



UNITED NATIONS
PACIFIC



UN PACIFIC 2021

RESULTS REPORT





UN PACIFIC RESULTS REPORT 2021

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR UN PACIFIC RESIDENT COORDINATORS

In 2021, our work across the 14 Island nations in the Pacific region was enhanced by welcoming a third Multi-Country Resident Coordinator's Office, in the Federated States of Micronesia, to cater to the five Northern Pacific countries (Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru, and Kiribati).

2021 was a difficult year for many Pacific Island nations, who experienced first, second, and even third waves of the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the Pacific, many island nations rely largely on tourism for revenue and income, so when economies took a hit, that translated to direct job losses and a deep sense of anxiety and fear.

For two years, the region has battled multiple crises – the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate emergency, and the direct impact of severe climate-induced disasters - which continue to increase in frequency and intensity.

Due to the particular vulnerability of Pacific Islands to natural disasters, the impacts of the annual cyclone season were only worsened by the hovering pandemic, which claimed thousands of Pacific lives.

Fiji experienced two severe tropical cyclones - TC Yasa and TC Ana - in the span of one month in 2021 – they took lives and left many homeless, only adding to the food insecurity already amplified by COVID-19.

Across the Pacific, we spent approximately US\$185m on development work - 40% of which was spent on equitable basic services (health, education, and WASH), and almost 30% on climate change, disaster resilience, and environmental protection. In the Pacific, investing strongly in these areas is crucial considering the geographical and economical vulnerabilities of the region.

Despite these challenges, we made great strides together as a One UN System. We convened the first ever Food Systems Dialogues across 10 Pacific nations, with most countries convening close to four in-country dialogues leading up to the inaugural UN Food Systems Summit - perhaps, one of the principal achievements.

With non-communicable diseases being the lead cause of death in the Pacific and remaining one of the most critical development challenges, it was both inspiring and crucial to witness the interest from nations to participate in the inaugural Food Systems Summit and creating better, more sustainable food systems for their communities.

Due to the limitations imposed by COVID-19 mitigation measures, we also hosted insightful virtual and in-person dialogues with government, civil society, as well as other technical and financial partners with 14 countries. These dialogues created a platform dedicated to discussing UN support, gaps, partnership opportunities, and ways to ensure that despite the impact of COVID-19 and the climate crisis, Pacific nations remain on track to achieve their sustainable development goals (SDGs) and that no one is left behind in the process.

The Pacific remains highly susceptible to the longer-term impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, particularly due to its heavy reliance on development support, tourism receipts, remittances, and imported goods. The UN system will continue to support Pacific countries to mitigate the impact and address the resultant socio-economic challenges in an effort to keep on track towards realizing the 2030 Agenda.



Photo: UNDP Pacific

This report brings to light the strides Pacific people have made over 2021, with support from the UN, in climate change adaption, migration, gender equality, human rights, health, environmental protection, economic empowerment, as well as governance and community engagement.

The work we achieved in 2021, and the smooth transition from two to three UN Multi-Country offices, was down to the strong partnerships we've created over the past few years with Pacific Island governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and through the determination and support of our own colleagues through our One UN approach.

We, the Resident Coordinators of the Pacific, are excited about the future of our work in the Pacific and the possibilities with the development of the new 2023-2027 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and the new Micronesia Multi-Country Office. The shared responsibility to the people of the Pacific will enable us to better focus on addressing the specific challenges of these diverse countries to improve the lives of all Pacific people.



Sanaka Samarasingha
UN MCO Fiji
Resident Coordinator

(RC to Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu)



Simona Marinescu
UN MCO Samoa
Resident Coordinator


(RC to the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, and Tokelau)



Jaap van Hierden
UN MCO Micronesia
Resident Coordinator

(RC to Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru and Kiribati)

ACRONYMS



ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BDS	Business Development Service
CAT	Convention Against Torture
CBSI	Central Bank of the Solomon Islands
C4D	Communication for Development
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CCE	Communication and Community Engagement
CDP	Community Development Plan
CDRFI	Climate and Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance
CMEs	Community Mobilisation Events
COSP	Conference of the States Parties
COVAX	Covid Vaccination
CP	Child Protection
CRBE	Coral Reef and Blue Economy Programme
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSE	Comprehensive Sexual Education
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CTI	Convention against Torture Initiative
DAHTS	Division of Anti-Human Trafficking Services
DFA	Development Finance Assessment
ECE	Early Childhood Education
FEdMM	Forum Education Ministers Meeting
EDS	Economic Development Strategy
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EiE	Education in Emergency
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
EU	European Union
EVAWG	Ending Violence against Women and Girls
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FDP	Faculty Development Programme
FICAC	Fiji Independent Commission against Corruption
FLR	Family Life Education

FRIEND	Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises and Development
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GANHRI	Global Association of National Human Rights Institutions
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HFPM	High-Frequency Phone Monitoring
HG	Home Garden
HR	Human Rights
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IDES	Inclusive Digital Economy Assessment Scorecard
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMS	Information Management System
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPV/DV	Intimate Partner Violence/Domestic Violence
ITC	International Trade Centre
JCAPs	Joint Country Action Plans
JIMT	Joint Incident Management Team
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LGBTQIA	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Asexual
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MCO	Multi Country Office
NCDs	Non-Communicable Disease
MCII	Munich Climate Insurance Initiative
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MSDP	Migration for Sustainable Development Policy
MVAs	Market Vendor Associations
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
MP	Member of Parliament
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MSRP	Multi Sectoral Response Plan
NES	National E-Commerce strategy
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
NEC	Nauru Electoral Commission
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
NMIRFs	National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-Up
NUS	National University of Samoa
NSPP	National Social Protection Policy
NSSD	National Strategy for Sustainable Development

OCHA	Office of the Coordination of Human Rights
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPAC	Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
OPDs	Organisation of Persons with Disabilities
OPSC	Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography
PCC	Pacific Conference of Churches
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
PDS	Pathway for Development of Samoa
PDEP	Pacific Digital Economy Programme
PHES	Pacific Heads of Education System
PHPC	Pacific Humanitarian Protection Cluster
PHT	Pacific Humanitarian Team
PICAP	Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaptation Programme
PICs	Pacific Islands Countries
PICTs	Pacific Islands Countries and Territories
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PIFR	Pacific Islands Food Revolution
PPE	Personal Protection Equipment
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCCE	Risk Communication and Community Engagement
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
RMNCAH	Reproductive Maternal Neonatal Child Adolescent Health
SERPs	Socio-economic Response Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual Gender Based Violence
SIDS	Small Island Development States
SFM	Sendai Framework Monitor
SIICAC	The Solomon Islands Independent Commission against Corruption
SKSI	Samoa Knowledge Society Initiative
SMC	School Management Committee
SMEs	Small to Medium-sized Enterprises
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics
SOI	The Solomon Islands
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPC	Pacific Community
SPMIS	Social Protection Management Information Systems
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
STI	Science Technology and Innovation
SWS	Seasonal Workers Scheme
TA	Technical Assistance
TC	Tropical Cyclone

TCCI	Tonga Chamber of Commerce and Industry
TNSP	Tokelau National Strategic Plan
TTF	Tuvalu Trust Fund
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UN AIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCAC	United Nations Convention Against Corruption
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDIS	United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDRR	United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction
UN Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes
UNPRPD	Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNPS	United Nations Pacific Strategy
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNU-EHS	United Nations University – Institute for Environment Human Security
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UNW	United Nations Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USP	University of the South Pacific
VAW	Violence Against Women
VNPF	Vanuatu National Provident Fund
WASH	Water and Sanitation Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
WHRDs	Women Human Rights Defenders
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation
WRMS	Weather Risk Management Services

Photo: UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji



UN COUNTRY TEAM

There are 29 UN agencies operating out of the Pacific with heads of agencies based in the Republic of Fiji, Samoa, and the Federated States of Micronesia. Non-resident agencies include IAEA (Geneva), UN-Habitat (Fukuoka), UNIDO (Bangkok), UNOPS (PNG), and ITC (Geneva). The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) is composed of the heads of UN agencies.

In the first nine months of 2021, the UN multi-country engagement in the Pacific was led by two Resident Coordinators and a UN Country Team (UNCT) linked to two multi-country offices, operating out of Fiji and Samoa. Ten Pacific Island Countries (PICs) were under the purview of the Fiji Multi-Country Office (MCO), including Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), Palau, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. The remaining four countries and territories under the Samoa MCO are the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, and Tokelau.

As a result of the 2019 UN Multi-Country Office Review, an agreement was reached to establish a new MCO to facilitate an integrated, effective, and efficient programmatic response specifically tailored to the needs of all countries in Micronesia. The Multi-Country Office of the UN Resident Coordinator for Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), Nauru, and Kiribati, was formally established on 01 October 2021, following the appointment of the UN Resident Coordinator.



FAO
Food and Agriculture
Organisation of the
United Nations



IAEA
International Atomic
Energy Agency



IFAD
International Fund for
Agricultural Development



ILO
International Labour
Organisation



IOM
International
Organisation for
Migration



UNAIDS
The Joint Nations
Programme on HIV/AIDS



UNDP

United Nations
Development
Programme



UNEP

United Nations
Environment Programme



UNESCAP

United Nations Economic
and Social Commission for
Asia and the Pacific



UNESCO

United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization



UN-Habitat

United Nations Human
Settlement Programme



UNFPA

United Nations
Population Fund



UNIDO

United Nations
Industrial Development
Organisation



UNHCR

United Nations High
Commissioner for
Refugees



UNICEF

United Nations Children's
Fund



UNDRR

United Nations Office for
Disaster Risk Reduction



UNOCHA

United Nations Office
for the Coordination of
Humanitarian Affairs



UNCDF

United Nations Capital
Development Fund



UNODC

United Nations Office on
Drugs and Crime



UNOPS

United Nations Office for
Project Services



OHCHR

Office of the United
Nations High
Commissioner for Human
Rights



UNV

United Nations Volunteer
Programme



UNWOMEN

United Nations Entity
for Gender Equality and
Empowerment of Women



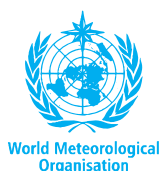
WFP

World Food Programme



WHO

World Health
Organisation



WMO

World Meteorological
Organisation



UNCTAD

United Nations
Conference on Trade
and Development



UNDSS

United Nations
Department of Safety
and Security

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COUNTRY AND REGIONAL CONTEXT



The 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) under the UN Pacific Strategy (UNPS) 2018-2022 cover an area of around 15% of the earth's surface mass. These countries are the Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, RMI, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

KEY REGIONAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Pacific regional context is influenced by the political challenges and tension linked to the deep-rooted issues of governance, centre-periphery relationship, resources and extractive industry, and ethnic land-based problems. In December 2021, the violent protest in the Solomon Islands was one of the most severe challenges to the stability that led to Australia, Papua New Guinea (PNG), and Fiji deploying the military to support law and order. The tension in the Solomon Islands is derived from a combination of the past conflict and the contemporary one of the breakdowns of the relationship between the central government and Malaita province. In Vanuatu and Kiribati, the political tensions and disputes are rooted in the combination of governance system, structure, and practices that led to several disruptions to parliamentary and governance functions, with several motions of no confidence tabled.

Pacific regionalism is still in crisis, with Micronesian countries scheduled to leave the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) from February 2022. The 12 month window of opportunity for dialogues has not led to a resolution that deemed acceptable from countries in Micronesia. The PIF leader summit was held without the participation of Micronesia. Fiji, who took over the leadership of the PIF from Tuvalu, together with other regional actors, is working to find an acceptable solution for all.

Climate change and climate security are overshadowing the Pacific's immediate and long-term future, with Atoll countries continuing to be the point of primary concern. Other countries are experiencing the more frequent tropical cyclones, climate internal migration, and critical concerns about the impact on agriculture, land, and the maritime boundaries. Despite the regional crisis, all Pacific countries went to COP 26 with the same voice and stood and appealed for immediate actions from the global community. The Pacific countries have also vigorously fought to preserve territorial boundaries and rights with dignity for migration due to climate change.

The inclusion of women and youth in politics and development is also experiencing progress and regression across the Pacific. In the Solomon Islands, thanks to the Peace Building Fund (PBF), more young people engage and participate in local decision-making processes, but progress is limited in other places. However, women political leadership and participation are significantly boosted by the appointment of the first woman prime minister in Samoa, but undermined with not a single woman elected in the Parliament in the last general election in Tonga.

The negotiations between the US and the FSM, RMI, and Palau about their respective Compact agreements is a significant issue that will impact the funding schemes for many of the health, education, infrastructure, and other development areas for these countries. While there has been both internal and external criticism of the US for its lack of attention and prioritization of the negotiations, FSM and RMI economic assistance funding expires first in 2023, which requires US Congress legislation. Without funding, there will be massive cuts in the revenue streams available to FSM and RMI governments to support national development. With geopolitical tensions in the Pacific Region and evident US strategic interest in maintaining support to these compact countries, it is expected there will be ongoing support to these countries.

KEY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

In 2021, the *PICs* economies sustained another year of contraction in the magnitude of 0.6%, fueled by domestic COVID-19 outbreaks, volcano eruption in Tonga, and political riots in the Solomon Islands amidst global economic downturn and supply chain disruptions. The continued evaporation of tourism due to border closings underscored the disproportionate reliance on the sector, leading some countries to innovate with safe arrivals schemes in the luxury sector and others to promote national tourism.

