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Planned Relocations in the Context of Disasters & the Adverse Effects of Climate Change

**A Conversation with the United Nations Special Rapporteur
on the human rights of internally displaced persons**

Ms. Paula Gaviria Betancur Webinar | Friday 15th March, 2024 |

8am- Suva; 2100 (14th March)- Geneva

Responses of Pacificwin & Associated Members

Apologies for our absence at the Webinar, here are our considered contributions, socialised with our Pacific Associate Members, hence the delayed email. As much as possible, we have tried to be accurate about what we recorded, some licence taken with where we placed some of the comments. Thanks again IOM-Fiji for organising us in Pacific civil society.



Pacificwin and other partners above were also part of the Kioa-350 Pacific organised gathering at Koa in 2022 regarding the resulting document of “KIOA Pacific Climate Emergency Declaration” that we presented at COP27 in Egypt; and followed by the” KATO Pacific Community Climate Fund” that we presented at COP28 in Dubai. These are duly noted as civil society actions to the slow onset emergency that befalls our region.

Tankiu Tumas...PefiKingi

Key questions for discussion

1

What are some concrete examples of ongoing or already implemented planned relocation processes in the context of disasters and climate change in your country or your geographical area are of interest? What were the critical challenges and human rights impacts of these planned relocation processes?

Our initial Talanoa to get our dialogue started

Firstly, we acknowledge that our peoples' respective Pacific histories contain many narratives of our people being mobile – growing up, some of our first stories related by our great grandparents concerned our Pacific leaders navigating our Big Blue Oceans for summit meetings between our reigning Paramount Houses of Fiji, Tonga, Samoa and Hawai'i. Some of us are excited to see this recreated by our PACIFIC ELDERS FORUM, and some of us excited to note our climate migration champions in that group – such as the women like Dame Meg Taylor, and Prof Konai Helu Thaman.

Rationale for remembering our histories

The real purpose of the initial “warm-up talanoa” was to ease us into our dialogue; and that brought the cultural memories into play. We have many more stories than these pages can contain; but we can save that for another Fono.

Climate migrants are very clear about what happened to our people/ancestors in the past, and recently through the ill-monitored seasonal labour migration schemes, when they/we Pacific labour migrants were and are still treated as if we are second class citizens.

Our Pacific migration histories of woe

- Most of our migration stories remembered are also tales of woe. Many of our ancestors were human trafficked and the Niue in the group remember our late Pacificwin leader Ms Tutagaloa Tutose Tuhipa who always reminded us about Bully Hayes who kidnapped our Niue peoples to work the guano fields of Peru for heating the households of the elite of Mother England.
- And the Pacific members of groups based in Australia recall all the other blackbirded Pacific peoples with horrific stories retold, including: Fiji; Papua New Guinea; Vanuatu; Solomon Islands; Kiribati; and Tuvalu. Although blackbirding was outlawed in the 1830s in Australia, our Pacific peoples were

still the foundation labourers of the sugar industry. They still lived under horrendous conditions that were slave-like.

- These few stories had purpose to be related – so that we avoid these atrocities which resounded in the modern seasonal work programmes of New Zealand and Australia.

Horrors of Refugees and Asylum-seekers

Refugees and asylum-seekers sought refuge with New Zealand and Australia; and Papua New Guinea and Nauru were sub-contracted “to contain the problem” (our perception) rationalized through Australia’s offshore policies. The people that sought refuge and asylum included, Malaysians, Chinese, Iranians and Afghanistans – and they have not been well treated. They have reported to international rapporteurs cases of sustained ill-treatment, including: human rights abuse; handcuffed/restrained; and other forms of torture. Australia’s solution was to build detention centres in other countries, hence, shifting the blame, abdicating responsibility; and ignoring the problem; and still, the refugees and asylum seekers were ill-treated.

Even as recently as the 2020s during the COVID, Australia’s detention centres in Australia were exposed as among the worst in the world. We want to firmly plant that fact right here.

