016-2030)</u></p>	<p>This policy, outlines a comprehensive approach to enhancing the country's climate resilience. Initiated with the establishment of the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction in 2012, the policy emphasises accountability, sustainability, equity, community focus, collaboration, and innovation.</p> <p>Key measures include strengthening governance, ensuring adequate resources, sharing traditional and new knowledge, integrating adaptation and disaster risk reduction, promoting low-carbon development, and enhancing disaster preparedness.</p>

	<p>The policy also highlights the importance of capacity building, GEDSI, and partnerships with diverse stakeholders. Implementation involves integrating the plan into corporate and business strategies, with regular monitoring, evaluation, and reviews to stay aligned with contemporary developments.</p>
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Analysis on the Integration of Gender Considerations into Climate Change Policies – Gaps and Opportunities

This section of the report analyses the integration of gender considerations into the climate change reports of six countries involved in this study. Across the six Pacific Island countries—Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, Solomon Islands, PNG, and Vanuatu—there is a strong recognition of the importance of integrating gender considerations into climate change policies. However, there are gaps within policies and, from this study's stakeholder interviews and wider evidence, gaps in implementation that limit the full effectiveness of these policies in addressing gender equity in climate action.

Gender-responsiveness and Gaps in Policy Implementation

1. Lack of Clarity in Climate Policy Implementation

Most countries **fail to clearly articulate the mainstreaming of gender in specific policy areas**, such as resource allocation, capacity building, monitoring, and evaluation, or explicitly addressing the intersection of climate change and the unique vulnerabilities of different genders. Although, Pacific governments mention gender considerations in their policies, there is a lack of clarity on how these planning and budgeting tools are being implemented in practice. Failing to clearly articulate and systematically integrate gender considerations into specific policy areas can result in gender blind resource allocation leading to unequal access to resources and opportunities.

The study found that while all countries emphasise the importance of gender-responsive actions and acknowledge the unique vulnerabilities and contributions of women in the context of climate change, many national policies still lack the clarity and specificity needed to translate these commitments into actionable measures. Various government ministries and departments are responsible for developing and implementing policies that address both climate change and gender issues. For example, Samoa's Ministry of Women, Community, and Social Development has played a key role in advancing gender-responsive climate policies, and in Fiji, the Ministry of Women, Children, and Poverty Alleviation works in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy to mainstream gender in climate action plans. However, for instance, while the Solomon Islands Government includes provisions for gender-responsive programmes in its Climate Change Policy, it lacks clear, actionable strategies to address the different impacts of climate change on women and men. Without clear and specific guidance, such policies risk remaining too general, limiting their effectiveness in meeting the distinct needs of diverse gender groups.

2. The overlooked role of young women and girls

There is insufficient emphasis on the **role of young women and girls** in tackling climate issues across different societal levels. While most national policies mention women's participation in policy consultations, they fail to highlight the involvement of young women and girls. This lack of emphasis means that the unique

perspectives and needs of young women and girls are not fully integrated into climate policies, potentially leading to less effective and equitable solutions. Empowering young women and girls to take on leadership roles can result in more comprehensive strategies that address the needs of the entire community.

Young women and men in the Pacific represent more than half of the total population in Pacific Island countries and territories and are expected to face more climate-related hardships in their lifetime compared to past generations. The proportion is highest in Vanuatu (95.8%), Micronesia (94.4%), Tonga (91.6%), and Fiji (91.5%). A UNDP¹⁰ report on how climate change impacts on young people in the Pacific, recommends several actions to support Pacific youth in the face of climate change. These include ensuring meaningful youth participation in climate negotiations and policymaking, providing targeted economic support to address high unemployment and underemployment, and promoting digital transformation to enhance opportunities. Additionally, legal reforms are suggested to protect the rights and well-being of young people, alongside improved mental health services to address the psychological impacts of climate change.

3. Bespoke Sub-sectoral Climate/Gender Nexus Policies

Although most countries refer to gender in general climate policies, few have issued sub-sectoral documents—such as on climate finance—that provide concrete, operational steps. These sector-specific documents are essential for translating high-level commitments into operational steps that can be implemented, monitored, and evaluated. Papua New Guinea stands out in this regard, having established a climate finance framework that explicitly integrates gender. This approach offers a valuable model for other Pacific countries, demonstrating how gender-responsive strategies can be embedded within technical and financial mechanisms to drive more inclusive outcomes. Gender-responsive policies are more likely to address the specific vulnerabilities and capacities of different genders, leading to more equitable outcomes. They move beyond symbolic inclusion and help ensure that policies are not only equitable in principle but effective in practice. By considering the unique contributions and challenges faced by all genders, including marginalised groups, these policies can leverage the strengths of all community members, thereby improving overall resilience to climate change.

4. Local and Inclusive Leadership in Climate Action

Inclusive leadership at the national and local levels that includes the role of women, people with disabilities and other marginalised groups in gender mainstreaming efforts plays a crucial role in driving long-term and sustainable climate action. Although many national policies acknowledge the inclusion of diverse and vulnerable groups, they fail to show that gender mainstreaming efforts are both inclusive and spearheaded by these groups. While women and other vulnerable groups may be involved in shaping priorities, there is often a lack of genuine ownership and local leadership, and mechanisms for feedback or accountability to influence policy adjustments and ensure responsiveness to their needs. For example, an article on climate relocation guidelines in Fiji highlights that, despite the existence of policies and guidelines, local leadership and ownership by those most affected by climate change are often absent. Commitments to inclusivity frequently remain at the level of principle and are not effectively translated into practice. The article goes on to say, “All too often communities become the passive recipients of outsiders’ plans and agenda”.¹¹

An inclusive leadership approach by marginalised groups ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, leading to more comprehensive and effective strategies. By involving various stakeholders, this approach

¹⁰ Pacific Islands youth on the frontlines of climate change need the world’s attention | United Nations Development Programme

¹¹ Climate Change-Induced Community Relocation in Fiji: Challenges and Ways Forward | Toda Peace Institute

promotes equity by ensuring that all members of society, including marginalised groups, have a voice in decision-making processes. Some Fijian stakeholders suggested a localisation model that addresses local realities by considering the deeper needs of the community in an inclusive and respectful manner would be improve outcomes.

An important suggestion was the adoption of a dual-track approach to policy initiatives and development. A representative from a PNG-based multilateral agency emphasised that this approach involves investing in local capacities to effectively reach and support rural communities, allowing them to lead policy initiatives and development.

The dual-track approach ensures that while policies are being developed with a deep understanding of local contexts, there is also a parallel effort to enhance the capabilities of local institutions to implement these policies effectively. This method aligns with the decentralisation approach emphasised by the PNG National Disaster Management Act,¹² which prioritises local and provincial government responses before national intervention. Investments should focus on local capacity building at the community and local government levels, including institutions like churches, rural-based community organisations, or clan associations, which respond and support communities when situations arise. Supporting local capacities, particularly in terms of disaster risk management, allows communities to identify and account for climate change impacts.

5. Technical Capability and Culturally Grounded Learning Approaches

Stakeholders identified a **significant gap in the technical capacity and local terminologies** at the national level needed to effectively address the intersection between gender and climate change. Several studies have highlighted the importance of culturally relevant approaches and the incorporation of local knowledge and terminologies to improve the effectiveness of climate change frameworks in the Pacific.¹³

¹² Disaster Management Act 1984.