Lower tax revenues, higher healthcare spending, and support to vulnerable populations and hard-hit sectors led to further deterioration in fiscal positions, notwithstanding an increase in grant support from multilateral and bilateral development partners. According to the IMF, the average fiscal balance in the Pacific region is estimated to have deteriorated from a surplus of 3.5% of GDP in 2019 to a deficit of 3.4% in 2021.

While extreme poverty is uncommon in the region and is estimated to surpass 10% in only three countries: Kiribati, Vanuatu, and FSM, in 2021, COVID-19 further increased the number of people living in poverty in the Pacific, with the impact being greater in tourism-dependent economies such as Fiji, Vanuatu, and Palau.

Food insecurity significantly amplified in the last two years, triggered by COVID-19. Widespread loss of livelihoods and reduced incomes coincided with food (especially nutrient-rich food) becoming more expensive and less available due to supply chain disruptions. Between February 2020 (before the pandemic) and June 2021, food prices rose in all countries in the Pacific region.

Another crucial vulnerability in the Pacific labour market continued to be low labour force participation rates, which are below 50% in many of the countries and territories. COVID-19 intensified these vulnerabilities by increasing the incidence of subsistence activities and informality. Additionally, the declining options for migrant laborers to access Australian and New Zealand markets due to COVID-19 increase the pressure on PICTs governments, as do growing unemployment, expanding poverty, and pressures on the labour market.

The economic vulnerabilities of the PICTs were further illustrated by the impacts of the November 2021 Solomon Islands riots and the January 2022 volcano eruption in Tonga. The Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI) estimated the riots to have led to losses to the tune of \$534 million and a 0.6% contraction of the economy in 2021.

The governments of RMI, Nauru, Kiribati, and FSM took on external debt to mitigate against economic fallout and maintain government services. In 2021, these countries continued to close their borders while allowing repatriation of nationals and essential services into their countries. Through the aid of development partners, COVID-19 responses and recovery efforts continued. COVID-19 vaccination is disparate among the Micronesian countries and even within countries, as in the case of the FSM, RMI, and Kiribati, with logistical challenges for remote outer islands. With over 90% of the population fully vaccinated, Palau re-opened borders for international travel in early 2021, instating COVID-19 travel requirements to start much-needed economic recovery efforts. Because of its high dependency in tourism, Palau faced increased unemployment and loss of income for foreign workers, and relied on external debt to maintain basic government services and provide unemployment funding to foreign workers.

Many of the huge numbers of people not covered by social insurance programmes are informal workers, low-waged women and young people, refugees and migrants, and people with disabilities— and they are the ones hardest hit by this crisis. **Photo:** PFIP/John Rae





UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES THROUGH THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK



OVERVIEW OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK RESULTS

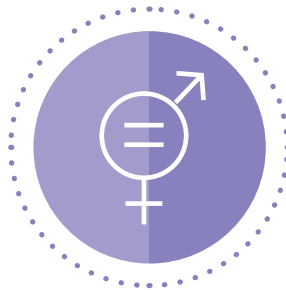
Overview of UNPS Results

The UN Pacific Strategy (UNPS) 2018-2022 is a five-year strategic framework that outlines the collective response of the UN system to the development priorities in the 14 PICTs.

There are six outcomes that address strategic priorities that promote mutual accountability for development results and foster cooperation in the Pacific. The outcomes are:



**Climate Change,
Disaster
Resilience and
Environmental
Protection**



**Gender
Equality**



**Sustainable
and Inclusive
Economic
Empowerment**



**Equitable Basic
Services**



**Governance
and Community
Engagement**



**Human
Rights**

The UNPS was developed through a consultation process with the 14 governments of the PICTS and with civil society and other stakeholders to identify regional and national development priorities where the UN system is best placed to respond. The UNPS is a guide for the UN development cooperation in the region by laying the foundation for partnerships with governments, civil society, and other development partners and coordinating the efforts of the 29 UN Agencies, Funds, and Programmes that comprise the UN system for the Pacific.

The UNPS has provided agencies with the space to channel their diverse contributions while staying within the confines of the joint strategy, and this has been achieved in a complex environment, bringing 14 countries and territories under one CF with constrained agency and RCO resources. While UN agencies engage effectively on a bilateral basis with their respective line ministries, engagement with governments at the level of UNCT has seen improvements made through the introduction of Joint Country Action Plans (JCAPs). The UNPS was even streamlined on an annual basis through the JCAPs to ensure shifting national priorities were addressed.

There has been a marked increase in the number of joint programmes to about 80 for 2021, as compared to the previous year. This was a result of greater availability of funding for such projects and increased efforts by the Secretary General and the UNCT to incentivize such programmes.

COVID-19 Response: Results achieved in the implementation of the COVID-19 socio-economic response plan (SERP)

The COVID-19 pandemic affected almost all programmes and project planning and implementation processes, which required the UNCT to adjust in a very short time to a new working environment. Certain activities had to be postponed. Like everywhere else, COVID-19 has worsened fiscal balances in the region. Lower tax revenues and higher healthcare spending have led to a deterioration in the fiscal position for most PICTs, notwithstanding an increase in grant support from multilateral and bilateral development partners.

Largely due to substantial donor support from the UN and other development partners, current account balances for the region are estimated to have improved. In 2021, UN agencies set aside approx. US\$62.3m for its response to COVID-19 for countries under the Fiji and Micronesia MCOs. The level of foreign exchange reserves cover remains adequate for most of the PICTs. The PICTs, as a group, are now projected to contract by an average of only 0.6 percent in 2021. While unemployment is relatively prominent in the region, UN support has seen a prevalence of improved subsistence and informal market activities. While the pandemic disrupted the implementation of many activities, the UNCT were quick in adapting to changed circumstance and pivoting to ensure that many activities were directly or indirectly part of UN's joint COVID-19 response.

Despite the resilience and governance capacities of PICTs, the region is still reeling from the fragility of its economies. The UNPS will end by December 2022. Therefore, the UN is in an ideal position to develop its next CF from the findings of the Common Country Analysis (CCA) and the UNPS evaluation, which will address challenges imposed by the impact of COVID-19.

Pacific Regional Spotlight Initiative

In 2021, the Pacific Regional Spotlight Initiative directly partnered with over 50 national, local, and grassroots women's rights organisations across 14 countries in the region, consolidating existing partnership and creating new ones with those closer to the communities. Small grants supported a wide range of activities, including support to the *LGBTQI+* community, vocational and financial training for women and survivors of GBV, awareness raising in menstrual hygiene solutions, and awareness raising for gender-responsive disaster risk response, to name but a few. Bridging and strengthening key partnerships between local and grassroots CSOs with the regional organisations that lead EVAWG prevention and response in the region, UN Women partnered with Diva for Equality, establishing the Pacific Feminist Community of Practice to provide capacity-building, networking, and movement-building opportunities for grassroots and women's rights organisations. It is creating a solid ecosystem of civil society organisations for learning exchange and dialogue with GBV service providers and communities.

Partnerships: Implementing global initiatives and partnerships such as the Spotlight Initiative for gender equality and women's empowerment



small grants

for support to the *LGBTQI+* community, vocational and financial training for women and survivors of GBV, awareness raising in menstrual hygiene solutions, and awareness raising for gender-responsive disaster risk response.



50+ partnerships

with national, local, and grassroots women's rights organisations across **14 countries**.



Samoa Spotlight Initiative Country Programme

The Samoa Spotlight programme has achieved some key milestones this year. At the policy level, the programme supported the community and law and justice sectors through the development and finalization of key strategic policies and plans:

1. Law and Justice Sector Plan 2021 – 2025.
2. National Policy on Gender Equality and Rights of Women and Girls 2021-2031.
3. National Policy on Inclusive Governance 2021 – 2031.
4. Six Village Bylaws Developed and Launched.

Additionally, the Spotlight programme rolled out a comprehensive advocacy and prevention campaign reaching large pockets of the population and enhancing village engagement and awareness of IPV/DV issues. The programme also provided capacity building support to civil society partners, including GBV service providers, to better respond to the needs of survivors and their families.

Vanuatu Spotlight Initiative Country Programme

The Spotlight Initiative has been catalytic in mobilizing UN agencies in Vanuatu to combine diverse, complementary mandates, expertise, and technical contributions to provide effective, comprehensive, and coherent support to EAWG in the country. The programme's country steering committee has evolved into a broader EAWG country level committee with several donors, government, UN, and civil society representatives providing strategic direction of UN's tailored support to EAWG, which is anchored in the newly passed National Gender Equality Policy. The civil society representatives actively engage in consultations with UN agencies, providing critical inputs in developing locally contextualized responses.

In Vanuatu, the Spotlight Initiative supports implementation across humanitarian and development nexus. The programme has developed multi-stakeholder essential services standard operating procedures to respond to women survivors of violence and child protection, which were also adapted to natural disasters response, migration, and COVID-19 safe guidelines (IOM).

The government and fishermen of Palau are setting up sustainable aquaculture farms near their shores in an effort to ensure food security for generations to come. **Photo:** Courtesy of Fabio Siksei



2021 Food Systems Summit

Pacific countries engaged in national dialogues to reflect on the current state of national food systems, to exchange ideas on solutions, and to initiate concrete actions to develop a pathway for sustainable food production and access to healthy and nutritious food for all. These National Food System Summit Dialogues were a critical element that ensured the Pacific voice was heard in global discussions.

With the UN system playing a pivotal role in supporting country implementation, action must be driven at country-level by governments in their local contexts. Five action areas to help inform the transitions needed to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda emerged from the Summit process. These include:



1. Nourish All People



2. Boost Nature-Based Solutions



3. Advance Equitable Livelihoods, Decent Work and Empowered Communities



4. Build Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stresses



5. Accelerating the Means of Implementation



A female market vendor in Vanuatu displays her items for sale. **Photo:** John Rae/UNCDF Pacific

Around 40 national dialogues across 10 Pacific countries (FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, RMI, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Island, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu) were convened, which brought together the crucial elements of healthy food, nutrition, and inequalities in the context of climate and environmental change. This phase has seen Fiji, Tonga, and FSM each conduct six dialogues with wide stakeholder participation, and small countries like Tuvalu, RMI, Palau, and Nauru have identified unique sustainable food system pathways integrated with existing policies and strategies. Nine out of 10 Pacific countries reported here have successfully proposed sustainable food system pathways and game-changing solutions as part of a greater global effort to create more inclusive, resilient, and healthier societies and a strong, safe, and fair for all future

COOPERATION FRAMEWORK PRIORITIES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS





CLIMATE CHANGE, DISASTER RESILIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

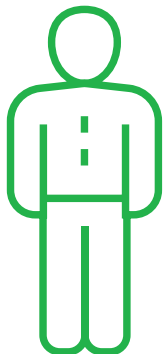
The UNPS sets that, by 2022, people and ecosystems in the Pacific will be more resilient to climate change, climate variability, and disaster impacts; plus, environmental protection will be strengthened.

The UN in 2021 expanded its work on promoting resilient and sustainable development in the Pacific by scaling up transformational adaptation initiatives in the area of climate change, disaster resilience, and environmental protection. These efforts were combined with strong community engagement and resilience-building support, including specialised support for water and food security. Under this outcome, UN efforts resonated with the achievement of the Global 2030 Agenda and the SDGs 7 and 13, bringing in global catalytic solutions for country and regional challenges on climate action and the 'Triple Planet Crisis' agenda.

Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

UNDP has worked hard to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience of at least 81,185 men and 80,006 women in three countries across the Pacific (Fiji, FSM, and Palau). This has been achieved through the development of the Tropical Cyclone Yasa Response and Resilience Plan in Fiji, rehabilitation of a water treatment plant and 14 wells in FSM, and the re-establishment and re-operationalising of three national multi-hazard warning systems in Palau. Additionally, Pacific countries cannot effectively mitigate or adapt to climate change without the implementation of effective national development plans. Along those lines, UNDP has supported the implementation of enhanced gender responsive Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans in five countries across the Pacific (Nauru, Tonga, Kiribati, RMI, and Vanuatu). These plans have contributed to the achievement of SDGs 13 and 14 and helped to increase resilience in these countries.

Different initiatives and plans have led to a reduction in vulnerability and an increase in resilience for at least:



81,185

men



80,006

women

Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

UNDRR (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction) has made incredible strides in relation to disaster risk reduction and management in 2021. The Sendai Framework Monitor (SFM) capacity building workshops took place in collaboration with SPC (Staff of the *Pacific Community*) and RedR Australia. As a result of these workshops, UNDRR increased the number of countries that reported using the monitor from three SIDS (Small Island Developing States) to all 12, gaining more than a 500% increase in the volume of data available and reported. The office also increased the number of countries reporting disaggregated data by sex from zero to five SIDS. This additional data will be key to helping the NDMO (National Disaster Management Office) better understand the impacts of disasters on different groups and critically allow them to plan and implement risk reduction strategies that are better suited to address their unique vulnerabilities through a human rights-based approach. UNDRR also worked on updating disaster damage and loss data for all 12 SIDS and now includes data covering events between 2016 to 2021. The availability of new data means national progress in the implementation of the Sendai Framework can now be better tracked by the government and partners. Specifically, with the data reported in the Monitor, officials can conduct analysis and comparison across several years. This analysis can help identify areas for improving disaster risk reduction efforts and support the development of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies.

Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaptation Programme (PICAP)

A joint initiative between UNCDF, UNDP, and UNU-EHS has resulted in the Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaptation Programme (PICAP). Under this programme, the Pacific region's first ever parametric microinsurance policy to cover cyclones was launched in Fiji in late August 2021. By December 2021, over 1400 Fijian households were covered under the pilot scheme.

The beneficiaries of this scheme range from small holder farmers, fishers, and market vendors. One of the particularly important highlights is that 32% of beneficiaries are women. It offers a maximum pay-out of FJ\$1000 (US\$500) for cyclonic storms for a premium of FJ\$100 (US\$50), with payments processed based on pre-defined triggers and without need for verification. Insurance policies such as this help vulnerable communities and/or families/individuals to increase their resilience to climatic events, allowing them to recover a lot quicker and reduce the impact of compounding events.

Thanks to the Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaption Programme (PICAP):

1,400



1,400 Fijian households received microinsurance for cyclones.

Takeisi Taumela in front of the destroyed vegetable garden of the women's community in Nui Island, Tuvalu. **Photo:** UNDP Pacific

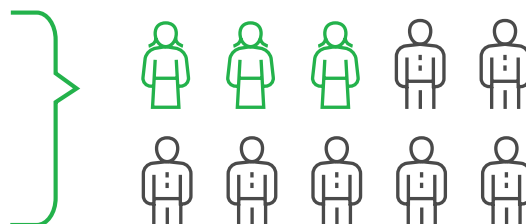


Offering a maximum pay-out of:

US\$500

beneficiaries range from small holder farmers, fishers, and market vendors, of which:

32%
are women



Social Protection Microinsurance Scheme

UNCDF has also partnered with WFP to introduce a first of its kind “social protection microinsurance” scheme. The pilot has identified 325 welfare recipients who will benefit from the programme. Based on the success of the pilot and lessons learned, there are plans to expand this programme, initially to cover more people in Fiji and then to expand further around the Pacific.

Staff of the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
Pacific team on a field visit. **Photo:** UNCDF Pacific





Tokelau receives a critical boost to waste management efforts. **Photo:** Pacifika Environews

Women and Climate Change

Women tend to be disproportionately affected by climatic and other emergency events. Through the Gender Inequality of Risk Project in the Solomon Islands, women's organisations in the Solomon Islands are now empowered to lead in emergency response after their participation in the Gender in Humanitarian Action training, which was facilitated by UN Women and members of the National and Provincial Protection Committees. This training came to fruition recently during the Honiara unrest and lockdown. Women who received this training independently organised themselves and mobilised to conduct response and assessments. The majority of team members were women who are now more confident to mobilise and coordinate resources across stakeholders to ensure the safety of the affected populations.

Regional Framework for Climate Mobility

IOM, in collaboration with ESCAP, ILO, and OHCHR, alongside the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Platform on Disaster Displacement, has worked to develop a regional framework for climate mobility across the Pacific. Together they have supported the establishment of a joint-working group on climate mobility chaired by the Government of Tuvalu and the Government of Fiji to oversee the development of a draft regional framework and seek opportunities for endorsement by Pacific Island Leaders. Along with UN partners, IOM has led national-level consultations in 10 PICs, regional civil society and technical advisory group consultations, and community consultations in three countries to help inform the regional framework. In addition, through high-level advocacy events, UN partners have supported the integration of climate mobility into regional (Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development) and global meetings (COP26).

Environment Protection

The UNDP continued in its efforts to support environmental protection across the region. Tokelau received critical safety gear and equipment for waste collection and segregation of recyclables. The equipment was provided under the UNDP Circular Economy for the Recovery of Waste (CERO Waste) 18-month programme for Samoa and Tokelau. UNDP is partnered with the Government of Tokelau's Department of Economic Development, Natural Resources, and Environment (EDNRE) for this project, which supported EDNRE with infrastructural (shipping containers as waste segregation and storage units, jumbo bags, litter-picking tongs, and other equipment), labour (targeting youth employment in Tokelau), and technical capacity for waste collection and segregation, as well as awareness-raising activities.

Electrification of Tobi Elementary School, Palau

Residents of Tobi, a small coral island in Palau's Southwest Islands, now benefit from the installation of the third off-grid 5kw solar system at the Tobi Elementary School. The solar system provides access to power for seven children and three teachers, enabling them to use digital devices for their learning. It also provides emergency backup power for schools, as they will be used as evacuation centers during the July – November typhoon season. The installation of the solar systems, worth around US\$230,000, was completed with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pacific Office in Fiji, through the Japan-funded 'Enhancing Disaster and Climate Resilience' (EDCR) project. The strong partnership between the Palau Ministry of Education, Palau Energy Administration, Hatohobei State Government, Palau National Communications Corporation (PNCC), and National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) also enabled its success. This is one of the Education Administration's pilot initiatives to expand the provision of solar systems to all households in the southwestern islands. It also aims to strengthen gender sensitive disaster communication and climate monitoring systems, enhance gender sensitive national and state disaster responder's readiness capacity, and enhance community disaster resilience through improved water resource management and integrated gender and social inclusion awareness. Transportation support was provided by the Division of Maritime Security, Fish and Wildlife Protection, and KEDAM, through the Nippon Foundation. Governor of Hatohobei State, Hon. Huana Nestor thanked partners of this project, saying it provided a renewable source of energy to their school and local community. *"This project has provided energy access to support the education of our children... during disasters, when the school is turned into an evacuation center for the local community, we can be assured of a reliable power source,"* she said. Similar systems were installed at the two elementary schools in Sonsorol and Pulo Anna in September and October 2021. Since its commencement in 2019, the EDCR Project has provided equipment to support Palau's disaster risk management approaches.







Restoration of Islands

Over 4,000 people across newly restored and conserved members had to walk over Government and the United children, and also on care High School, Veuru, Mar Francis Sade, the Guada an appeal to the 490 hou Adding to Mr. Sade's wo natural hazards such as we must care for the wa Organisations), and gove took place – meeting th working together after a c recovery planning, streng

This support relieves the burden of women, children and carers for people with disabilities who often are the ones collecting water for family use. **Photo:** UNDP Pacific



f Water Supply System in West Guadalcanal, Solomon

ss seven communities in the Solomon Islands affected by the Tropical Cyclone Harold will benefit from the constructed water supply system. Following the destruction of Tropical Cyclone Harold, thousands of community er 1.5km to fetch water for cooking, drinking, cleaning, and bathing. This support, jointly funded by the Australian ted Nations Development Programme (UNDP), relieves the burden on vulnerable groups such as women and rs for people with disabilities. The seven communities in West Guadalcanal - Vatulovo Savoulu, Visale Community ngakiki, Verahue, Hulavu, and Selwyn College - were among the worst affected in the Solomon Islands. Mr. lcanal Province Premier who received the infrastructure and tools on behalf of the seven communities, made eholds in these communities to take ownership of the infrastructure, as it also reaches those most vulnerable. rds was the Principal of Selwyn College, Fr. Davidson Ngwaeramo, who said: "Our communities are prone to cyclones, flooding, and landslides which damage our water sources. This intervention is a blessing for us, so ater infrastructures." The strong partnership with community-based organizations, NGOs (Non-Governmental ernment institutions at provincial and central levels provided crucial support to ensuring this implementation e urgent and long-term needs of these 4000+ people was a joint effort, only reinforcing the importance of disaster. UNDP helps countries manage and mitigate disaster risk through preparedness measures, pre-disaster ghtening early warning systems, and developing contingency plans and support systems.

Women market vendors in Vanuatu share a laugh in front of their local produce. **Photo:** UNCDF Pacific/ John Rae







GENDER EQUALITY

The second strategic priority establishes that, by 2022, gender equality is advanced in the Pacific, where more women and girls are empowered and enjoy equal opportunities and rights in social, economic, and political spheres, contribute to and benefit from national development, and live a life free from violence and discrimination.

The UN centred its programming efforts on the 14 PICTs, focusing on support to empower women and girls and build inclusive societies. Its support is espoused for the elimination of discriminatory policies and practices in all aspects of life and working towards achieving gender equality that benefits individual women and men, families, communities, and countries. The UN advocated for joint legal and policy reforms and educational programming in the Pacific that promote gender equality, women's and girls' empowerment, and respect for women's and human rights.



International Day for Rural Women in Vanuatu.

Photo: UN Women Pacific

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

A specific recommendation dedicated to the ratification of c.190 on sexual harassment in the workplace was successfully negotiated by Women's Ministers in the Outcome Document of the 14th Triennial Conference for Pacific Women and 7th Meeting of Pacific Ministers for Women. This was a result of the engagement and high visibility of the UN and key partner, Fiji Women's Rights Movement, through a conference side event.

GBV Administrative Data

UN Women and UNFPA facilitated the development of a Regional Reference Group on GBV Administrative Data, which acts as a core technical group to bring together knowledge and thought partnership on the roll out of GBV Administrative Data systems in the Pacific. Group members include representatives of the Pacific Community, the University of Melbourne, UN Women, and UNFPA, which are technical support organisations to women's machinery and service providers in the rollout of these systems. The group will be responsible for ensuring coherence on GBV Administrative Data systems, bringing together best practices and guidance/resources for countries, ensuring consistency in standards and approaches in alignment with global evidence and best practice (including an adaptation of the GBV IMS for humanitarian settings to national systems and the forthcoming WHO-UN Women Guidance on GBV Administrative Data), and provide technical advisory services to national governments and frontline service providers.



A young girl in Kiribati poses for a photo.
Photo: UNICEF Pacific

UN agencies actively participate in the Pacific Humanitarian Protection Cluster (PHPC) and Regional GBViE (Gender Based Violence in Emergencies) Cluster, which plays a critical role in coordinating protection in humanitarian preparedness, response, and recovery across UN agencies, including issues on gender-based violence in emergencies, psychosocial support, and gender and social inclusion mainstreaming. The PHPC supported several emergency responses, such as TC Yasa, TC Ana in Fiji, as well as political unrest in Solomon Islands in 2021, by providing technical support to national protection coordination mechanisms.

DIVA for Equality

The UN continues to invest in women's movement-building in the region by supporting diverse civil society organisations, including women-led and feminist organisations at the grassroots level. In 2021, 18 smaller civil society organisations across 10 countries were supported with Small Grants for work in the areas of COVID-19 advocacy for women and girls, GBV service delivery for rural and maritime communities, securing the safety of people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity/LGBTQI+, and feminist climate justice.





Women from Nui Island, Tuvalu, raise their hands when asked if they want to participate in UNDP's Cash for Work programme. **Photo:** UNDP Pacific







A UNDP-UNCDF joint intervention has supported Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu to access formal financing services. **Photo:** John Rae/UNCDF Pacific

National Financial Inclusion Strategies (NFIS)

A UNDP-UNCDF joint intervention supported three countries (Fiji, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu) for access to formal financing services through the adoption of National Financial Inclusion Strategies (NFIS) and the rolling out of financial services and products. This has been realised in collaboration with the Pacific central banks, which established a space for innovative, inclusive financial solutions that consider the specific national priority development needs of the Pacific. This achievement contributes to the Pacific national development priorities on economic empowerment through financial inclusion and SDG5. The joint programme has been instrumental in building financial knowledge and skills across the Pacific, particularly amongst women. About two million people were enrolled into formal financial services and products, of which around 50% were females.

“Due to this training (Financial Education), I have a better understanding and skills to manage money, so I opened a new bank account last year to save money for my family”. Ruth, Teacher, Solomon Islands.

National SDG Database and E-space

With technical support from UNDP and ESCAP, the governments of Tuvalu, Tonga, and Kiribati have established an online National SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) database. All official SDG data is disaggregated where possible by sex and geographic location. Data availability remains to be a big challenge in these countries, as it is in most parts of the region. Towards advancing SDG 5, UNDP established a Pacific e-space during the 16 days activism campaign on GBV. The provided e-space enabled sharing of knowledge and practices on online services delivery, innovative tools of community engagement, success stories, and lessons learned amongst development partners, including non-organisations, community-based organisations, civil societies, government departments, senators, UN agencies (UN Women), universities, and private sectors on gender mainstreaming in climate change, governance, and inclusive growth. This first established integrated development intervention virtual space reached 3,031 live views not only in Fiji and the Pacific Region, but also globally.

Women’s Political Participation

The UNDP has been actively involved in promoting women’s political participation in six PICs (Tonga, Nauru, Solomon, Kiribati, Fiji, and Tuvalu) through capacity building, peer to peer support, and south-south exchanges - aimed at increasing women MPs knowledge related to options for economy recovery in COVID-19 context, women, peace and security, and options for increasing women’s political participation through the design of political and electoral laws.