Tuvalu in Niue

About 2000, under Niue Premier Vivian, the Tuvalu had already started emigrating to Niue; and in 2004, a formal agreement between governments saw 100 Tuvalu move to Niue; and they occupied the near-empty village of Vaiea. However, but beware, ‘tis a precautionary tale (and the speakers do not want to be quoted on this) – by their own story-telling, the Tuvalu do not think they are well-treated. Many have lived the pre-requisite time in Niue and have emigrated to New Zealand; many still live there but they have occupied the lower levels of the socio-economic ladder for many years now. Some of their rights are suppressed and many have examples of perceived lack of fulfilment of their human rights.

India in Niue

In 2006, 13 men were brought into Niue to try and resolve the work shortage. It did not work out well. Please do not cite any of this, instead google and cite from public sources:

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/174372/concern-over-restrictions-on-indians-wanting-to-return-home-from-niue-via-new-zealand>

The problem was always about Niue not in any position to do well for the group of 13 x Men. They conducted themselves above board and were extremely hard workers. However, the host country was not set up to receive them and take care of them properly. The only way they could exit was to lodge a complaint; zoom participants wonder how the 13 men are now.

At the time there were tales misconstrued about how the Indian men were seeking ease of passage into New Zealand, not truly well founded, they were just genuine workers who sought meaningful employment. The host country was not well fortified to deliver on their side of the labour shortage situation.

American Samoa and Daewoosa

We all know because this is how Pacificwin was originally formed; in 2014, our American Samoan Trainer, a prosecutor for the USA courts – related a watershed case of the Daewoosa garment factory in American Samoa by Mr Lee of China. He recruited garment seamstresses from Vietnam, China and Samoa. All manner of abuse ensued, including – physical abuse, lack of pay, filthy sleeping quarters, and other. The women finally found a way to complain formally and all 33 human traffickers were charged in 2005. However, to this day – those women have not seen a penny of wages due to them, and they were sewing-producing American brand label garments.



New Zealand & Australian Seasonal Labour Schemes

- A lot of the information is found via internet; but what is not found is how the seasonal workers really experienced the labour migration schemes, and all of the good, the bad and the ugly experiences of the 100,000+ migrant labourers.
- The bilateral arrangements have left respective population groups most vulnerable.
- Capped or not, the labourers are not receiving in hand what they earn by right.
- We must not repeat the errors in our regional climate mobility realities.

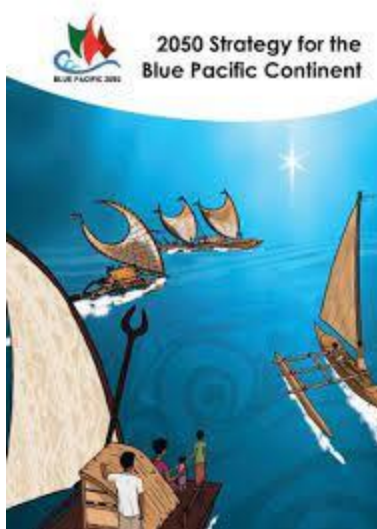


'In New Zealand, the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme allows the horticulture and viticulture industries to recruit workers from Pacific Island nations for seasonal work. Workers can stay in New Zealand for up to seven months. Implemented in 2007, as of 2020 it is capped at 14,400 places annually.'

CRITICAL STRATEGIC REFERENCES FOR PACIFIC CIVIL SOCIETY

2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

<https://forumsec.org/2050>



- *The success of the 2050 Strategy depends on enhanced cooperation, strong leadership and the continued participation at all levels of society in its implementation. We seek the broadest support possible across our region to ensure full ownership and accountability in delivering on our shared objectives. This is our 2050 Strategy, and we will drive and deliver it together for the benefit of all Pacific peoples.'*

Our Responses to the 2050 Strategy:

- We don't mind quoting from it because we helped to shape it and tailor it so that our voices were included.
- We worked hard to shape it in our voices for what we needed to state about climate migration, but we were up against some big guns who did not want the document to promote climate mobility out of the Pacific islands "too much"
- We were up against politicians and senior level officers and agencies who really needed to emphasise the re-development of the Pacific region to fortify it against slow-onset climate impacts.
- We had agencies who depended on funding for strengthening their brick and mortar, so never mind about our homes' brick and mortar

- There were offices that were enjoying funding for their mitigation programmes so climate mobility solutions were difficult for them to accept word for word as the way we described it
- It seemed like it was more about strengthening them than solidifying civil society, but we enjoyed the lunches
- At the end of the day, we were part of the conversations and we always enjoy meeting with our old loud friends and making some new quiet ones
- We were always treated well amongst our own people so nothing disturbed that fellowship we have amongst us; even with the top level people; and it's simple, many of us are related to one another
- There's nothing like a Pacific fono of Pacific Peoples!