¹³ [Gender Equality the Pacific Way | Mercy Masta & Elisabeth Jackson](#)

On local pedagogies, an NGO representative from Tonga emphasised the importance of language and culture, noting that sessions would be more effective if conducted in Tongan, blending modern and traditional educational practices. She mentioned that government-led training on mainstreaming gender into climate change has been too technical, leaving participants feeling unconfident and ill-equipped to run their own sessions. Effective pedagogy suggests using culturally recognised methods like *talanoa* or *tokstori* (storytelling) and approaching the *tanoa* (kava bowl) for engaging discussions. Additionally, employing local terminologies such as *hausman* (men's house), *hausmeri* (women's house), and *toktok* (dialogue) in PNG can foster community participation aligned with Pacific values of respect and cooperation. Research indicates that Western concepts and terminology like gender and feminism can be alienating and provoking *resistance*. Gender equality can be more effectively conveyed through culturally resonant approaches within Pacific communities.¹⁴

Fiji's *Vanua*-Centred Relocation

Fiji's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Planned Relocation Guidelines is the Fijian government's pioneering initiative which actively engages with the *vanua* (land/community/village) structure, underscoring the essential role of women and girls. Their participation ensures that their voices are not only heard but also acted upon, fostering a more inclusive decision-making process. It respects traditional structures, knowledge, and various cultural and faith values. In contrast to the often-hurried state-led relocations, the *vanua* (in Fijian or *fenua* in Tuvalu) approach prioritises a more deliberate and inclusive process. This method reflects a deeper consideration of community needs and cultural values, promoting sustainable and equitable adaptation strategies. Using a *vanua*-centred approach means considering conflict-sensitive, trauma-informed and community led approaches that aim to walk alongside the community to understand the broader relocation context and understand the policies and agendas that different stakeholders in a community may hold.

Although the SOP guidelines are heavily involved with communities, its implementation has not always been well-received. An article recently noted that while the guidelines make mention of the importance of indigenous knowledge and multicultural and faith values, as a form of 'policy speak', remaining questions such as how to translate principles and values into practice have proved to be challenging. The SOP and guidelines are also discussed in subsequent sections of this report.

National government climate policies could look to integrate trainings and awareness programmes conducted in local Pacific languages or pedagogy. A UN Framework Convention on Climate Change¹⁵ study suggests adapting training approaches and tools by engaging transdisciplinary experts from natural and social sciences, as well as indigenous knowledge holders.

Integrating custom and traditional knowledge with modern ideas, technology, and science is essential for creating sustainable solutions. For example, blending traditional agricultural practices with innovative farming techniques can enhance food security and climate adaptation. This balanced approach respects cultural heritage while leveraging scientific advancements to improve resilience. Additionally, it is crucial to focus on global south approaches and ensure that climate actions are community-driven and culturally

¹⁴ [Approaches to engaging men in support of women's leadership in the Pacific | WLI and La Trobe University](#)

¹⁵ [Best practices and available tools for the use of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices: Technical paper | UNFCCC](#)

There is an urgent need to **strengthen the capacity of climate professionals** to integrate gender considerations into climate policies and actions. As discussed above, most national government policies lack a clear guidance on how to mainstream gender considerations, which may stem from insufficient training and support within the climate and adaptation sectors. Upskilling all relevant stakeholders – including climate experts – is essential for developing strategies that are both gender-responsive and inclusive. Particular attention should also be paid to ensuring that women, who are often underrepresented in technical roles have equal access to these opportunities. This point is further discussed in the subsequent sections of this report.

6. Disconnect between National Policies and Local Realities

Despite the existence of national policies aimed at addressing coordination and prioritisation of climate change and gender issues, interviews revealed a frequent **disconnect with local realities**. This highlights the gap between national policies and their implementation at the local level, suggesting that these policies may not effectively address the actual needs and conditions on the ground.

Several key reasons were identified as contributing to the challenge of prioritising climate change within government agendas. One stakeholder from PNG highlighted that governments, especially in developing countries, are often preoccupied with a variety of pressing national priorities that take precedence over climate action. These can include law and justice issues, national elections, and economic sector reforms. Such priorities are often seen as more immediate or directly tied to national stability and development. As a result, climate change, despite its long-term implications, tends to be deprioritised in favour of more urgent or politically visible concerns. In many cases, these competing priorities attract more resources and attention, leaving climate change with limited funding and institutional focus.

Another factor contributing to the challenge is the issue of policy fatigue. As noted by a stakeholder, government officials in PNG, like those in many other countries, often report feeling overwhelmed by the abundance of global policies and international demands. The sheer volume of global climate agreements, international partner requirements, and donor-driven frameworks can be overwhelming, especially when these global agendas often come with their own sets of rules and timelines. Local governments may struggle to balance these external expectations with their own domestic realities, leading to ineffective implementation or a feeling of being disengaged from the process. This disconnect between the global policy landscape and local implementation can result in diluted efforts, where national and local priorities are not adequately aligned, and where the pressure to meet external expectations may undermine genuine, locally owned climate strategies.

Ultimately, government prioritisation and sustained commitment—backed by adequate budget allocations—are critical to driving meaningful and long-term progress on climate change and gender equity. While development partners, NGOs, and civil society organisations often play a vital role in initiating and supporting climate-related initiatives, their efforts alone cannot substitute for the systemic influence and authority that governments hold.

When governments do not place climate change high on the political or fiscal agenda, it signals to implementing agencies and the public that these issues are secondary—undermining urgency and momentum. This lack of prioritisation contributes to under-resourced departments, weak coordination across sectors, and limited accountability mechanisms, which in turn hinders the effective mainstreaming of gender and climate considerations across policies and programmes.

Nature-based Solutions from Sea Women of Melanesia and Mangoro Maket Meri

The Sea Women of Melanesia is a groundbreaking non-profit based in PNG, recognised as the region's first all-female marine conservation organisation. All of their directors are Indigenous Papua New Guinean women. The Sea Women's award-winning training programs are delivered in partnership with the Coral Sea Foundation, which provides technical expertise. This initiative empowers Indigenous women in Papua New Guinea by equipping them with the training, skills, tools, and resources needed to actively participate in the creation and management of marine protected areas in their communities' coral reefs. Through their efforts, local women are trained to monitor, protect, and conserve coral reefs, contributing directly to both marine biodiversity preservation and climate resilience.

Similarly, Mangoro Maket Meri (or Mangrove Market Women), is a unique initiative that links local efforts, ecotourism, and blue carbon strategies to create long-term, sustainable solutions for mangrove conservation while empowering women in PNG. The women leading this project are working to manage their mangroves and nearshore fisheries sustainably, tackling challenges such as overfishing and over-harvesting. A key innovation of their work is exploring the economic value of mangroves for storing blue carbon, highlighting their importance for both coastal protection and climate mitigation.

Both organisations emphasise the critical role women play in environmental stewardship, particularly in the context of nature-based solutions. They empower women to take charge of sustainable mangrove management and marine conservation, both of which are essential for enhancing coastal protection and promoting carbon sequestration. However, to fully realise their potential, these initiatives require increased support and resources to address the dual challenges of climate change and gender inequality.

Effectively addressing climate change in PNG or the Pacific demands a coordinated approach that combines technical expertise with community-driven action. Supporting women-led organisations like the Sea Women of Melanesia or Mangoro Maket Meri, while integrating traditional knowledge with scientific practices, offers a resilient, inclusive strategy for tackling climate change. By building local capacity and ensuring strong coordination among stakeholders, Pacific can better navigate climate challenges and pave the way for a sustainable future. This holistic approach not only enhances climate resilience but also fosters social equity, empowering communities to shape their environmental future.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Strengthening monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems for gender-responsive actions is essential for ensuring that commitments translate into measurable outcomes. In the national policies reviewed for this desk study, there were links to M&E mechanisms, but these were often general or lacked gender-specific indicators. Robust and well-designed M&E frameworks enable policymakers to systematically track progress, evaluate the impact of interventions, and make evidence-based adjustments where necessary. By integrating clear gender indicators and disaggregated data into these systems, governments can identify where gaps exist—such as in participation, resource allocation, or differential impacts—and respond with targeted strategies. This approach supports greater accountability and transparency, making it easier to determine whether policies are genuinely benefiting women, men, and marginalised groups. Moreover, this iterative cycle of planning, monitoring, learning, and adapting allows policies to remain relevant and responsive to the changing social and environmental dynamics in the Pacific region. In this way, M&E is not simply a technical tool, but a key driver for inclusive and effective climate governance.