Anti-corruption Toolkit

As a follow-up to the development of the first-ever anti-corruption toolkit for women-owned micro, small, and medium enterprises in Fiji, similar toolkits have been developed for two other countries (Palau and Samoa). The toolkits are aimed to raise the awareness of women in businesses and guide them on anti-corruption and are accompanied with capacity building trainings.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

The FSM launched the National and State Policy to End Violence against Women and Girls during 16 Days of Activism. At service delivery level, UNFPA worked with Ministries of Health to support six countries (Samoa, RMI, FSM Pohnpei State, Vanuatu, FSM Yap State, and Tonga) to develop SGBV Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs), which strengthens the health system response to SGBV. The health sector has struggled with their role in GBV response, as it has been viewed as ‘NGO business’ in the past. The SOPs provide the foundation for the health systems strengthening approach to capacity building of health workers on survivor-centred clinical response and strengthening of the referral pathways, which align with national multi-sectoral service delivery protocols for SGBV developed/under development in the various countries. The SOPs are based on WHO global guidance and emphasizes the need to mobilize resources to equip health facilities to become “service ready” to respond to GBV, including delivery of Clinical Management of Rape. In addition, new Reproductive Maternal Neonatal Child Adolescent Health (RMNCAH), which include VAW (Violence Against Women) response, were developed in Vanuatu, Kiribati, and Tonga - further enhancing VAW case management within the health system.

Comprehensive Sexual Education (CSE)

UNFPA also worked with the Ministry of Education, in close consultation with UNESCO, in some countries to develop CSE in and out of curriculums in Fiji, Kiribati, RMI, FSM, Samoa, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, and Tonga. CSE assessments for all these countries and curriculum development for some grades: Kiribati's grade 10, Samoa's grades 9-12, and Vanuatu's grades 11-12 are completed, while training of master teachers also commenced in preparation for the nation-wide roll-out of the curriculums in 2022.

Disaster Disaggregated Data

In 2021, UNDRR conducted Sendai Framework Monitor (SFM) capacity building sessions, in collaboration with the Pacific Community and RedR Australia. As a result, the Office increased the number of countries reporting disaster disaggregated data by sex to five SIDS (Fiji, FSM, Solomon Islands, RMI, and Tonga). This data will help National Disaster Management Offices to understand the impacts of disasters on different groups and enable them to plan risk reduction strategies that address their unique vulnerabilities through a human rights-based approach.

Child Protection Systems

A total of 40 social welfare ministry officials from 12 PICTs participated in a series of eight weekly three-hour regional webinars on child protection systems.

Under the Prevention Pillar of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and children (Regional/Multi-Country Programme), through a partnership with the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC), educational resources to be used by church communities to promote child protection (CP), based on Christian scriptures developed in 2020, were reviewed by church leaders and key stakeholders from seven countries and contextualized for each of the three pilot countries (Fiji, RMI, and Solomon Islands). The resources were tested during regular church activities, such as Palm Sunday week and children and youth conventions, in these three countries, and in online sermons, which were viewed by over 2,500 persons in Fiji.



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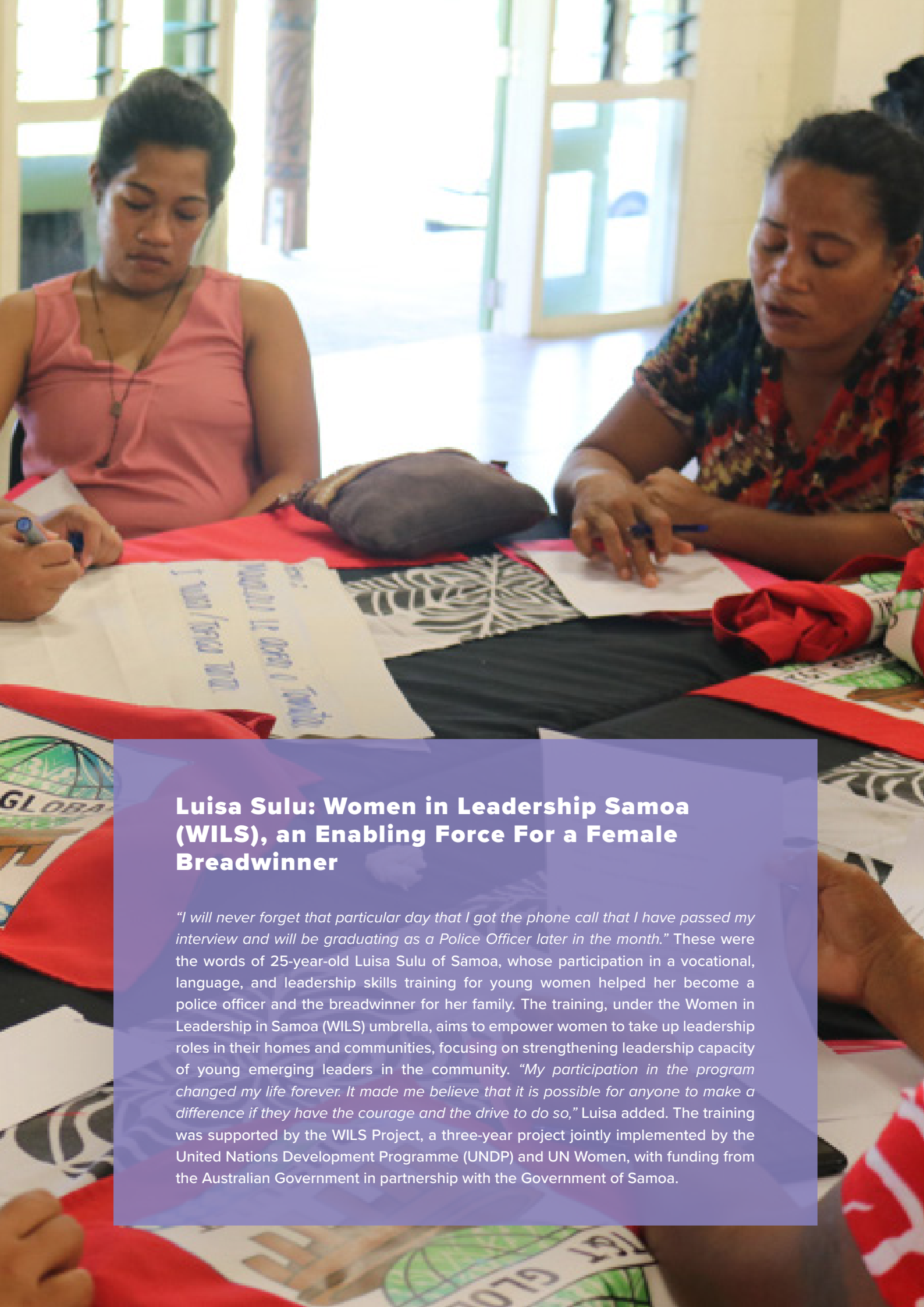


Last year, officials from 12 Pacific Islands Countries participated in regional webinars on child protection systems. **Photo:** UNICEF Pacific



Luisa Sulu of Samoa participates in a vocational, language and leadership skills training for young women. She says this training helped her become a police officer and the breadwinner for her family.

Photo: UN Women/Jordanna Mareko



Luisa Sulu: Women in Leadership Samoa (WILS), an Enabling Force For a Female Breadwinner

"I will never forget that particular day that I got the phone call that I have passed my interview and will be graduating as a Police Officer later in the month." These were the words of 25-year-old Luisa Sulu of Samoa, whose participation in a vocational, language, and leadership skills training for young women helped her become a police officer and the breadwinner for her family. The training, under the Women in Leadership in Samoa (WILS) umbrella, aims to empower women to take up leadership roles in their homes and communities, focusing on strengthening leadership capacity of young emerging leaders in the community. *"My participation in the program changed my life forever. It made me believe that it is possible for anyone to make a difference if they have the courage and the drive to do so,"* Luisa added. The training was supported by the WILS Project, a three-year project jointly implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women, with funding from the Australian Government in partnership with the Government of Samoa.

Oripa Lee Discusses Women's Rugby and Inclusivity in Fiji

Oripa Lee is a schoolteacher, whose school was among those chosen to pilot the 'Fiji – Get Into Rugby PLUS Lifeskills Programme'. *"With this programme, we support girls and boys in schools with a safe and inclusive playing environment and build their skills so they can think and talk more openly about gender, respectful relationships, impact of peer pressure, values, and power,"* she said. She explained that the values of rugby help her pass these lessons onto her students – these values are integrity, solidarity, respect, discipline, and passion. *"I see this programme contributing to the upbringing up of our future leaders. There are so many changes I am seeing in the students – behaviour is one. Not only do they openly share their problems with me, but they have also started sharing with their parents, compared to previous years,"* she reflected. Oripa said power imbalances that exist in society are linked to gender discrimination faced by women and girls. *"So, with this programme that we run through Oceania Rugby and UN Women, our aim is to work with young students, to support them in understanding that we are all equal, and in this way, we hope to balance the scales between women and men, girls, and boys. All the coaches' part of the programme are committed to this vision and this work."*





SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The UNSP sets that by 2022, people in the Pacific, in particular youth, women, and vulnerable groups, benefit from inclusive and sustainable economic development that creates decent jobs, reduces multi-dimensional poverty, inequalities, and promotes economic empowerment.

The UN sustained its programming efforts in the 14 PICTs focusing on women, youth, people with disabilities, and the informal sector to ensure sustainable and equitable economic empowerment. Through an integrated approach, the UN worked to strengthen the informal sector, improve extension agriculture services to increase the productivity of small land holders and subsistence farmers, support cultural and creative industries, reinforce shock responsive social protection systems, enhance links between agriculture and the tourism industry, and launch climate disaster risk insurance products and innovative solutions to build resilience and better respond to the devastating effects of the pandemic.



A market vendor in Vanuatu hands handmade necklaces to a customer in Port Vila. The UN supports women, youth & people with disabilities in the informal sector to ensure sustainable and equitable economic empowerment. **Photo:** UN in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu & Vanuatu

Business Development Service (BDS)

The ILO and UNDP built the capacities of 25 Business Development Service (BDS) providers in four countries on using on-line capable business development services (training, advisory, and mentoring). Approx. 48% of the BDS's are women headed or owned.

The ILO led UN joint project (Inclusive Economic Recovery through Sustainable Enterprises in the Informal Economies of Fiji, Palau, Tonga, and Vanuatu) is a COVID-19 recovery project funded by UN Secretary General's Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF). Targeting informal sector enterprises and workers in the creative industries and the agriculture sector, the project is implemented jointly by the ILO, UNESCO, UNDP, and IFAD (International Fund for Agriculture and Development).

The ILO and UNDP built the capacities of 25 Business Development Service (BDS) providers in four countries on using online capable business development services in:



training



advisory



mentoring

48% of the BDS providers are headed or owned by women.



Target: Informal sector enterprises and workers in the creative industries and agriculture sector.

Sector Associations

There were nine informal sector associations established in two countries. This resulted in 2,500 workers/entrepreneurs in the creative and agriculture sectors, through their national employers and workers organisation, having an identity and voice and submitting a total of 19 COVID-19 recovery policy priorities to government.



9 informal sector associations in
2 countries resulted in
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in the creative and agriculture sectors having a voice through national organisations to submit 19 COVID-19 recovery policy priorities to government.

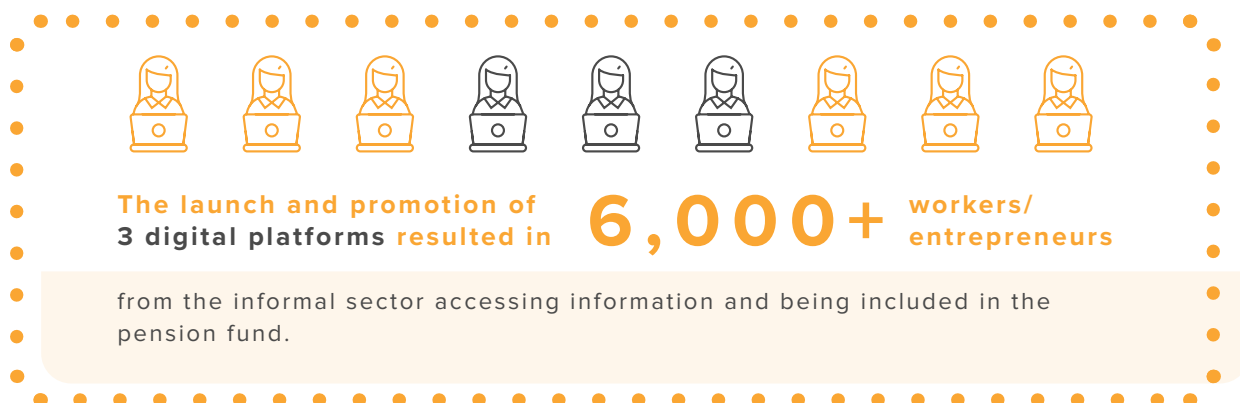
Ratification of C190 Convention on Violence and Harassment at the Workplace

The ILO supported Fiji to ratify C190 Convention on violence and harassment at the workplace. The Convention entered into force on 25 June 2021.

A total of 400 youths were trained on community-based entrepreneurship in rural areas in Solomon Islands to promote coexistence between communities.

Digital Platforms

The ILO further supported the launch and promotion of three digital platforms with payment gateways to the Vanuatu National Provident Fund (VNPF). This resulted in over 6,000 informal sector workers/entrepreneurs accessing information and being included in the pension fund.