Fiji's Framework for Planned Relocation (2018)

All Pacific communities are aware that Fiji had developed one of the very first Frameworks for relocation in the world – what is important to ask is – given that is the case, why is Fiji not a CHAMPION PILOT COUNTRY as part of the UNNM WORKPLAN? It is odd that there are many champion case studies in other regions, yet there are no champion countries recommended from the Pacific Region, why is this?



IOM-Fiji & Partners – Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility

- Pacificwin and Partners were very pleased to have been a part of the dialogues and consultations concerning the development of the PACIFIC REGIONAL FRAMEWORK ON CLIMATE MOBILITY (“The Framework”).

- Well done, Sabira Coelho and IOM-Fiji Team for another world/regional “first” !! It was a lot of hard work that was a collaborative and mammoth undertaking between a few key agencies, but they did it! Hats off to all involved, including us in civil society!
- The Framework achieved the purpose of strengthening understanding and coordination, increasing cooperation on climate-related human mobility in the Pacific region, “to establish adequate human rights-based response and support mechanisms for people at risk; and to adopt a pro-active and planned approach to address climate mobility and enhance”.

We endorse:

- 1. Our climate-impacted Pacific Peoples do not choose to move, so that is a misconception we must dispel.**
- 2. Our Pacific Peoples wish to focus on a best resolution – whether a policy/agreement/MOU/formal pledge or commitment with/from all possible HOST COUNTRIES – that reassures Pacific Peoples’ human rights, dignity, respect and support in climate-induced mobility.**
- 3. Our Pacific Peoples must have voice into all policies designed for/with/about Us – do not continue to treat us as a liability because we choose to be part of our own affirmative solutions if/when our Population Groups are in-situ/displaced/relocated or resettled. “Nothing about Us without Us”**

2

What are some practices and examples of collaboration with relocated communities to identify and address the impacts of planned relocation on livelihoods, housing, education, access to public services, physical and mental health as well as the communal impacts of loss of land, social cohesion, local knowledge and culture?

2.1 National Disaster Management Office, Fiji

- They know how to treat Pacific civil society well, we are important.
- They have included us in their consultations and we never fail to have a great fellowship when we all get together!
- We are grateful to the Office and the Director because the Pacific People, and in this case the 100s of villages that are to be relocated; hard to navigate but they do it with style.
- If you want a model, this Office do a great job!

2.2 Case of Kioa – Tuvalu, Fiji & the KIOA Declaration

- Albeit the case was for a different purpose, the way that 350-Pacific worked with the People of Kioa was impressive!
- In 2022, we were 40+ civil society representatives of many people – 20 x diverse ethnicities and nationalities; civil society comprised non-state actors, activists, creatives, academics, businesses and we all got on with it and tailored, KIOA PACIFIC CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION.



It emerged following a historic gathering of Pacific leaders, activists, and communities in Kioa Island, Fiji. The Declaration serves as a powerful demonstration of unity on the urgent need for climate action to protect the Pacific region and its people and culture from the devastating impacts of the climate crisis. <https://www.greenpeace.org.au/what-we-do/climate-justice/what-is-the-kioa-declaration2/>

- We were a group of highly committed civil society, led by Joseph Sikulu, Managing Director of 350-Pacific and now Tuvalu MP Dr Maina Talia.
- They had a plan, they had a vision, we entrusted that our lives were in their care and we produced an amazing document that was launched at COP26 in Sheikh Al Sharm, Egypt.
- Thereafter, this was followed up by the KATO – Pacific Community Climate Fund – a vehicle for trying to ensure resources get to the people at community working for Pacific peoples who are adversely affected by the current climate crisis.