Regional Intergovernmental Bodies and Frameworks

The study identified three intergovernmental bodies that are essential in advocating for and integrating gender considerations into climate change policies and programmes in the Pacific region. Additionally, seven flagship regional frameworks developed by these agencies were identified, which guide and promote gender-responsive climate action. These frameworks aim to ensure that climate policies and initiatives are inclusive and equitable, addressing the unique needs and contributions of women and marginalised groups.

1. The **Pacific Community (SPC)**, which was established in 1947 as a regional development agency that provides technical and scientific support to Pacific Islands countries and territories, works on various development issues, including gender equality and climate change. Its main functions are to provide technical assistance, research and data collection, capacity building, regional coordination, and policy development. The following are the key frameworks and tools developed by SPC.

- The **Pacific Gender and Climate Change Toolkit for Practitioners**¹⁶ provides practical tools for integrating gender perspectives into climate change initiatives, ensuring equal benefits for all genders. It also provides guidance on integrating gender perspectives into all aspects of policymaking, programme design, implementation and evaluation. This toolkit was supported by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women, and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ). SPC collaborates with various multilateral and bilateral agencies on their Climate Change Projects,¹⁷ offering technical support to in-country offices through GEDSI technical assistance and training.
- The **Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility**¹⁸ integrates gender considerations by acknowledging the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and other vulnerable groups, highlighting their heightened risk of facing discriminatory practices, violence, social disadvantage, or economic hardships during conflicts, crises, or disasters.

2. The **Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)** serves as the administrative arm of the Pacific Island Forum, providing support and coordination for the region's political and economic initiatives. It also advocates for member countries' interests and supports high-level meetings to address key issues like climate change and regional security. In addition, PIFS provides technical assistance, promotes economic development, and works to ensure peace and stability in the Pacific region. The frameworks developed and forums coordinated by PIFS include:

- The **Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration**¹⁹ addresses the intersection of gender and climate change, recognising that women and girls are disproportionately impacted by climate events. It promotes women's economic empowerment and resilience as fundamental to development and climate adaptation efforts.
- The **2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent**²⁰ highlights the need to address gender inequalities for sustainable development, advocating for the inclusion of women and gender-diverse individuals in decision-making processes.

¹⁶ [Pacific Gender and Climate Change Toolkit for Practitioners | The Pacific Community](#)

¹⁷ [Climate Change Projects | The Pacific Community](#)

¹⁸ [Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility | The Pacific Community](#)

¹⁹ [Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration | PIFS](#)

²⁰ [2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent | PIFS](#)

- The **Boe Declaration on Regional Security**²¹ recognises climate change as a threat to human security, including gender considerations, and stresses the need for inclusive strategies.
 - **Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting**²² emphasises integrating gender perspectives into climate change policies by ensuring women's voices are considered in adaptation and mitigation strategies. It is a political dialogue that has the potential to advocate on the increased access to climate finance for women-led initiatives.
3. The **Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)** is an intergovernmental organisation dedicated to protecting and managing the environment and natural resources of the Pacific region. Its key functions include environmental governance, climate change resilience, biodiversity conservation, waste management and pollution control, and capacity building and technical assistance.
- **SPREP Gender Policy**²³ promotes gender equality in environmental management, conducting gender analysis, and advocating gender-responsive climate actions to enhance community resilience. It provides comprehensive guidance on gender mainstreaming processes.

Additionally, the **Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific**²⁴ was developed collaboratively by SPC, SPREP, PIFS, as well as UNDP, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, and University of South Pacific, as a strategic guidance document aimed at enhancing resilience to climate change and disasters in the Pacific region through an integrated approach that supports sustainable development. It also calls for gender-responsive approaches at all governance levels, emphasising inclusive gender analysis and human rights-based decision-making.

The Pacific region is increasingly forming a cohesive bloc to address the interconnected issues of climate change and gender equality. This is evident through regional cooperation such as the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) and the development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, which emphasises a strategic and long-term approach to regionalism, including climate change and disaster resilience.

This move also includes the Boe Declaration on Regional Security, which highlights climate change as the single greatest threat to the region. The PIF has also committed to gender equality and leadership, emphasising the importance of culturally rooted initiatives. The Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and the Meeting of Pacific Ministers for Women have set the agenda for gender equality in the region.

While efforts to integrate gender and climate change, such as the development of tools and frameworks by intergovernmental bodies, are underway, progress has been slow and needs significant strengthening. These initiatives must be more effectively implemented at the national level and eventually trickle down to local organisations. Ensuring that gender considerations are embedded in climate policies and actions across all levels is crucial for achieving equitable and sustainable outcomes. Enhanced collaboration, capacity building, and resource allocation are essential to accelerate this integration and ensure that the benefits reach the most vulnerable populations.

These regional intergovernmental agencies amplify women's voices by holding governments accountable to regional agreements that promote gender equality and ensure women's representation in regional forums, thus incorporating women's perspectives into actionable policies. The quality, scope, and

²¹ Boe Declaration on Regional Security | PIFS

²² Pacific Islands Forum Women Leaders Meeting | PIFS

²³ [South Pacific Regional Environment Programme Gender Policy | SPREP](#)

²⁴ Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific

effectiveness of these agencies are demonstrated by their ability to influence government policies and secure funding for gender-responsive climate policies and programmes in the region.

Key Regional Networks and Notable CSO-led Initiative

Women-led civil society networks are pivotal in driving grassroots advocacy and influencing policy changes at various levels. These networks bring together diverse voices and experiences, strengthening the overall impact of their advocacy efforts. The coordination and maturity of women-led grassroots organisations and movements in the Pacific region have significantly improved over the years. Although women's organisations in the region have been successful in networking, lobbying, and service delivery, they continue to operate on a small scale, have limited capacity, and lack core funding to sustain their activities.²⁵

These regional networks and alliances hold membership with CSOs in the countries involved in this study. These networks work at local, national, and regional levels to ensure that gender considerations are integrated into climate change policies and responses. Their efforts are crucial in creating inclusive and equitable environments that support sustainable development and resilience across the Pacific region.

- **Pacific Island Feminist Alliance for Climate Justice (PIFA4CJ)**²⁶ is a regional feminist movement that addresses the intersection of gender and climate justice. It empowers Pacific Island women to lead climate action, ensuring their voices are heard in decision-making processes. The alliance promotes community-led solutions and advocates for equitable climate policies. PIFA4CJ operates in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, PNG and Vanuatu, however, Shifting the Power Coalition (StPC) coordinates its regional framework from Suva, Fiji.
- **Pacific Islands Climate Advocacy Network (PICAN)**²⁷ is a coalition of CSOs advocating for climate justice and sustainable development in the Pacific. It amplifies Pacific voices in global climate discussions, supports community-led initiatives, and works to protect island ecosystems from the impacts of climate change. The network's central coordination is based in Suva, Fiji, which serves as the operational hub for PICAN's regional activities.
- **Shifting the Power Coalition (StPC)**²⁸ focuses on increasing women's leadership in disaster preparedness, response, and humanitarian action. It supports diverse Pacific women, including young women and women with disabilities, to influence policies and shape humanitarian responses at local, national, and regional levels. StPC's regional hub is located in Suva, Fiji, with the Coalition Secretariat based in Sydney, Australia.
- **Global Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) Pacific**²⁹ is part of the global network of 15 CSOs dedicated to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In the Pacific, GPPAC Pacific focuses on empowering local communities to lead peacebuilding efforts, promoting inclusive dialogue, and addressing the root causes of conflict. The regional network is based in Suva, Fiji, and coordinates the network's activities and serves as the focal point for peace building and prevention efforts in the Pacific region.