Data Collection on the Impact of COVID-19

The high-frequency phone monitoring (HFPM) survey conducted in collaboration with World Bank contributed to the body of knowledge on the impact of COVID-19. UNICEF supported Solomon Islands with two rounds of HFPM data collection, which focused on various multi-dimensional vulnerabilities for children. The assessment reports provide short- and long-term policy options to guide government and partners on social protection responses to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on families and children.

Governance and Management of Social Protection Systems

The governance and management of social protection systems (SPMISs) were strengthened in the Cook Islands and Niue, where UNICEF is supporting the feasibility, review, and development of effective SPMIS. A comprehensive SPMISs will help strengthen the shock responsiveness of existing social protection system for children and women. The SPMISs will provide reliable and relevant data and evidence for policymakers to inform social protection policies and programmes, especially during COVID-19 pandemic and future climate-induced disasters.

Revival of the Master–Apprentice Scheme

UNESCO supported the revival of the master–apprentice scheme in Fiji, Vanuatu, Palau, and Tonga to enable specialised skills transfer in the cultural and creative industry sector, with a total of 202 master-apprentice collaborations created in the fields of craft design, visual arts, and performing arts.

Cultural and Creative Industries

There were capacity building programmes for 187 entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative industries in Fiji, Tonga, and Palau through specialised trainings in branding, product design, and effective supply chain management. In total, 202 women and young entrepreneurs are more able to engage with target market and have increased ability to define their business venture course of action. A training curriculum was developed and was adapted to the Pacific context where 30 participants from 13 Pacific SIDS were trained in methods and approaches that enable the effective implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

There were Capacity building programmes through **specialized training in the cultural and creative industries in Fiji, Tonga and Palau** for



202 women and young entrepreneurs

are more able to engage with target market and have increased their ability to define their business course of action



Persons with Disabilities (PWD)

UNESCO established an employment pathway for Persons with Disabilities (PWD) programme for the Cook Islands. In this frame, a 12-level certified training programme has been developed and 15 participants have graduated in 2021. The programme is now part of the national capacity building framework of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Cook Islands.

Online Web Tool

An online web tool was rolled out to ensure that governments and people of Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu had increased ability to harness the potential of remittances to support long term sustainable development.

Women in Tourism

Women-led domestic tourism was promoted for increased self-reliance and livelihood diversification in the RMI. The first two awardees of the Ao Kapijuknen programme received a seed funding award to establish tourism businesses on the island of Rongrong, Majuro and Pikoj, Rearlaplap, Arno.

An application site survey in the RMI. **Photo:** Office of Commerce, Investment and Tourism (2021)



Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaption Programme, Pacific Digital Economy Programme

A total of four new programme initiatives were launched in 2021. These included the Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaption Programme, Pacific Digital Economy Programme, Investing in Coral Reef, and the Blue Economy Programme. More than 179,000 new enrolments into financial services were supported across six PICs, including Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, PNG, and Vanuatu.



4 new programme initiatives were launched in 2021:

- The Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaptation Programme
- Pacific Digital Economy Programme
- Investing in Coral Reef
- Blue Economy Programme



179,000+

new enrollments into financial services were supported across six PICs, including Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, PNG, and Vanuatu

The Pacific Insurance Climate Adaption Programme (PICAP) launched the Pacific and Fiji's first ever climate and disaster risk parametric micro insurance product. By the end of December 2021, three new climate disaster inclusive risk insurance products were piloted namely: high windspeed cover, cyclonic cover, and social protection insurance cover. The programme managed to register around 1,388 people onto the new insurance product, of which around 1,248 paid initial premiums.

3 climate disaster inclusive risk insurance products were piloted by the end of December 2021, after The Pacific Insurance Climate Adaptation Programme (PICAP) launched its first-ever climate and disaster risk microinsurance product.



1,388
people registered for the programme



1,248
have paid initial premiums



The Pacific Digital Economy Programme (PDEP) in 2021 carried out a Regional Network Analysis and Mapping of Institutions supporting Entrepreneurship. The [mapping report](#) was published in November 2021, of which the findings outline the key characteristics of the existing entrepreneurship ecosystem in Fiji, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

In 2021, two new UN joint initiatives were launched, the Coral Reef and Blue Economy Programme (CRBE) and the Blue Bond Programme. The two initiatives are aimed at creating pipelines of bankable projects / businesses that have an impact on protecting the marine ecosystem in Fiji, in addition to providing or facilitating access to investment capital. Projects are related to marine protected areas, aquaculture, green shipping, and waste management.

The UN provided investment readiness grants for these projects/entrepreneurs to test market demand for their products, secure land, and conduct other start-up activities. Additionally, UNDP and UNCDF collectively contributed USD 260,000 in grants and TA to identify and design new investment opportunities in marine protected areas, aquaculture, and green shipping, among others, for financing through private investments or the sovereign Blue Bond.



Readiness grants
were provided for projects/entrepreneurs by the UN to test market demand for their products, secure land, and conduct other start-up activities.

US\$260,000

collectively contributed in grants and TA by UNDP and UNCDF to identify and design new investment opportunities in marine protected areas, aquaculture, and green shipping, among others.

The Solomon Islands Inclusive Digital Economy Assessment Scorecard (IDES) Report was published in 2021. The report is used to assist The Solomons to develop priorities that builds an inclusive digital economy that leaves no one behind.



Market vendors in the Solomon Islands share a laugh.
Photo: John Rae/UNCDF Pacific

Market Vendors

The UN Women supported keeping markets in Fiji open and market vendors and their customers safe as a key priority during economic recovery post-COVID-19. The Suva and Nausori Market Vendor Associations (MVAs) were supported in their businesses during COVID-19 through a new partnership with Food Well Fiji. A total of 41 vendors (39 females and two males) piloted an e-commerce business platform to provide fresh produce to customers within the greater Suva, Lami, Nasinu, and Nausori areas.



Key priority

to keep markets in Fiji open and market vendors and their customers safe, which is supported by UN Women, during economic recovery post-COVID-19.

41 vendors (39 females and 2 males)

piloted an e-commerce business platform to provide fresh produce to customers within the greater Suva, Lami, Nasinu, and Nausori areas.



A new partnership between three MVAs (Suva, Lautoka, and Nadi) was supported during COVID-19 to supply produce to the Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development Fiji (FRIEND Fiji). A total of 337 vendors (289 females and 48 males) supplied fresh produce to FRIEND Fiji for food packs delivered to families in COVID-19 severely affected communities. Those assisted included 495 families and 13 homes (including orphanages, old age homes, and homes for low-income earners) in the Central and Western divisions for a period of over eight weeks.



495 families 13 homes

from communities severely affected by COVID-19 were assisted with fresh produce - provided by 337 vendors through FRIEND Fiji.

Technical support was provided to the Suva and Lautoka MVA for the organisation of a COVID-19 vaccination drive at the Suva and Lautoka Market. This was an opportunity for rural women vendors to access the vaccine and vaccine information that often otherwise was not readily available to rural dwellers in the country.

A Fijian woman market vendor uses her phone to access financial services and products. **Photo:** John Rae/UNCDF Pacific



A total of 936 market vendors were granted cash assistance in partnership with Save the Children Fiji.



In Vanuatu, the Spotlight Initiative supported capacity building activities among the women of the Silae Vanua Market Vendors Association, strengthening women knowledge in finance literacy, food safety, methods of food preservation, gender-based violence, and climate change, creating opportunities for generating extra income and increasing financial independence and resilience.

Home Gardens

In Kiribati, a total of 3,045 households have established home gardens (HG), representing 144% of the target. With the Kiribati Outer Island Food and Water Project, a total of 1,805 households were targeted to increase output of local fruits, vegetables, root crops, and poultry. Training on soil fertility management through promotion and application of solid and liquid compost, mulching, and other environmental and climate-friendly techniques remain core topics for extension support.

In collaboration with the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), the project trialed compost making using local edible leafy vegetables - vigna marina, psionia grandis (chya), and Moringa oleifera (drumstick). The project has established 177 community nurseries (compared to the project target of 67) to address the issue of lack of planting materials. Seedlings (nitrogen fixing trees i.e., gliricidia sepium), papaya, and vegetable seeds have been transplanted to nurseries in September 2021.





177 community nurseries

were also established by the project, compared to the target of 67, to address the issue of lack of planting materials.

In reference to Tonga's Rural Innovation Project, a total of 269 District Officers, Town Officers, Community Members, and Facilitators were trained, which is 180% of the original project targets, updating 48 of the 60 existing Community Development Plans (CDPs) and formulated all the planned CDPs for 62 new (TRIP II) communities. As for sustainable livelihood, 294 officials and 960 rural people were trained in resilience of agricultural systems to climate change and natural disasters, against a target of 200 and 1200 respectively (147% and 80%). A total of 48 village maps were revised/updated, including data from village surveys, and added to the CDP's, against a target of 60 (80%). 1,148 persons/ groups were supported to sustainably manage natural resources and climate-related risks, 87% of the target of 1320. IFAD further provided support where 1,782 acres of land were brought under improved management practices. In addition, a total of 2,145 persons were trained in production practices and/or technologies, which was 149% of the target of 1440.

In reference to Tonga's Rural Innovation Project:

269 people:



District Officers



Town Officers



Community Members



Facilitators

were trained - 180% of the original project targets

As for Sustainable livelihood:



294 Officials



960 Rural people

trained in resilience of agricultural systems to climate change and natural disasters

As for Sustainable livelihood:



48 village maps were revised/updated



1,148 persons/groups were supported to sustainably manage natural resources and climate-related risks



1,782 acres of land have improved management practices, supported by the IFAD



2,145 were trained in production practices and/or technologies, 149% of the target

A total of 17 agricultural production facilities were established in model gardens in vulnerable areas to increase water availability. This represented 28% of the target of 60 - one processing facility rehabilitated for cyclone proof weaving sheds has a total of 198 women benefiting from the improved cyclone-proof weaving shed.



17 agricultural production facilities

were established in vulnerable areas to increase water availability.



198 women are benefiting

from a processing facility rehabilitated to become cyclone proof weaving sheds.

Photo: UNDP Pacific



Pacific MSMEs Work Together for Prosperity

In many Pacific communities, the strong sense of unity and togetherness help create tight social structures which make people feel supported. This also applies to the growing network of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across Pacific Islands countries, who have relied on relationship-building within their community to strengthen their own businesses. This was a key takeaway from the Master-Apprentice Scheme, a course under the joint UN project 'Inclusive Economic Recovery through Sustainable Enterprises in the Informal Economies of Fiji, Palau, Tonga, and Vanuatu'. *"I think this course was a really great way to advance the dance industry as a whole. A lot of times when we think about up-skilling, we think about bringing people from overseas... I think the idea of bringing people together to pool that knowledge and learn from each other's experiences is more effective. No amount of experts from overseas will understand our context,"* explained one of the course master trainers. This project has supported technical and entrepreneurial skills development, provided access to new markets, and enabled creatives in Fiji, Tonga, Palau, and Vanuatu to cultivate a stronger voice.





There is a growing network of micro, small to medium enterprises (MSMEs) across the Pacific. This photo was taken in the Solomon Islands, showing small canteens which cater to some of the needs of people in nearby communities. **Photo:** John Rae/UNCDF Pacific



EQUITABLE BASIC SERVICES

The UNPS target by 2022 is that more people in the Pacific, particularly the most vulnerable, have increased equitable access to and utilization of inclusive, resilient, and quality basic services.

The UN continued its efforts to support its 14 programming PICTs to ensure equitable access to basic social services for all, despite the compounded impact of the simultaneous shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters. The UN took a multidimensional approach that focused on strengthening national systems and institutional frameworks, engaging and building national capacities, and utilizing innovative solutions to build resilience and better respond to the devastating effects of the pandemic.



Public health workers in the Federated States of Micronesia deliver COVID-19 vaccines and information to health centres supporting hard to reach communities the outer islands of Yap. This forms part of the Government's COVID-19 vaccination activities to reach adults still to receive their jabs.

Photo: WHO/Ann Norizal Lopez

Covid-19 Preparedness and Response

UNICEF led the delivery of COVID-19 vaccines from the COVAX Facility, advocated, coordinated, and assisted country readiness to receive vaccines from other sources, and played a leading role in country readiness and the receipt of sufficient vaccines in 14 PICTs. Both the cold chain and supply chain were further augmented to facilitate COVID-19 vaccination in 13 PICTs, with the provision of cold chain equipment, tents, vehicles, boats, and motorbikes. UNICEF co-led the COVID-19 risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) response in close coordination with WHO, SPC, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and other partners. Through a range of multi-media and community engagement interventions, more than 1.3 million people across countries were mobilized for COVID-19 vaccine demand and sustaining preventive behaviours. In response to the widespread community transmission of COVID-19 in Fiji, UNICEF provided supplies and technical assistance to strengthen COVID-19 supply chain, and the 'Health Care on Air' distance education initiative for health workers in remote locations was used as refresher training for 41 COVID-specific topics.



UNICEF

advocated, coordinated, and assisted country readiness to receive COVID-19 vaccines, played a leading role in country readiness and the receipt of sufficient vaccines, led the delivery of vaccines from the COVAX facility and assisted delivery from other sources, co-led the COVID-19 risk communication and community engagement response, and more.