2.3 Case of Post KIOA Declaration – the KATO Pacific Community Climate Fund

- We have an excellent concept, now we must try and work hard to generate the funding our community people need.
- Civil society are not receiving the kind of levels of funding we need to do the work we do very well to support our communities in climate mobility options.
- TRANSLATION INTO PACIFIC LANGUAGES – there is very little translation/interpretation going on in the exchanges between the English Language and the application at village/community level – this gap must be addressed – it is a human right.
- We anticipate support for the KATO, but we will have to work hard to ensure it comes to fruition.

2.4 Community Empowerment through Pacific Fono and Training for civil society in climate migration:

NB: This may not be absolute excepting from the perceptions and feedback of our Talanoa; also, we acknowledge others doing good works, this is our according to our limited awareness.

2.4.1 Community Levels for Civil Society in Climate Mobility

- Civil society groups are endeavouring to cover this gap.
- EG FCOSS – who train their members across the Fijian jurisdictions.
- United Universalist Services Committee/USA – who fund/sponsor local and national trainings
- EG Platform of Disaster Displacement
- EG other civil society organisations
- EG NDM Office Fiji – covers this sector

- EG IOM-Fiji – cover this sector

2.4.2 Regional Levels for Pacific Civil Society in climate migration - Regional Agencies:

- EG PIFS/Pacific Islands Forum Sec especially the Non-State Sector Unit cover this sector
- EG SPREP cover this sector but civil society is not their target group
- EG NDM Office Fiji – cover this sector
- EG IOM-Fiji – cover this sector
- EG SPC – cover this sector

2.4.3 Regional Levels for Pacific Civil Society in climate migration - Civil Societies:

- EG PIANGO – who train their 26+ regional members.
- EG United Universalist Services Committee/USA – who fund/sponsor regional trainings
- EG 350-Pacific – who tailor regional trainings for climate change proper (with focus on climate justice, agency, non-renewable energy; renewable options)
- EG Pacificwin - who will host a “NIU PACIFIC TRAINING’ 21-28June24, Nadi-Fiji – tailored for regional reps in climate justice, climate migration, loss and damages, climate finance, disaster risk and management and gender equity training (with funder/sponsor-collaborations in order to make it happen)

2.4.4 International level for Pacific civil society in climate migration - Pacific Agencies:

- EG PIFS/Pacific Islands Forum Sec especially the Non-State Sector Unit - cover this sector but only for their govt officials
- EG SPREP - cover this sector but only for their govt officials
- EG NDM Office Fiji – cover this sector but only for their govt officials
- EG IOM-Fiji – cover this sector but only for their govt officials
- EG SPC – cover this sector but only for their govt officials

2.4.5 International level for Pacific civil society in climate migration - Pacific regional agencies:

- EG NDM Office Fiji – covered this sector when DRR Australia organized a regional meeting in Qld-Australia, 2023

2.4.6 International level for Pacific civil society in climate migration - Pacific civil societies:

- EG PIANGO – who are part of international and global forums eg CPDE, where designated Pacific organisations represent different sectors (gender, indigenous, faith, youth, migrants-diaspora covered by Pacificwin)
- EG United Universalist Services Committee/USA – who fund/sponsor international trainings
- EG Pacificwin – partnered with MIGRANT WOMENS FORUM under MIGRANT FORUM ASIA focused on women in climate migration
- EG Pacificwin – Pacific civil society advisor to UCLG – United Cities Local Government – work with other civil society members on climate migration

2.4.7 Global level for Pacific civil society in climate migration – Regional Agencies:

- SPC – they have sponsored community representatives to attend the COPs but mostly focused on climate change proper and non-renewables
- DRR – they have covered this for mainly DRR

2.4.8 Global level for Pacific civil society in climate migration – Civil Society:

- 350 Pacific - they have coordination of community representatives to attend the COPs; mostly focused on climate change proper and non-renewables
- EG United Universalist Services Committee/USA – who fund/sponsor global representation eg COPs
- Pacificwin – coordinates/represents at GFMD
- Pacificwin – coordinates/represents at UCLG (eg Futures Forum; annual summits)
- Pacificwin – coordinates/represents at Global Action Committee on Migration
- Pacificwin – coordinates/represents at Climate Migration Displacement Platform
- Pacificwin – represents at Unicef’s global meetings (London, UK; Youth Leading Minds Conference, Italy)
- Pacificwin – UNNM respond to Memos, Papers, Issues; SDGs drafts, other