²⁵ [The Pacific | Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund](#)

²⁶ Pacific Island Feminist Alliance for Climate Justice | PIFA4CJ

²⁷ Pacific Islands Climate Action Network | PICAN

²⁸ Shifting the Power Coalition

²⁹ GPPAC | Prevention of Armed Conflict | Peacebuilding Network

Other key organisations include beyond those listed in the early section:

- femLINKPacific
- Women Mediators Network
- Women United Together
- Diverse Voices
- Action for Equality
- Transcend Oceania
- Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding
- Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation

The regional NGOs such as **Women's Weather Watch (WWW)**³⁰ is a regional initiative run by Fiji's femLINKpacific that empowers women to be first responders in disaster preparedness and response. It provides real-time weather updates and disaster information, ensuring that women's needs and perspectives are included in disaster management plans.

The **Gender Transformative Climate Change Action in the Pacific launched in 2014** is an initiative, led by Plan International Australia and the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney, in partnership with femLINKPacific and Diverse Voices and Action (DIVA) for Equality in Fiji. It focuses on gender-transformative approaches to climate change. It emphasises adaptive programming that considers local contexts and engages stakeholders at all levels and challenges cultural norms and practices around gender, promoting the rights of diverse sexual and gender minorities in climate action. The initiative has been implemented in countries like Fiji and the Solomon Islands, highlighting the importance of women's rights and the inclusion of diverse sexual and gender identities. The tools developed in 2018 continue to be used today.

³⁰ Women's Weather Watch | femLinkPacific

The Role of Regional Advocacy Networks in Climate Justice

Regional advocacy networks play a critical bridging role in connecting local initiatives with global policy processes by facilitating communication, collaboration, and the exchange of knowledge grassroots organisations and international policymakers. By facilitating communication, collaboration, and the exchange of knowledge between grassroots organisations and international decision-makers, these networks help to ensure that local perspectives are not only heard but also meaningfully reflected in global climate agendas. They serve as platforms that amplify local voices, elevate Indigenous and community-based knowledge, and advocate for climate solutions that are rooted in the lived experiences of those on the frontlines of climate impacts.

The Feminist Action For Climate Justice (PIFA4CJ), supports grassroots feminist organisations across the Pacific by helping them establish community-led planning mechanisms for responding to climate emergencies. It also plays a vital role in building the capacity of local actors to engage in climate advocacy, policy design, and resilience building. Beyond the regional level, PIFA4CJ has actively participated in international climate forums, including the UNFCCC process, where it **advocated for the establishment of a Loss and Damage Fund**. Through such efforts, it ensures that the specific concerns, priorities, and leadership of Pacific Island women are not side-lined, but instead shape global climate justice discourse.

Similarly, through the support of Shifting the Power Coalition (StPC), women-led initiatives like the Women-Led Early Warning & Resilience Systems have **strengthened the ability of local communities to access timely and actionable climate information**. These systems enable faster and more inclusive responses during climate crises by ensuring that early warning alerts are accessible to all, including women, persons with disabilities, and other marginalised groups who are often overlooked in traditional emergency response planning.

Together, these regional networks play a transformative role in climate advocacy by linking the grassroots to the global. They translate local knowledge into policy influence, build solidarity across borders, and help shape climate strategies that are equitable, inclusive, and rooted in justice. By reinforcing the leadership of women and marginalised groups in climate

Notable Pacific Women Leaders

There are also emerging women figures in climate negotiations, activism and advocacy from the Pacific, such as Ms. Luisa Tuiafitu and Ms. Ana Malia Falemaka from Tonga who is a youth activist. . The table below outlines the specific areas of climate change advocacy, activism and negotiation along with the areas of expertise of these emerging women leaders from the Pacific region. While stakeholders in this study named these women, it does not encompass other women within local communities and women-led organisations who are advocating for gender considerations in climate action. These leaders have play crucial roles in shaping climate policies that prioritise gender equality and advocate for the unique needs and contributions of women in the Pacific region.

Name	Country	Areas of Focus	Expertise
Ms. Luisa Tuiafitu Malolo	Tonga	Climate policy development, gender-responsive climate action, national climate change strategy	Climate policy, gender integration, environmental governance
Ms. Ana Malia Falemaka	Tonga	Youth climate activism, gender equality in climate action, community engagement	Youth empowerment, gender advocacy, community mobilisation
Alisi Rabukawaqa Nacewa	Fiji	Ocean conservation, indigenous rights, climate activism	Marine conservation, indigenous knowledge, environmental justice
Charlene Erasito	Fiji	Marine science, deep-sea exploration, ocean conservation	Marine biology, deep-sea research, environmental education
Naomi Longa	Papua New Guinea	Coral reef conservation, community-based marine management, women's empowerment in conservation	Marine ecology, community-based conservation, women's leadership
Debra Sungi	Papua New Guinea	Climate change policy, development planning, adaptation strategies	Climate policy, development planning, adaptation strategies
Vinzealhar Ainjo Nen	Papua New Guinea	Youth climate action, ocean conservation, community mobilisation	Youth engagement, ocean conservation, environmental advocacy
Ms. Akka Rimon	Kiribati	Climate-induced displacement, labour migration as adaptation strategy, Pacific regional security	Climate adaptation, migration studies, Pacific regional security
Cynthia Houniuhi	Solomon Islands	Climate justice, human rights, youth-led climate advocacy, international climate litigation	Climate justice, human rights, youth leadership, international law
Belyndar Maunia Rikimani	Solomon Islands	Climate justice, youth activism, legal	Climate law, youth activism, legal advocacy

		advocacy for climate action	
Suluafi Brianna Fruean	Samoa	Youth climate activism, sustainable development, Pacific youth engagement	Youth leadership, sustainable development, environmental advocacy
Flora Vano	Vanuatu	Women-lead disaster preparedness, inclusive humanitarian response and climate negotiation	Women/women with disability empowerment, disaster risk management, climate adaptation

Key demands raised by civil society operating within the climate/gender nexus space

The following section explores the key advocacy needs of women-led CSOs and regional networks identified, drawing on insights from interviews with representatives of two CSOs, two regional agencies, and an academic who collaborates closely with civil society groups.

1. Underrepresentation of Women in Climate Action and Decision-making

All interviewees in this study indicated that women are still underrepresented in decision-making and leadership roles both nationally and regionally where crucial climate action decisions are made. This is not only a concern for the Pacific but also a global issue.³¹ Studies on women's leadership worldwide in environmental management and climate change action demonstrate that, while women are forming powerful networks to combat environmental degradation and climate-related inequalities, significant gaps in leadership persist, especially in countries that are vulnerable to climate change and where gender-differentiated impacts are most acute. Several reasons for the limited representation of Pacific women at the national and regional level were linked to culture and patriarchy. However, it was also noted by stakeholders that culture could also be leveraged to address this concern.

Firstly, the limited representation of women in leadership or decision-making roles was attributed to the neglect of traditional hierarchical structures that exist in the Pacific. A Fijian climate change academic expert expressed concern that overlooking the traditional structures and hierarchies of Fijian or Pacific culture restricts women's participation. She argued that there is a need to work within the current system, recognising the different hierarchies and power structures. Women have a space and voice within many of these structures, and the failure to integrate this into policies is the cause of conflict, resulting in the limited representation of women.