1.3M+ people

across countries were mobilized for COVID-19 vaccine demand and sustaining preventive behaviors - thanks to a range of multi-media and community engagement interventions by UNICEF.

Joint Incident Management Team (JIMT)

WHO continued to lead and convene the JIMT for COVID-19 in the Pacific to ensure the coordinated provision of support to countries across the Pacific to strengthen their preparedness for, and response to, the COVID-19 pandemic. The JIMT brings together partners, including the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Pacific Community, and UNICEF. It also collaborates closely with the Asian Development Bank, European Union, ICRC, IOM, Pacific Island Health Officers' Association, Pacific Islands Forum, UN, UNDP, UNFPA, United Kingdom, United States, WFP, and the World Bank. Together, JIMT partners have provided almost US\$30 million worth of personal protective equipment, medical equipment, medicines, and other supplies to support COVID-19 preparedness and response in the Pacific, weighing a combined total of 464,000 kg. The UN provided support to countries for interventions on Communication and Community Engagement (CCE) for COVID-19 vaccine demand generation to be effective. A total of seven additional communication for development (C4D) specialists were hired exclusively to support the smooth roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines, and continue to provide technical support and build government capacity, especially in coordination.



JIMT ensure the coordinated provision of support to countries across the Pacific - strengthening their preparedness for, and responses to, the COVID- 19 pandemic.



It is led by WHO with partners and collaborators such as Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, UNICEF, UN, UNDP, UNFPA, WFP, among others



≈ **\$ 3 0 M**

provided by JIMT partners for personal protective equipment, medical equipment, medicines, and other supplies to support COVID-19 preparedness and response in the Pacific.

Triple Burden of Malnutrition

Reducing stunting and its contribution to the triple burden of malnutrition remained a focus. The UNICEF played a strong role in advocacy around the triple burden of malnutrition faced by many PICTs, highlighting the positive role to be played by adolescents in promoting healthy foods. It continued its collaboration with the Pacific Island Food Revolution (PIFR), creating a spin-off TV series that promotes healthy eating among children in the Pacific. This adolescent-led initiative is part of UNICEF's broader programme to help 14 PICTs overcome the triple burden of malnutrition facing the Pacific, where stunting, micronutrient deficiency, and being overweight and obesity coincide. It uses reality TV as a stimulating, evocative and entertaining medium to communicate healthy eating habits, reaching previously untapped audiences in the Pacific.

UNICEF played a lead role and promoted the participation of children, adolescents, and youth in national food system dialogues convened by 11 PICTs in collaboration with the FAO and WFP. The food system dialogues culminated in agreements for game-changing solutions, pathways, and actions for achieving food- and nutrition-related SDGs. These game-changing pathways were presented to the UN Food Summit, where countries pledged their implementation.

FOCUS

To reduce stunting and its contribution to the triple burden of malnutrition.



UNICEF PLAYED A ROLE

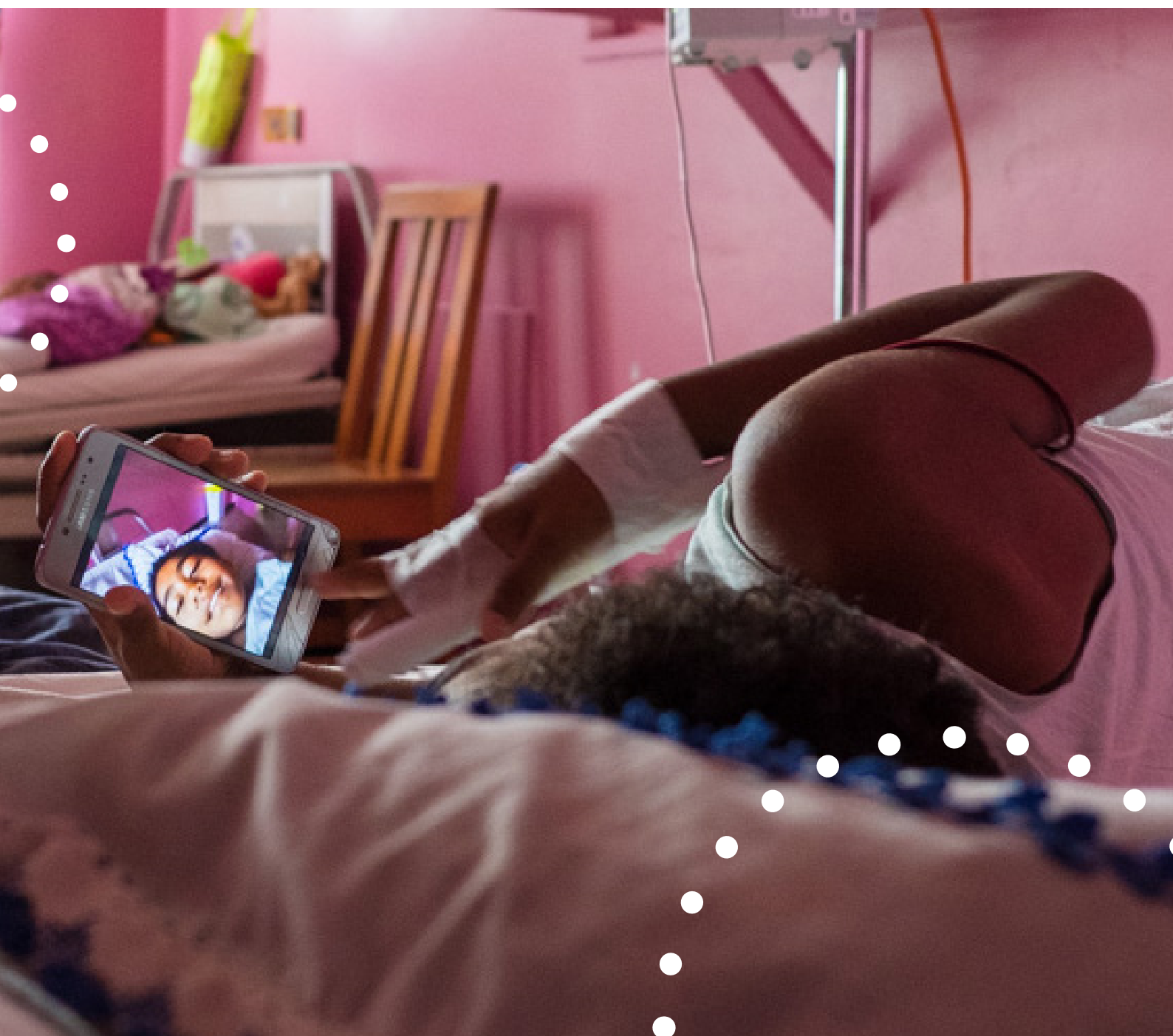


in advocacy around the triple burden of malnutrition faced by many PICTs, highlighting the positive role of adolescents to promote healthy food, and reaching previously untapped audiences in the Pacific through a TV series.

Building Sustainable Health Systems

WHO worked with countries and partners to leverage the pandemic to build sustainable health systems that will save lives during the pandemic and also long into the future. Laboratory capacity, for example, was significantly strengthened through the provision of training, equipment, and supplies. All countries across the Pacific are now equipped with polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing capacity, which is key for detecting many infectious diseases, including the virus which causes COVID-19, dengue, tuberculosis, measles, influenza, and others. In Fiji, for instance, an innovative new laboratory built from shipping containers was opened with WHO's support in Nadi in November 2021. This was to provide additional capacity to back up existing testing in the country's Western Division and facilitate the reopening of tourism.

Photo: UNDP Pacific



Midwifery Faculty Development Programme (FDP)

The purpose of the FDP was to strengthen the midwifery faculty capacity across the Pacific region, through the review, development, implementation, and evaluation of the midwifery education curricula. An online FDP was rolled out and the capacity of 69 Midwifery and Nursing Faculty members across eight PICs was built to provide authentic midwifery education for quality service delivery. As a result, midwifery curricula reviews for four countries (Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, and the Solomon Islands) have been completed.



FDP

strengthened the midwifery faculty capacity across the Pacific region through the review, development, implementation, and evaluation of the midwifery education curricula.



An online FDP

was rolled out, building the capacity to provide education for 69 midwifery and nursing faculty members, and completing the midwifery curricula reviews for four countries: Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, and the Solomon Islands.

Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child, Adolescent Health Policies

The reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child, and adolescent health policies were finalised for Vanuatu. This is currently being developed for Fiji, Tonga, and Kiribati.



Young boys play on a beach as the sun sets in Fiji.
Photo: ILO Pacific



SGBV Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs)

To strengthen health systems response to SGBV, UNFPA worked with Ministries of Health to support six countries (Samoa, RMI, FSM Pohnpei State, Vanuatu, FSM Yap State, and Tonga) to develop SGBV, and the SOPs that strengthens the health system response to SGBV. The health sector has struggled with their role in GBV response, as it has been viewed as 'NGO business' in the past. The SOPs provide the foundation for the health systems' strengthening approach to capacity building of health workers on survivor-centred clinical response and strengthening of the referral pathways. This aligns with national multi-sectoral service delivery protocols for SGBV developed/under development in the various countries.

Access to Live-Saving Antiretroviral Treatment

Through an unprecedented effort that brings together multilateral and bilateral partners, communities, and the private sector, people living with HIV in Fiji will continue to access live-saving antiretroviral treatment during the height of the COVID-19 outbreak of the Delta variant. The Atlanta Medicare Co. Ltd in Thailand donated over USD \$200,000 for first line ARV drugs that directly supports almost 500 people living with HIV in Fiji. Additionally, the Australian government supported the purchase of paediatric ARV treatment for children living with HIV and covered transportation costs from Thailand in August. A second trench of donations was coordinated between UNAIDS India and the Indian Government through the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO), consisting of first line and paediatric doses of HIV medication estimated at USD \$5000, which was officially handed over on World AIDS Day, Dec 1st, 2022.

Safe Schools

Pacific countries continued implementation of COVID-19 education response plans, both for immediate response and long-term system strengthening, to ensure learning continuity and safe school operations. Safe schools training programmes were developed and implemented in Fiji and Solomon Islands. In Fiji, the training reached 196 schools (96% of total) in the Northern Division (196 school leaders, 108 school management committee (SMC) members) in early 2021, before the second outbreak halted other trainings. In Solomon Islands, 494 teachers, 432 school leaders, and 384 SMC members from 432 schools were trained as provincial trainers to roll-out the programme at school-level nationwide. Later in 2021, Fiji conducted online safe schools reopening training for 719 primary and 176 secondary schools (98% of all schools nationally), accompanied by extensive communications and communication for development (C4D) efforts to support the phased reopening of all schools, by November 2021.



SAFE SCHOOLS TRAINING PROGRAMMES

for COVID-19 education response plans continued to be developed and implemented in Fiji and the Solomon Islands.





Andrew, a child living with disability, is assisted by a special needs teacher. **Photo:** UNICEF Pacific

Fiji

Training reached 196 school (96% of total) in the Northern Division, including:

196

school leaders



108

school management committee members



719

primary and 176 secondary schools received online training in 2021



The Solomon Islands

Training reached 432 schools, including:

432

school leaders



384

school management committee members



494

teachers



Early Childhood Education plans, systems, curricula and services strengthened

Evidence-based plans, systems, curricula, and services for early childhood education (ECE) were strengthened across the Pacific. National ECE priorities and strategies were defined for Tonga and Tuvalu through ECE diagnostic workshops, which will inform sector planning and policies. Kiribati and Tonga strengthened national ECE curricula with training and piloting. In Fiji, an animated television series, 'Bula Kids', was disseminated widely in both Fijian and Hindi to promote parent engagement in learning and development at home.

Grade four teacher at the War Memorial Primary School in South Tarawa, Kiribati. Ririene Kenneth recently attended a UNICEF-supported teacher training programme targeted at primary and secondary teachers. The pilot programme focused on building the capacity of teachers so they can support their students' learning and wellbeing to minimize the learning loss, should schools close again.

Photo: UNICEF Pacific



Regional Review of Inclusive Education

Pacific countries continued to develop robust and relevant education sector plans and strengthened the collection and use of education data to inform planning. Inclusive education was strengthened at national levels. A regional review of Inclusive Education was completed in 2021 to expand the knowledge base on education policies, programmes, and data collection mechanisms, with a special focus on learners with disabilities and out-of-school children in the Pacific. High-level findings from the regional review were presented at the Forum Education Ministers Meeting (FEEdMM) and the draft report was endorsed by the Pacific Heads of Education System (PHES). In addition, the Pacific Regional Inclusive Education Framework was endorsed at FEEdMM to improve the prioritization of inclusion throughout education-sector collaboration across the Pacific, and ministers requested that the Pacific Inclusive Education Taskforce, to which UNICEF is Secretariat, be lifted from senior official to ministerial representation.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

UNESCO supported the regional development of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) teaching and learning e-resources, encompassing ECE, Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary education with contributions from Fiji, Nauru, Niue, Marshall Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Solomon Islands. Over 70 participants from 15 Pacific SIDS met virtually for the ESD Pacific Regional Workshop in August 2021. The regional workshop, along with the virtual training of trainers participated by eight countries, provided opportunities to share knowledge, resources, and experience on Education for Sustainable Development in the region. Support for the Learning Management Platforms (LMPs) enables countries to expand access to online teaching and learning resources in response to COVID-19 and prepare for the future. ESD resources would be disseminated through these LMPs and other subject areas.