2.4.9 Recommendations from Pacific Civil Society

1. We need resources for civil society to be more coordinated and cohesive at all levels for climate migration agenda and issues – policy advocacy; programme implementation; research; monitoring; SDGs; reviews; collaborations; other – without this support, we will not do well as a cohesive strategy for our Pacific Peoples in climate mobility.
2. We appreciate and admire the work of IOM-Fiji, but perhaps we need a strategy outside of government agencies for civil society to be much more effective and efficient – we need resources to mobilise this strategy!
3. We would appreciate resources for a working group to enable this strategy to work for our Pacific civil society/non-state actors!

OUR TALANOA GROUP’S RESPONSES

3



**Not our visual, none of the images used are ours by right, excepting where we are in some of the photos, thanks to all for permitting its limited use for this TALANOA FEEDBACK*

- 3.1** *How can we ensure that planned relocations are people-centered, anchored in human rights-based approaches and preserve cultural identity?*

One very simple answer, “Nothing about/for/with Us without Us”

- 3.2** *What actions can be taken at the local, national, regional, and international levels, as well as by different groups of stakeholders: governments, communities to be relocated, potential host communities, development agencies, financing institutions.?*

**We chose to answer this only from Pacificwin’s perspective – as there is many more gaps to fill and time is limited:*

3.2.1 Global

1. More resources to ensure training of potential representatives that could fill the spaces at global level for Pacific (eg UNNM workstreams).
2. More Pacific at global levels championing climate migration agenda for Pacific civil society.
3. More collaboration with other Pacific Representatives (diplomatic corps) to ensure we are all on the same page when we are at High Level summits so we do not seem to be unaware of what the other is doing.
4. More resources to determine our own collaborative researches, for/with/about us with us!
5. More resources to design a Programme that would be most appropriate for the needs of the Pacific climate mobility agenda and issues at global level.
6. More resources to collaborate and innovate for mutual optimization eg AI in climate migration; climate migration and indigenous standpoint.

3.2.2 International

7. More resources to ensure training of potential representatives that could fill the spaces at international level for Pacific (eg UNNM workstreams).
8. More Pacific at international levels championing the climate migration agenda for Pacific civil society.
9. More collaboration with other Pacific Representatives (diplomatic corps) and Pacific Regional Agencies to ensure we are all on the same page when we are at High Level summits so we do not seem to be unaware of what the other is doing.
10. More resources to determine our own collaborative researches, for/with/about us with us!
11. More resources to design a Programme that would be most appropriate for the needs of the Pacific climate mobility agenda and issues at international level, and to work with other partners at international level for mutual benefit.
12. More resources to focus on pathways that may work well for our respective climate migrants eg visas or policies.

3.2.2 Regional

13. More resources to ensure training of potential representatives that could fill the spaces at regional level for Pacific (eg Pacific regional fono organized by PIFS, PIANGO, other).
14. More Pacific at regional level championing the climate migration agenda for Pacific civil society.

15. More collaboration with other Pacific Representatives (of other NGOs) and Pacific Regional Agencies to ensure we are all on the same page when we are at various Fono so we do not seem to be unaware of what the other is doing.
16. More resources to determine our own collaborative researches, for/with/about us with us at regional level!
17. More resources to design a Programme that would be most appropriate for the needs of the Pacific climate mobility agenda and issues at regional level, and to work with other partners at regional level for mutual benefit.
18. More resources for Pacific TRANSLATIONS OF KEY DOCUMENTS re Pacific climate migration agenda and issues
19. More resources to focus on pathways that may work well for our respective climate migrants eg visas or policies across the region – especially with metro-countries – Australia; Aotearoa New Zealand; USA; other.

3.2.3 National

20. Same as above, including:
21. In Aotearoa New Zealand – we would look to strengthen a network of all migrant networks for considered common TORs and mutual benefit regarding climate mobility agenda and issues
22. In Australia – we would look to strengthen a network of all migrant networks for considered common TORs and mutual benefit regarding climate mobility agenda and issues

3.2.4 Local

23. To establish an office and satellites in other countries where we could work for the same purpose in Pacific climate migration agenda and issues.