Understanding and working with these traditional hierarchies is crucial for inclusive and careful research or programming. As noted above, women hold significant roles within traditional hierarchies, such as being custodians of knowledge and can play a role in managing natural resources and leading conversation efforts within their communities. Understanding this role, framing conversations with men and women and their

³¹ Behind the Scenes: The Strong Voice of Pacific Women in Climate Negotiations – Debating Development Research | [Women's Leadership in environmental action | OECD](#)

responsibilities around these specific roles is essential for creating inclusive and effective policies that leverage the strengths and knowledge of all community members. Recent study reinforced this perspective by emphasising the importance of understanding and addressing gender equality from Pacific viewpoints, advocating for the leveraging of cultural values and structures to tackle women's underrepresentation in leadership roles.³²

Pacific Women as Guardians of knowledge

A notable initiative that embodies this principle is the [Women's Weather Watch \(WWW\)](#), which leverages the unique knowledge and leadership of women in Pacific communities, amplifying their roles as **guardians of traditional wisdom** and **first responders during disasters**. Rooted in community-based action, the WWW provides **real-time weather updates and preparedness information** to a network of rural women leaders through accessible platforms **such as SMS alerts, Viber groups, and a dedicated Facebook page**. This enables women across remote areas to receive timely and accurate information on approaching storms, cyclones, floods, and other weather-related hazards—ultimately helping entire communities stay informed, safe, and better prepared.

The WWW initiative highlights the transformative power of women-led, community-driven solutions to climate change and disaster preparedness. It not only strengthens the capacity of women as communicators and protectors during crises but also recognises them as key actors in resilience building. By centring the knowledge and leadership of women, the initiative contributes to more responsive and inclusive disaster management systems that reflect the lived realities of those most affected.

A Fijian climate change academic noted that Pacific people often underestimate the depth of their own knowledge systems, influenced by dominant narratives that privilege external expertise. However, Indigenous traditional knowledge, particularly held and passed down by women, is a rich and underutilised resource in climate action. Women are often the custodians of ecological knowledge, caregiving practices, and community cohesion, making their participation essential in climate resilience strategies.

The WWW exemplifies how reclaiming and valuing traditional knowledge, combined with modern communication tools, can empower women, enhance preparedness, and promote climate justice. It serves as a model for how to integrate local wisdom into broader adaptation efforts, reinforcing that women are not only vulnerable to climate impacts—they are also key agents of change. The initiative is discussed further in subsequent sections of this report.

Secondly, failure to integrate cultural aspects into gender related activities can lead to conflict. A representative from a Fijian-based multilateral agency observed that male-dominated governments often prefer to define gender and diversity based on their cultural, social and religious contexts, rather than having these definitions decided by 'outsiders'.³³ He noted that

³² [Gender Equality the Pacific Way | Lowy Institute](#)

³³ Referring to foreign or international development and donor agencies

consulting with governments on gender integration often faced reluctance due to the taboo and sensitivity surrounding gender and sexuality.

He argues for a context-specific and culturally grounded approach that allows each government to decide what is appropriate for their specific cultural and social contexts. However, this can lead to inconsistencies and a lack of standardised policies across the region. Allowing independent definitions risks gender and diversity issues being unevenly addressed, potentially neglecting marginalised groups. This preference, rooted in patriarchal structures, can hinder the development of unified and effective gender policies.

The emphasis on inclusive policies and cultural integration underscores the need for a holistic approach to policymaking, recognising the cultural contexts and needs of men and women. A Tongan-based NGO representative supported this, noting that failure to integrate cultural aspects can lead to conflict and limited representation of women and marginalised groups. Including men in gender workshops is a positive step, but a change in mentality is also necessary.

2. Centering Indigenous Knowledge and Community Voices

A dominant perspective that emerged from the interviews was the urgent need to rethink the prevailing paradigm in climate and gender – one that currently tends to prioritise Western scientific frameworks over **indigenous knowledge systems and lived community experiences**.

A representative from a civil society organisation (CSO) in Tonga emphasised this disconnect, stating, *“Current approaches are often too technical and disconnected from communities. Valuing community-generated knowledge offers an opportunity to shift focus.”* This sentiment reflects a broader critique that the methods commonly used to engage communities—such as consultations or needs assessments—are frequently rushed, extractive, and surface-level. They often fail to embrace vanua-centred approaches, which are rooted in relationships between people, land, culture, and spiritual values, and central to community identity and decision-making in the Pacific. The representative further argued for a shift in how resilience is conceptualised and operationalised. *“We should advocate for community resilience, ensuring interventions and knowledge are community-driven and based on data produced in consultation with the people,”* she said. This reflects a call to decolonise data collection and policy design, moving away from imposed solutions toward approaches that are co-created with communities, reflecting their priorities, worldviews, and systems of accountability.

Reorienting policy to value Indigenous knowledge and community-led data empowers local voices and leads to more effective, inclusive, and sustainable outcomes. It challenges traditional hierarchies of expertise and affirms that those closest to the challenges often hold the most relevant solutions.

3. Fostering stronger ties with Local Women’s Organisations

CSOs have deep-rooted connections within their communities and their nuanced understanding of local contexts, cultures, and vulnerabilities. Ensuring their active participation in decision-making processes helps tailor adaptation strategies to the specific needs of the community. For example, Vanuatu Community-based Climate Resilience Project (VCCRP)³⁴ has pioneered community-based adaptation projects that places women at the centre of planning and implementation. By recognising women as key stakeholders—rather than just beneficiaries—

³⁴ [VCCRP | Green Climate Fund](#)

these projects not only empower women with leadership roles and decision-making power, but also challenge traditional gender norms that can limit women's participation in climate governance. The success of VCCRP illustrates how local knowledge, inclusive leadership, and gender-responsive approaches can dramatically improve the effectiveness and longevity of climate interventions. These community-led models demonstrate that when adaptation is rooted in local realities and shaped by those most affected, it leads to outcomes that are more equitable, culturally aligned, and resilient to future climate shocks.

4. Peer-to-Peer Learning

Two NGO representatives emphasised the need to prioritise peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing among countries in the Pacific region. They recommend that national and regional governments consider this approach. By doing so, it would enable the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and innovative solutions, fostering solidarity and mutual support. This would enhance regional cooperation and bolster collective climate reliance. One representative NGO representative noted that Solomon Islands are keen to learn from Fiji CSO's management of climate mobility. There is a growing sentiment among those interviewed to move away from accessing global best practices which appeared less applicable to the Pacific context. This perspective was echoed by other NGOs and regional organisations.

Emphasising peer-to-peer learning presents significant opportunities for the Pacific region. Enhanced regional cooperation is a primary benefit, building stronger networks that support collaborative climate efforts. This cooperation can lead to cohesive and effective regional policies and initiatives, fostering a united front against climate challenges. Another critical opportunity lies in the contextual relevance of shared knowledge. Learning from neighbouring countries ensures that practices and strategies are more relevant and applicable to the local context, leading to more effective climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. Capacity building is also a key benefit, enhancing the capacity of local organisations and governments with practical insights and strategies successfully implemented in similar environments. This empowers local actors to take proactive roles in climate action, strengthening community resilience.

5. Climate Finance - Access to finance

Stakeholders stressed the importance of capacity building to improve access to climate finance. A representative from a multilateral agency in PNG emphasised the need for training and technical support to empower women negotiators at COP meetings.

"Climate financing opportunities are limited for women's organisations working on climate change. Some programs have deprioritized climate financing. Therefore, there is a need for more women negotiating for climate financing at COP meetings," said a representative from a multilateral agency in PNG.

Similarly, an NGO representative in Tonga said;

"We need to focus advocacy on technical support and capacity strengthening for accessing finance and Green Climate Fund accreditation. Providing technical support and capacity building for women to negotiate [for climate financing] at COP with confidence" said a representative from a Tongan NGO.