UNESCO

supported the regional development of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) teaching and learning e-resources.



70+ participants

from 15 Pacific SIDS met virtually for the ESD Pacific Regional Workshop in August 2021.



Abdul, 8, gets ready for class with his new UNICEF backpack, Seaqqa, Fiji. **Photo:** UNICEF Pacific

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

In support of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), further technical assistance was provided in 2021 to six countries (Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, PNG, and Samoa) that have expressed interest in continued support and to assist resource mobilisation in the areas of priorities identified. Consultations have led to an identification of regional interest in Greening TVET, which will be supported in 2022 and beyond.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)

Since the virtual launch of the International Technical and Programmatic Guidance of Out-of-School CSE/FLE (Guidelines) in 2020, the Pacific is witnessing a changing landscape to pro CSE/FLE, with growing political interest and national commitment resulting to notable milestones. Under the regional programme, the Spotlight Initiative is credited for having set the stage for a political tone that identifies with and values the relevance of CSE to transform the lives of young people.

UNFPA has been supporting countries to establish and operationalize CSE/FLE coordination mechanisms that are playing an oversight and advocacy role for CSE/FLE. There is on-going development of CSE/FLE resource materials, as well as technical assistance to Ministries/departments of Education, to integrate CSE/FLE in the targeted syllabus for grades and training of primary trainers, all with technical support from FPNSW.

Access to WASH Facilities and Supplies

In Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu, UNICEF supported improvements in gender-segregated WASH facilities and supplies, including the promotion of menstrual hygiene management (MHM) in schools and health care facilities. In Vanuatu, significant progress was made in WinS, with 42 of the targeted 74 schools in Penama Province now meeting the minimum requirements for WASH. Inspired by the progress, UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Education to scale up to all 595 schools in the country. With Australian financial support, 31 schools were equipped with gender-segregated WASH facilities in Fiji. In Solomon Islands, 38 schools improved their WASH facilities and 42 school WASH committees/WASH clubs were trained in Guadalcanal Province. Additional COVID-19 resources mobilised by UNICEF resulted in new WinHCF programmes in Fiji, Kiribati, FSM, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.

Vanuatu



42

schools in Penama Province are now meeting the minimum requirements for WASH.

Fiji



31

schools were equipped with gender-segregated WASH facilities.

The Solomon Islands



38

schools improved their WASH facilities and 42 WASH clubs were trained in Guadalcanal.

Progress on drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in schools. **Photo:** UNICEF Pacific



Strengthening WASH Systems

The UNICEF's technical and financial assistance on strengthening WASH systems led to the finalisation of the Water and Sewerage Act in Fiji (to be presented to Parliament in early 2022), strengthening the capacity of the Department of Water Resources in Vanuatu and government leadership on sanitation in Solomon Islands. To help close significant data gaps and to promote evidence-based decision-making, surveys on WinS and WinHCF were completed in Fiji, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. UNICEF supported the College of Micronesia to establish a baseline on WinS (including menstrual hygiene management), WinHCF, and WASH in religious facilities in FSM. In Kiribati, UNICEF supported assessments of WinS infrastructure and groundwater and water quality on North Tarawa Island. A significant achievement was the completion of the multi-country Pacific WinS Formative Evaluation of the Three-Star Approach, covering more than 600 schools in Fiji, Kiribati, FSM, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, providing strategic directions for scaling-up WinS. With UNICEF support, 46 participants from PICTs completed an eight-module WinHCF course at Emory University.



UNICEF technical and financial assistance on strengthening WASH systems helped to:

- finalise the Water and Sewerage Act in Fiji
- strengthen the capacity of the Department of Water Resources in Vanuatu
- strengthen government leadership on sanitation in the Solomon Islands
- complete surveys on WinS and WinHCF in Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu
- complete the multi-country Pacific WinS Formative Evaluation of the Three-Star Approach, covering 600+ schools in Fiji, Kiribati, FSM, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu

No health without mental health: Vanuatu mental health officer Norika Watt said being involved in family and community activities helps people deal with stress. **Photo:** UNDP Pacific



In Vanuatu, Communities are Key to Making Mental Health Care for all a Reality

In Vanuatu, simultaneous health crises in the past two years have highlighted the urgent need to protect and promote the mental health and wellbeing of everyone.

In addition to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, public health and safety in Vanuatu was also severely threatened by [Tropical Cyclone Harold](#) and a volcanic eruption on the island of Tanna in 2020.

Measures to prevent the spread of COVID, such as port closures and stay-at-home orders, affected the country's ability to respond to these other health emergencies, adding to the challenges of providing support to people experiencing mental distress.

Forced to rely on local resources, the Ministry of Health, with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO), channeled limited resources towards vulnerable groups and empowered communities to provide necessary support needed on the ground.

Vanuatu Ministry of Health National Mental Health Officer, Norika Watt, says mental health is more than identifying and treating mental illness.

She says mental health must be embedded into daily life within communities, in the places where people live, work, learn, play, and thrive.

This will contribute to reducing stigma and facilitate the involvement of different groups in mental health.





Learning Passport Brings Innovation to Education in Kiribati

In 2021, the Kiribati Ministry of Education worked closely with UNICEF to ensure that learning could continue, even in the case of forced school closures due to COVID-19. They did this through strengthened multiple elements of the education system, such as ensuring home-based learning was accessible by all.

To do this, the Kiribati Learning Passport was developed - a digital learning platform accessible both online and offline, delivered through UNICEF support and powered by Microsoft Community Training.

It provides continuous access to quality education for children regardless of where they live, or whether they have internet connectivity.

Twelve-year-old student, Betangnga, from Bikinibeu village in South Tarawa, downloaded his video lessons from the comfort of his family's traditional open hut (kiakia).

Although internet speed in Bikinibeu can be slow, he waits patiently for the lessons to appear and knows that once they are downloaded, he will be able to access them whenever and wherever he wants without having to wait.

He heard about Learning Passport through a school outreach campaign initiated by the officers of the Ministry of Education and through an SMS circulated to all mobile phone holders in Kiribati.

Betangnga holds his phone to the screen, showing how he accesses the Learning Passport lessons virtually. **Photo:** UNICEF Pacific



GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

By 2022, people and communities in the Pacific will contribute to and benefit from inclusive, informed, and transparent decision-making processes, accountable and responsive institutions, and improved access to justice.

The UN continued its programming efforts in the 14 PICTs, supporting national efforts to sustain peace and stability and working with governments and parliaments to develop innovative mechanisms to increase interaction and consultation with citizens, focusing on marginalised groups, women, and youth in particular. Interactive community-to-government solutions, including digital communication, are supported to address the issues of geographic remoteness, access, and voice and will contribute to working with national institutions, regional organizations, and civil society to advocate for the legal and policy reforms needed to increase the number of women represented in national and local legislatures and institutions.

Increasing Women's and Youth Political Representation and Participation

The Pacific remains the region with the lowest representation of women in parliaments/legislative bodies. The UN Development system therefore supported six PICs (Tonga, Nauru, The Solomons, Kiribati, Fiji, and Tuvalu) through capacity building, peer to peer support, and south-south exchanges. The purpose was to increase women MPs' knowledge of economic recovery in the COVID-19 context, women, peace and security, and options for increasing women's political participation through the design of political and electoral laws. The UN's technical investments and support were crucial in enabling and increasing the participation of 200 women in the work of the parliament committees in Fiji, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands parliaments.

The UN supported the Youth Parliament and Women practice Parliament in Tonga, increasing the knowledge of 28 youths (14 females / 14 males) and 26 women on Parliament and parliamentary processes.

problem



The Pacific remains the region with the **lowest representation of women in parliaments/legislative bodies.**

solution



Technical investments and support from the UN were crucial in **increasing the participation of 200 women** within the parliament committees in Fiji, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands, and increasing the knowledge of 28 youths and 26 women.

Strengthening Electoral Processes

Through electoral assistance support, the UN, through the adoption of innovative digital technologies, enabled the Government of Vanuatu to register 220,978 citizens (72% of the population) spread over 3,363 villages and 83 islands and obtain their first biometric National Identity Cards. This gave them not only legal identity but automatic voter registration, enabling participation in elections. The legal identify of residents of Vanuatu lays the foundation of a central civil and voter register with high integrity and accuracy, contributing to increased trust and confidence in electoral processes.

The UN support was critical in enabling the newly formed Nauru Electoral Commission (NEC) to successfully hold a full national Electoral process in 2021. The enhanced capacity of the Nauru Electoral Commission resulted in the conduct of multi-level outreach programme in advance of the poll, which produced a high level of understanding of the new process for all voters and resulted in high voter turnout. Covering social media, traditional media, SMS messaging, community mobilisation events (CMEs), and face-to-face door knocking ensured that all voters were reached and no one was left behind.

The adoption of innovative digital technologies enabled the Government of Vanuatu to obtain their first biometric National Identity Cards for:

220,978 citizens



3,363 villages



83 islands





Building capacity of Naoero Election Commission officials, Nauru. **Photo:** UNDP Pacific

Peace Building and Social Cohesion

The 2021 Solomon Islands unrest was a series of demonstrations and violent riots in the Solomon Islands from 24 to 27 November 2021. It started off as a peaceful protest against the government's decision to recognize China over Taiwan. Protests demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare erupted in the capital of the South Pacific nation on November 24, which later turned violent, leading authorities to institute a 36-hour lockdown.

Based on the initial assessment of the Central Bank of the Solomon Islands, 63 buildings were burned down, including schools and police outposts, 1,000 employees lost their jobs, and the total damage to the economy could reach 534 million US dollars. The government lost about 36 million US dollars in potential revenue from tobacco excise taxes alone. Honiara represents 30 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product

Under the PBF project in the Solomon Islands, UN support resulted in youth and women actively involved in community level dialogues to enhance peaceful co-existence and social cohesion.

According to the Central Bank of the Solomon Islands, demonstrations and violent riots that took place in the Solomon Islands from 24 to 27 November 2021 caused:



63 buildings to burn down - including schools and police outposts

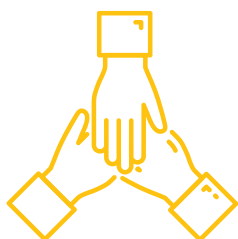


1,000 employees to lose their jobs



the government to lose a potential 36M USD from tobacco taxes

Total damage to the economy could reach **US\$534M**



PBF Project

In the Solomon Islands, UN support has resulted in youth and women actively involved in community level dialogues to enhance peaceful co-existence and social cohesion.

Community Engagement

In 2021, the UN developed a training curriculum adapted to the Pacific context and trained 30 participants from 13 Pacific SIDS in methods and approaches that focus on community engagement and enable the effective implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS) and the National University of Samoa (NUS), in collaboration with the UN, developed this first draft Science Technology and Innovation (ST&I) Policy and Plan of Action 2022-2027 for Samoa.

Strengthening Access to Justice, Human Rights and Rule of Law

The Access to Justice and Adult and Juvenile Survivors of SGBV programmes were strengthened through the UN System's support in development, launch, and use of a new court procedure ("Bench Book") for handling child victims, witnesses, offenders, and children in need of care and protection in Fiji. A total of 91 (33 female) police officers and 81 (44 female) medical officers and nurses acquired new knowledge and skills on use of sexual assault examination kits. Police inspectors and 137 new police recruits acquired knowledge and skills for the handling of child victims, witnesses, and alleged offenders.

The capacity of the judiciary in Fiji was enhanced through the digitisation of the case management system, enabling all levels of the courts to be connected and facilitating easy access to real time case information to the judiciary, allowing lawyers and litigants to file cases online.

As part of Fiji's commitment to comply with the Convention against Torture and UPR recommendations to uphold human rights of those in detention, the UN supported the Fiji Police force with procurement, installation, training, and use of Video Recorded Interview Equipment.

In implementing the leave no-one behind principle, the UN, through a multi-stakeholder service provision platform in Fiji (REACH), effectively provided services to 4162 Fijians (1231 adult females, 1145 adult males, 964 youth females, 735 youth males, 43 female children, 44 male children, and a total of 86 persons with disabilities). Services provided included legal support, poverty and disability benefits scheme, business registration, birth, death, and marriage registration, registration, voter card registration, Covid-19 assistance, updating of voter registration, government subsidy/free water tanks, medical services, and psycho-social support. Community outreach-based service provision was particularly impactful for Fiji considering limitation to services and financial hardships due to the outbreak of the second wave of COVID-19.

Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD):

The Cook Islands is the focus country for this joint programme implemented by three UN agencies, UNDP, UNICEF, and UNESCO. The programme is currently in its inception phase with a dedicated budget of US\$100,000 towards developing the full US\$400,000 programme. As part of the project development inception phase, community consultations have proceeded and completed, capturing 10% of the Cook Islands population and direct consultation with most of the Organisations of Persons with Disabilities.

Promoting Volunteerism

UNV has a double mandate of mobilizing volunteers and promoting volunteerism (footnote/reference to the [UNV mission: Promote volunteerism | UNV](#)). In 2021, 73 UN volunteers were deployed in the Pacific region, with 19 national volunteers and 54 international volunteers, contributing to a wide range of fields from human rights protection and youth engagement, through to disaster relief, public information, and administrative support.