While stakeholders recognise that climate financing opportunities for women are limited, with some programmes deprioritising this funding, they are also advocating for more skilled women negotiators at COP meetings and focusing on technical support and capacity building.

Equipping women leaders with scientific climate language, complemented by social sciences, can significantly benefit the region. By doing so, it increases the likelihood of securing climate finance, as donors are more likely to support initiatives that demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of climate issues. Empowering women in this way can lead to more inclusive and effective climate policies, ultimately bringing more funding and resources to the region.

Beyond climate financing, women involved in local organisations expressed that their limited technical knowledge of bidding processes prevents them from competing effectively with international NGOs, which often succeed in securing funds. As one representative from a Tongan NGO explained, “We feel restricted because applying for project funding from donors can be highly technical, with complex processes that’s hard to grasp, and so large international NGOs receive the funding, while we, the ones doing the grassroots work, are left out.”

This highlights the need to support women-led local organisations by simplifying bidding procedures and building their capacity to navigate technical requirements. It also points to the importance of establishing dedicated funding streams for local organisations, so they are not forced to compete with larger, better-resourced institutions.

The findings also highlight the misalignment between nature-based solutions, which are often led by women, and current climate finance goals, suggesting advocacy should focus on integrating these solutions into green climate funding.

Internal limitations and lack of coordination in funding criteria also make it difficult for large donor agencies and smaller CSOs, particularly women-led groups, to access climate finance. Advocacy should demand enhanced technical support, capacity building, and better coordination to ensure these networks can effectively participate in and benefit from climate action.

“Funding from COP does not always trickle down effectively due to internal limitations with Green Climate Financing or Climate Financing. Big donor agencies struggle to tap into these opportunities, making it even more challenging for smaller CSOs and women’s groups. Misalignment and lack of coordination in funding criteria further complicate access for CSOs.”
(Representative from a PNG-based multilateral agency)

Tonga After Cyclone Gita: Lessons from Tonga's Climate Response

Tonga was severely impacted by Tropical Cyclone Gita, the most intense cyclone ever recorded in the country. The cyclone caused widespread destruction, affecting approximately 80,000 people and damaging infrastructure and homes. In response to this disaster, local organisations like **MORDI Tonga Trust** stepped up to support communities both in immediate disaster relief and long-term climate change adaptation.

MORDI Tonga Trust, along with other local organisations, provided crucial support to 122 communities. They focused on agricultural support, training farmers on climate-resilient crops and women on floriculture to help expand their livelihood opportunities. This immediate action was necessary as waiting for government and donor funding was not an option.

One of the key factors that facilitated an effective response, and long-term planning was the **pre-existing 'community development plans'**. The Tongan government had already worked with communities to develop these plans through inclusive consultations. These plans identified the specific needs of each community, ensuring that interventions were targeted and effective.

MORDI Tonga Trust had a critical rule for community support: communities needed to organise themselves and ensure **50 per cent representation of men and women before any meeting** could be held. This rule also required the inclusion of young people and people with disabilities. This approach not only ensured fair representation but also taught communities the importance of inclusive planning.

Incorporating conflict sensitivity into these efforts is crucial. Ensuring that interventions do not exacerbate existing tensions or create new conflicts is essential for maintaining social cohesion and stability. This involves understanding the local context, identifying potential sources of conflict, and designing programmes that promote peace and inclusive planning.

MORDI Tonga Trust recommends that donors, including the UK and other international agencies, work through existing community development plans and adopt a bottom-up planning approach. This ensures that community knowledge and ways of life are respected and integrated into climate resilience efforts. By leveraging these plans, donors can provide more effective and culturally appropriate support.

Tonga's experience with Cyclone Gita highlights the importance of inclusive and community-driven planning in addressing climate change and disaster resilience. The proactive efforts of local organisations like MORDI Tonga Trust, combined with the government's inclusive community development plans, have created a strong foundation for building climate resilience. Supporting women and ensuring fair representation in planning processes are crucial steps towards achieving sustainable and equitable climate action in Tonga.

6. Technical Barriers to Gender and Climate integration

Understanding the intersectionality of gender and climate change continues to be a significant challenge across the Pacific region. This complexity stems not only from the conceptual nature of “intersectionality” itself but also from **the technical language and scientific framing** that dominate climate discourse. Representatives from multilateral agencies and NGOs observed that these technicalities and abstract terminologies often alienate civil society organisations (CSOs) and grassroots communities. As a result, many CSOs find it difficult to engage meaningfully with climate policy processes, particularly when their core focus areas—such as gender-based violence, disability rights, and community development—are framed as separate from climate-related work.

This concern highlights the need for integrated approaches that bridges the gap between technical climate science and social issues. Capacity-building initiatives could help CSOs, NGOs and government officials understand the intersectionality of gender and climate change through training using appropriate and relatable terminologies and methodologies. Enhancing the technical understanding in the region is crucial.

7. Weak Disaggregated Data Systems

CSOs interviewed also discussed the lack of data management, collection, and sharing among national and regional stakeholders as challenge to progress effective implementation and monitoring of national policies. Despite the presence of national government and regional intergovernmental policies aimed at addressing this gap (refer to discussion on national policies in preceding sections of this report), this issue persists, raising concerns about how to plan and develop programmes and policies effectively when there is a lack of data. Furthermore, this issue impedes the development of effective policies, as donors are hesitant to fund projects or programmes without solid evidence.

A Fiji-based multilateral agency representative noted that most Pacific governments, due to other priorities, do not allocate budgets for research and data collection that considers gender, disability, and children. This lack of focus results in insufficient and unreliable data, making donors hesitant to support these countries due to a lack of trust in the data concerning vulnerable populations. Consequently, the specific needs of these groups are often overlooked, leading to ineffective policies and programmes. Addressing this issue requires prioritising and investing in comprehensive data collection to build donor trust and ensure targeted support.

A Tongan NGO representative, highlighted the challenges of data sharing: “Sharing of data is crucial, yet it seems like everyone is keeping data close to their chest and not sharing it. Our biggest partner is the government, but we struggle to work hand in hand with them when they do not share data.” This supports the earlier point about national policies, where many have included data management as a key component of the policies. However, NGOs often highlight the government’s reluctance to share data. A recent report on data governance in Asia and the Pacific notes that sharing, integrating, or accessing data can be challenging for many small islands states due to the systematic, technical, and legal skills and mechanisms required, including human

capacity. This poses a significant challenge for small island states that lack the necessary human capacity, infrastructure, and financial resources to invest in data management.³⁵

Without reliable and accessible data, policy development in the Pacific becomes speculative and disconnected from reality on the ground, making it harder to address complex issues like climate change and gender equality effectively. Enhancing data management through data sharing agreements can improve interoperability and sharing by fostering greater collaboration among national governments, regional intergovernmental agencies, and donor organisations. Supporting initiatives such as the Pacific Data Hub,³⁶ managed by the SPC, or the Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium,³⁷ which focus on centralised data repositories and coordinated collaboration among regional stakeholders, presents an opportunity for the UK government to contribute.

³⁵ [Data governance: Practices in the Asia and the Pacific | ESCAP](#)

³⁶ [Pacific Data Hub](#)

³⁷ [Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium | University of Victoria](#)

International Development Partner Programmes

The following is a snapshot of climate and gender programming by key international and bilateral partners in the Pacific. These programmes address the intertwined challenges of climate change and gender inequality, focusing on sustainable development and resilience. Each partner aims to create an enabling environment for women to contribute meaningfully to climate change efforts, benefiting them in the long run. They provide opportunities for women to actively participate in decision-making processes at all levels, building resilience to climate change and disaster impacts.

Key International Partners in the Nexus Programming in the Pacific

International Partner	Nexus Programming
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	<p>ADB's Strategy 2030 prioritises accelerating progress in gender equality and tackling climate change. Key activities in 14 Pacific countries include integrating gender equality in climate policies, expanding green job opportunities for women, enhancing access to climate-smart technologies, and encouraging women's participation in community-led solutions.</p> <p>In Fiji, ADB empowers women to lead climate resilience efforts and participate in decision-making processes. Women in Fiji, Vanuatu, and Solomon Islands are trained in disaster preparedness and response.</p> <p>Funding: Part of ADB's broader commitment, with significant resources allocated to gender and climate resilience projects in the Pacific.</p> <p>Duration: Ongoing, with projects extending towards 2030.</p>

Climate Investment Funds (CIF)	<p>The Climate Investment Funds (CIF) investments in several projects in the Pacific aimed at addressing climate change and promoting gender equality. These include -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fiji: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Project: Strengthening the Adaptive Capacity of Coastal Communities through Nature-Based Seawalls. ◦ Investment: \$5.7 million. ◦ Duration: 2024-2029 ◦ Gender Focus: Enhances women's roles in community-based adaptation strategies 3. Vanuatu: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Project: Enhancing Adaptation and Community Resilience by Improving Water Security. ◦ Investment: \$28.3 million. ◦ Duration: 2023-2028 ◦ Gender Focus: Ensures women's access to clean water and involvement in water management. 4. Nauru: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Project: Resilient Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture. ◦ Investment: \$7.9 million. ◦ Duration: 2024-2026 ◦ Gender Focus: Supports women's roles in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. 5. Papua New Guinea: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Project: Adaptation of Small-Scale Agriculture for Improved Food Security. ◦ Investment: \$10 million. ◦ Duration: 2023-2027 ◦ Gender Focus: Empowers women in agriculture and enhances food security.
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International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	<p>The IOM has a flagship programme in the Pacific called the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCMHS) Phase II programme. This initiative addresses the intricate relationship between climate change, migration, and human security in the region. The Programme addresses gender and climate change through several targeted activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme ensures that women's voices are heard, and their roles are strengthened in climate adaptation and resilience strategies • Increasing knowledge and skills of women to actively participate in climate mobility planning and decision-making processes. • Engaging women in community consultations to understand their specific challenges and needs in the context of climate change. • Creating policies to manage climate mobility at regional and sub-regional levels, with a focus on gender-sensitive approaches. • Assisting Pacific governments in developing and implementing national policies that address climate mobility and include gender considerations. • Collecting data to support policy-making, ensuring gender-disaggregated data is available to highlight the impacts of climate change on women <p>Countries Project Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiji • Tuvalu • Kiribati • Marshall Islands • Vanuatu • Solomon Islands <p>Funding: Approximately \$5 million, funding from the Australian and New Zealand Governments</p> <p>Duration: 2023-2025</p>
United Nations Development Programme	<p>The UNDP Gender Seal Programme in the Pacific region is designed to embed gender equality into all aspects of UNDP's work. It focuses on promoting inclusive and equitable climate action and empowering women in various sectors.</p> <p>The programme emphasises promoting inclusive and equitable climate action by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring women's participation in climate adaptation and resilience strategies. 2. Supporting the development of gender-sensitive policies to address climate change. 3. Engaging women in community consultations to understand their specific challenges and needs in the context of climate change. <p>Countries Project Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiji • Solomon Islands • Vanuatu • Tonga • Nauru • Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) <p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme is supported by various donors and partners, with a budget of approximately \$5 million <p>Duration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gender Seal Programme is an ongoing initiative, with the latest phase running from 2023 to 2025

UN Women	<p>The UN Women's Women's Resilience to Disasters Programme in the Pacific aims to strengthen the resilience of women and girls to disasters and threats, contributing to sustainable, secure, and thriving communities. The programme provides training, involves women in local decision-making, advocates for gender-responsive policies, and collaborates with various stakeholders to implement its initiatives.</p> <p>Programme Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening Resilience: Ensuring that the lives and livelihoods of women and girls are resilient to disasters and threats. 2. Gender-Responsive Frameworks: Developing prevention, preparedness, and recovery policy frameworks, systems, processes, and tools that are gender-responsive 3. Empowering Women: Enhancing the leadership, advocacy, and participation of women's organisations in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation 4. Capacity Development: Increasing access to knowledge, guidance, and expertise on gender-responsive disaster resilience <p>Countries Project Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiji • Kiribati • Vanuatu • Solomon Islands <p>Funding: Approximately A\$13.5 million Duration: 2022-2025</p> <p>The programme is part of Australia's Pacific Women Lead initiative and is aligned with UN Women's Strategic Plan 2022-2025.</p>
World Bank	<p>The Pacific Women in Power (PWIP) Programme by the World Bank aims to transform the Pacific energy sector by boosting women's roles in engineering, science, and leadership. Here are the key details:</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encouraging more women to enter the energy field, particularly in engineering and technical roles. 2. Providing training and mentorship to women aspiring to leadership positions in the energy sector. 3. Challenging norms and fostering advocacy for gender equality in the energy workforce. 4. Enhancing capacity building and knowledge management across different groups in the sector. <p>Countries Project Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiji • Vanuatu • Samoa • Tonga • Solomon Islands • Papua New Guinea <p>Funding: Approximately \$5 million Duration: 2023-2028</p> <p>The programme is implemented in collaboration with the Pacific Power Association and the Pacific Community, aiming to bolster women's employment and economic empowerment in the energy sector</p>

Flagship Initiatives of Bilateral Partners Working in the Pacific

Bilateral Partner	Flagship Initiatives
Australia	<p>Australia focuses on integrating gender considerations into its climate policies and projects, supporting women's leadership in climate action.</p> <p>The Outcomes Nexus resource provides guidance for Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade officers and development partners to create programmes that address both gender equality and climate change, while also supporting the participation of people with disabilities. It emphasises the importance of understanding the intersection of gender equality and climate change across various sectors, such as agriculture, education, energy, health, and water resource management.</p> <p>Examples of projects funded by the Australian government include the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, which improves access to skills and markets by integrating gender, disability, and climate change resilience through its Better Balance Strategy. This strategy mainstreams climate change adaptation and mitigation across tourism, creative industries, and agribusiness.</p> <p>In Papua New Guinea, WaterAid, funded by DFAT, supports government collaboration with women's organisations and organisations of persons with disabilities. As a result, the Special Council of Women and the East Sepik Disabled Person's Association now have permanent roles on the District WASH Committee, advising on inclusive, climate-resilient WASH services and programmes. These initiatives highlight Australia's commitment to inclusive and equitable climate action, ensuring marginalised groups are actively involved in decision-making processes.</p> <p>Pacific Women Lead (PWL) is Australia's flagship regional gender equality investment in the 14 Pacific Island countries, with a commitment of AUD 170 million over five years (2021-2026). It integrates gender perspectives into climate change initiatives, recognising the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and marginalised groups. The PWL programme collaborates with a diverse range of partners, including regional organisations like the SPC, national governments, NGOs, community-based organisations, international donors, development partners, and academic institutions.</p>

<p>European Union (EU)</p>	<p>The EU's notable initiative is the EU-Pacific Green-Blue Alliance, which aims to enhance climate resilience and sustainable development in Pacific Island countries. This programme integrates gender considerations by promoting women's participation in environmental governance and climate action in line with the ambitions set by the new EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III). The GAP promotes gender equality, tackling the widespread problem of violence against women and children and creating an enabling environment for civil society.</p> <p>The EU Pacific Green-Blue Alliance support to Fiji, PNG, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and a regional programme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgetary support contracts for policy development and implementation in areas like energy, water, sanitation, ocean management, coastal management, and biodiversity • Capacity building and technical assistance are provided through dedicated country and multi-country programmes or regional technical facilities. • Large-scale projects support sectoral strategies, combining technical support with investments and community engagement, implemented by international organisations, civil society, or multi-donor platforms. • Blended finance investments through grants, guarantees, or technical assistance promote private/public partnerships and mobilise private investments in sustainable infrastructure and circular economic models. <p>Funding: €200 million Duration: Ongoing, with projects extending towards 2050</p>
<p>France</p>	<p>France promotes gender equality in climate action through its international climate finance programmes and partnerships. Its flagship policy in the Pacific, the Gender Transformative Climate Change Action in the Pacific framework, supported by Plan International Australia, integrates gender perspectives into climate change adaptation and mitigation. It aims to empower women and marginalised groups by ensuring their active participation in climate decision-making processes.</p> <p>The French Development Agency (AFD) manages a multi-donor initiative (US\$6 million, 2020-2030) focusing on nature-based solutions to enhance climate resilience in the Pacific region.</p> <p>The Kiwa Initiative includes programmes addressing gender equity and climate change through its GEDSI and Human Rights frameworks. Project countries include Fiji, Solomon Islands, Niue, Vanuatu, PNG, and Tonga. In Fiji and Vanuatu, the initiative includes training programmes for women in mangrove restoration and sustainable management, and nature-based seawalls involving women and marginalised groups in construction and maintenance. In Niue, it empowers youth and vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, to participate in climate resilience activities.</p>
<p>Japan</p>	<p>Japan's Accelerating Action for Gender Equality and Conservation in the Pacific flagship initiative focuses on empowering women in biodiversity conservation and environmental management. This programme, led by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, highlights the critical role of women in protecting ecosystems and addressing climate change impacts in the Pacific region. It was announced at the Tenth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting in 2024 and is aligned with the Pacific Islands Forum's 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and works in 14 Pacific Island Countries.</p>

Key Recommendations

The following are key recommendations for the UK government aimed at creating more effective and inclusive policies at the intersection of gender and climate change, empowering communities, and leading to more holistic and impactful interventions.

Principles for Effective and Inclusive Policies

Community-led engagement:

- Prioritising community-led engagement ensures women's and gender-diverse individuals' voices are heard in climate change policy decisions. The UK government must work with local organisations and leaders to build relationships and facilitate community involvement. Meetings and events should be accessible to all, considering location, timing, and language barriers, and multiple channels for ongoing community input and feedback should be created.
- The UK government should collaborate with local and traditional structures to amplify women's voices, working alongside these structures rather than opposing them. By rethinking policymaking approaches to be inclusive and respectful of existing social dynamics, the UK can foster more effective climate change interventions. Strengthening partnerships with local women's organisations nationally will ensure effective implementation and monitoring of gender-responsive policies.
- Collaborating with Pacific Island governments and implementing partners to leverage women's organisations' expertise in developing programmes or delivering services to women facing climate/gender barriers is crucial. Additionally, partnering with and funding women-led organisations will build their capacity to advocate on climate/gender concerns.

Invest in strengthening local capacities:

Consider the prioritisation of investments in local capacity building at the community and local government levels, including institutions like churches, rural-based community organisations, and clan associations. By supporting local capacities, particularly in disaster risk management, communities can better identify and address climate change impacts.

The UK government can achieve this by advocating for and enabling communities to lead the policymaking process and enhancing capacity-building initiatives through a dual track approach, discussed in preceding sections of this report. These actions will empower communities and result in more comprehensive and effective climate change interventions. For this, funding or resources given by the UK government should ensure that resources allocated for training programmes are developed and designed specifically for women and to address the barriers highlighted by stakeholders' interviews in enabling more inclusive participation in decision-making by gender-diverse individuals focusing on leadership, technical skills, and advocacy. Consideration should also be given to mentorship programmes and support networks to provide ongoing guidance and encouragement at national and regional levels.

Women-led initiatives: The UK government should support regional advocacy networks that connect local initiatives with global policy processes, facilitating communication, collaboration, and knowledge exchange

between grassroots organisations and international policymakers. By amplifying local voices, these networks ensure that local challenges and solutions are presented in global forums. For example, PIFA4CJ supports grassroots feminist organisations in the Pacific Islands, establishes community planning mechanisms for climate emergencies, and builds capacity to respond to climate impacts. StPC supports women-led organisations like Women-led Early Warning & Resilience Systems, providing communities with timely climate information and early warning alerts. Supporting these networks will integrate local community needs and solutions into international decision-making. The UK government should fund and scale up women-led adaptation initiatives and nature-based solutions that leverage local knowledge and practices. Strengthening partnerships with local women's organisations will support women-led climate initiatives, as seen in the UK's funding for grassroots women's groups in the Pacific and provide training and resources to enhance women's leadership and technical skills in climate action.

Climate Finance Technical Capacity Building: The UK government should adopt integrated approaches that bridge technical climate science with social issues addressed by CSOs. This includes enhancing capacity-building initiatives to **Data management** (sharing, accessing, and integrating): The UK government should address data management challenges in the Pacific by enhancing data sharing and interoperability through collaboration among national governments, regional intergovernmental agencies, and donor organisations. Supporting initiatives like the Pacific Data Hub, managed by the SPC, and the Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium, which focus on centralised data repositories and coordinated collaboration, will ensure reliable and accessible data. This will enable more effective policy development to address complex issues like climate change and gender equality. In addition, improve data sharing among government and implementing partners, particularly gender-disaggregated information, to aid in planning and creating targeted interventions. The UK government should work with existing regional data hubs as discussed and foster collaboration between Pacific Island countries' government agencies and other multilateral and bilateral partners to facilitate seamless data sharing and utilise modern technology solutions to enhance data interoperability and accessibility nationally and regionally.

improve the technical understanding of CSOs, NGOs, and government officials. Training could also be conducted in local Pacific languages and incorporate traditional educational practices. Additionally, gender-sensitive training should be accessible and understandable, avoiding overly technical language. Engaging transdisciplinary experts from natural and social sciences, as well as relevant knowledge holders from indigenous peoples and local communities, will ensure the effectiveness of these training sessions. Furthermore, increase the number of technical experts who can analyse and articulate the gender–climate nexus, driving more effective policymaking and implementation.

Conduct thorough conflict analysis to identify potential sources of tension and address them proactively in climate interventions. Another key principle for achieving effectiveness and fostering inclusion is the consideration of working values: Consider how best to work with traditional structures to avoid tensions within communities and ensure inclusive, effective, and conflict-sensitive climate change interventions. Ensure that perspectives of traditional leaders or community elders, women and marginalised groups are included in decision-making bodies and processes. Additionally, integrate peacebuilding measures into climate projects to promote social cohesion and prevent conflict.

Conclusion

Climate change is expected to significantly impact Pacific Island communities, with women and men playing crucial roles in adaptation due to their unique skills and knowledge. However, social and economic inequalities, including gender disparities, can exacerbate these impacts and hinder adaptive capacities. Despite progress in closing gender gaps, women in the Pacific often remain underrepresented in governance and lack resources and equal opportunities in technical fields. This exclusion can lead to

overlooked perspectives and ineffective adaptation strategies, further entrenching vulnerabilities. Ensuring gender-responsive policies and inclusive decision-making can enhance sustainable adaptation and reduce gender inequalities.

The study underscores the interconnectedness of gender and climate issues in the Pacific. It highlights the critical need for focused interventions that support gender-sensitive climate responses through community-led approaches that value local institutions and indigenous knowledge and practices. By addressing the unique challenges faced by women and other marginalised groups, and leveraging regional and international partnerships, the UK government can play a pivotal role in promoting equitable and effective climate action in the Pacific. The hope is that the UK government and its partners will use this document as a guide to understand and work through the complexities and diversities of relationships, values, institutions, and issues of the Pacific.