UNV Pacific and its volunteers were also involved in major international events, such as the 2021 UNFCCC COP 26 (with a side event title: Volunteering for Resilience), contributing to the broader international conversation on the role of volunteerism and disaster management and on the need for complementarity of bottom up and top-down approaches to leverage the expertise, innovation, and networks of all players, including volunteers, in facilitating the delivery of major projects, and building stronger more sustainable and resilient communities. In 2021, UNV celebrated its 50th anniversary. UNV Pacific hosted a Volunteer Awards in the Pacific to recognize the outstanding contribution of volunteers to community development.

The Samoa Knowledge Society Initiative (SKSI)

The Samoa Knowledge Society Initiative is a rights-based access to knowledge programme implemented by UNDP and UNESCO. The programme has seen the transfer of equipment and ICT components for the functioning of the knowledge society with an accessible bi-lingual interface. The joint programme has delivered training on access to information and promoted government policy on open access to information. Agritouch App had a soft launch with partners on 7th October 2021. The knowledge society is creating an environment of accessible open learning by providing physical resources and updated policies that will enhance equitable learning in Samoa.

Social Protection Initiative

A multi-country joint programme under the Samoa MCO, the Social Protection Initiative's main objective is to develop evidence-based nationally owned social protection systems to accelerate the SDGs. The programme aims to impact 250,000 households across the four countries with a total value of US\$3.4 million. The initiative is implemented jointly by UNESCO, ILO, UNESCAP, UNICEF, and UNDP as the convening agency. The programme reported transformative results for 2021:

- Comprehensive stock takes and reviews of social protection systems in the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, and Tokelau were completed, of which a draft national social protection policy (nspp) was developed.
- Completion of the assessment of the gender responsiveness system based on the social protection floor review has recognised gender issues that directly affect gender inequalities, with the view to improve gender outcomes and avoid gender biases or discrimination in social protection.
- Development of the Samoa National Employment Policy 2021/2025.
- Improvements in evidence-based knowledge.
- Completed research on social protection fiscal space and analysis for persons with disabilities.
- Delivery of the first multidimensional poverty index (mpi) for the Cook Islands, Samoa, and Tokelau.
- Finalised the Samoa Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system.

Parliamentary Developments in the Pacific

Leveraging digital technology has been widely successful in parliamentary strengthening. In the absence of regional face-to-face conferences, the UN's adoption of digital platforms enabled knowledge sharing and capacity building with over 14 webinar series for members, staff, CSOs, political party representatives and political party regulatory bodies, and electoral officials on a range of topics related to democratic governance from across 10 Pacific countries. A total of 232 Members of Parliaments (including 32 female MPs out of 48), 271 parliamentary staff, and 432 external partners of parliaments' (independent bodies, political parties, and CSOs) capacities were enhanced through online trainings and engaged in discussions forum to enhance oversight capacity of parliament.

The UN supported four parliaments and 169 members of parliament (including 17 female MPs) to receive in-depth briefings with independent analysis of the annual budget and budgetary commitments on COVID-19 response, climate change, and gender equality - which informed the parliamentary debate and vote on national budgets

Oversight, Transparency and Accountability

Through UN Support in 2021, audit backlog from Supreme Institutions in two PICs were reduced significantly, increasing the capacity by legislatures to exert oversight of public finance. Citizens in six countries have access to simplified budget information and in four countries the engagement between civil society and government resulted in more systematic and transparent budget consultations.

In 2021, 18 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders adopted the UN supported Teieniwa Vision as the anti-corruption roadmap for PICs' engagement through PIFS processes. With the UN's support, the Pacific anti-corruption voice was heard in the UNGA Special Session against Corruption. The UN's assistance contributed to addressing and prioritising the UNCAC review recommendations, including - in relation to the implementation of existing anti-corruption strategies in two countries (SOI and Kiribati) and Fiji - rolling out a nationwide anti-bribery and integrity campaign.

There was also institutional knowledge exchange between the Fiji Independent Commission against Corruption (FICAC) and the Solomon Islands Independent Commission against Corruption (SIICAC), formalised through a Memorandum of Cooperation on anti-corruption knowledge exchange and capacity-building.

His Excellency Te Beretitenti Taneti Maamau, the President of Kiribati, delivered a statement at the Conference of the States Parties to UNCAC (COSP 9), as Head of Delegation that included the Secretary for the Public Service Office and the Chair of the Leadership Commission. This is the third successive COSP where H.E. Te Beretitenti attended.

Data

In 2021, the UN Development system successfully supported the governments of Vanuatu and Tonga to complete the Population and Housing Census. The following were supported:

- Tonga- 2021 Census was conducted and the preliminary results have been released
<https://tongastats.gov.to/document-library/#6-231-2021-1630540712>
- Vanuatu- 2020 Population & Housing Census Volume 1 Report
<https://vnso.gov.vu/index.php/en/census- and surveys/census/2020populationhousingcensus#volume-1-basic-tables-report>

Working in collaboration with SPC, the UN supported the carrying out of the Fiji Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in 2021 by the Fiji Bureau of Statistics (FBoS) in collaboration with other government ministries as part of the Global MICS Programme.

https://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/images/documents/Fiji_MICS_2021/Fiji_MICS_2021_Fact_Sheet_-_Preliminary_Report.pdf

Tonga's Parliament continues to support initiatives that encourage youth and women's participation, as well as increasing awareness of their roles in society.
Photo: Office of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga



Tongan National Youth & Women's Parliament to Boost Knowledge and Confidence of Future Leaders

28 youths living in Tonga took over Parliament as part of the country's fifth Youth and Second Women's Parliament to support Tonga's goal to build a modern, inclusive, and interactive Parliament.

The youths participated in a three-day orientation practicing deliberation on motions and a petition as part of their preparation for the Parliament sitting, which took place from 28 to 29 October, followed by the Women's Parliament from 4-5 November.

Jane Langilangi, 16, of 'Eua, learnt about Parliament in school, so she found the experience to be changing, and she hopes to one day become a female politician.

"I would love to start my career as a lawyer for Tonga Parliament and become a Member of Parliament when I am matured to run for Parliament. My advice for young people in Tonga is to not belittle yourself and always stand up for what you believe in," she said.

These sittings will see youths discuss issues that affect them, as well as their nation, such as illicit drugs-related social issues, climate change, education, health, and good governance.

Tonga's parliament continues to support initiatives that encourage youth and women's participation as well as increasing awareness of their roles in society.

This youth and women led parliament is facilitated by the Legislative Assembly of Tonga with support from UNICEF, UNFPA, and UNDP. The UNDP's Pacific Parliamentary Effectiveness Initiative (PPEI) Project, funded by New Zealand, supports Tonga Legislative Assembly and other legislatures of the Pacific Island Countries to increase transparency and accountability in the Pacific countries.

Talk to us, we can help you - CSO Counselling Helpline supports Fijians in need

Looking into the face of her newborn baby, Nanise (real name withheld) felt strength rising within her. She recalled how she regained her confidence through the generous support provided by a civil society network when she was eight months pregnant.

She had been taking care of her six-year-old son with no stable income and considered begging on the streets for money.

After speaking with a neighbour, she learned of the toll-free number, 5626, to a helpline for psychosocial counselling provided by Fijian CSO (Civil Society Organisation), Empower Pacific, and she contacted them immediately. Within four days, Nanise was provided with baby essentials and linked to CSOs for food assistance.

When COVID-19 reached Fiji in 2020, Empower Pacific made their counselling services available by phone to reduce risk of infections.

In May 2021, Empower Pacific created the helpline through support from the governments of Australia and New Zealand.

The UN, through UNDP's REACH Project and the Japanese Government, issued public service announcements about Empower Pacific's services to vulnerable communities to strengthen social, economic, and legal rights of people.

Patrick Morgam, Empower Pacific CEO (Chief Executive Officer) said since these videos aired, the number of calls for counselling jumped.

"In August, we received 334 calls, while in September, we received 538 calls in the first two weeks alone. We receive more than 60 calls in a busy day," he said.

"We received calls from parents concerning children's drug abuse, women suffering from domestic violence, single mothers, and individuals protecting family members with disabilities from COVID-19," said Mr. Morgam.





HUMAN RIGHTS

By 2022, people in the Pacific will effectively enjoy a strengthened legal framework and institutions that deliver human rights protection in accordance with international commitments under relevant treaties and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

The UN continued its efforts to support its 14 programming PICTs to ensure increased visibility of human rights, PICs' engagement and reporting under international human rights mechanisms, and national human rights implementation. The UN continued to provide technical support to strengthen national legal frameworks and institutions that deliver human rights protection and support countries in implementing international human rights standards. Many PICTs experience difficulties on timely human rights reporting and effective implementation. Common human rights issues raised and recommendations to PICTs include increasing ratification of treaties and Optional Protocols, establishing national human rights institutions, and addressing gender-based violence, child protection, ill-treatment, and torture.



Young women in Samoa pick fruits from the land.

Photo: John Rae/UNCDF Pacific

Pacific States Engagement with the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

The Pacific Island's engagement in Universal Periodic Review (UPR) reporting was strengthened through joint UN support. Under the leadership of the RCO and OHCHR, UN agencies contributed to the UNCT submissions for the third cycle UPR of the human rights situations of the FSM, Palau, the Solomon Islands, and Samoa. Technical guidance provided by the OHCHR and UNICEF included the provision of briefings for government delegations, including a mock UPR session and UPR follow-up consultations for the government delegation of Samoa.

To increase meaningful youth participation in the process, UNFPA, in collaboration with the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education and CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality, positioned the Pacific ICPD25 Youth Network and the Solomon Islands National Youth Congress to deliver statements in the Solomon Islands UPR. The youth advocates championed the Nairobi Summit and the broader ICPD agenda.



9-year-old Seraphine looks to the camera from a classroom which her family lived in after Tropical Cyclone Harold destroyed their home. **Photo:** UNICEF Pacific

Pacific States Engagement with the CRC (Convention on the Rights of the Child), CAT (Convention Against Torture) and ILO Conventions

Joint advocacy interventions were undertaken to increase child rights compliance, awareness on the prohibition of torture, and the ratification of ILO Conventions. There was progress made on the ratification of the CRC Optional Protocols, with Fiji's ratification of the Optional Protocol on the Sale of children (OPSC), child prostitution and child pornography, and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC). Additionally, the Solomon Islands announced its intention to ratify the CRC Optional Protocols at the 76th Session of the UNGA (UN General Assembly) in September. There was capacity development with the SPC and the Convention against Torture Initiative (CTI) to promote the ratification of CAT by seven Pacific countries was also undertaken.

High-level advocacy on the ratification of ILO Conventions was strengthened through joint UN advocacy by the UNICEF, ILO, and RCO. The UN jointly reached out to a number of Heads of States in the region (Tuvalu, RMI, Palau, Tonga, and the Cook Islands), calling for the ratification of ILO Conventions on the Minimum Age and Forced Labour as part of the 2021 campaign for the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour.



Establishment of National Mechanism for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-Up (NMIRFs)

The sharing of knowledge on best practices on governmental mechanisms and processes to ensure coherent and coordinated engagement with international human rights mechanisms was promoted at an Asia-Pacific consultation on NMIRFs (National Mechanism on Reporting and Follow). The consultation was organised by the OHCHR and saw eight Pacific countries participate in the event: Fiji, Kiribati, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, PNG, and Samoa. Building on this and at the national level in Kiribati, OHCHR, together with the SPC, organised training for members of the National Human Rights Task Force to draft its initial overdue report to the Committee against Torture.

Human Rights Defenders - Specific attention to and advocacy on the rights of Women Human Rights Defenders, including those from rural and remote areas, was progressed through conducting scoping missions in seven Pacific countries (Fiji, Kiribati, RMI, PNG, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu), culminating in a regional OHCHR report on the situation of WHRDs in the Pacific.

Disability Inclusion - The UN made significant strides to implement disability inclusion in UN Agencies work in the Pacific. An important achievement in 2021 was the implementation of the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) piloted in Fiji, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands. The pilot focused on three UNDIS elements – accessibility, recruitment and procurement, joint planning, and partnerships – to support increased awareness of UN staff on disability inclusion procurement and hiring, as well as through the conduct of accessibility audits of UN premises. To advance this work, there has been UNCT agreement to cost-share a national Disability Inclusion officer for 2022.

Human Rights awareness - There has been active engagement to support the promotion and protection of the rights of Pacific Human Rights Defenders. In a first for the global south, a University course on Human Rights Defenders was launched by the University of the South Pacific (USP) and OHCHR. The milestone course aims to inspire a new generation of leaders about human rights, defending human rights, and national and international HR mechanisms, good practices, and networking.

National Achievements

1. Tonga and the Solomon Islands – Two critical policy developments to address migration, climate change, and human rights include the development of strategies to address safe and orderly migration and relocation. The Government of Tonga has adopted a new Migration for Sustainable Development Policy (MSDP). The MSDP prioritizes safe and orderly migration, promotes migrants' dignity, and the advancement and protection of migrants' human rights. In the Solomon Islands, the development of evidence-based and rights-based Planned Relocation Guidelines was initiated. Supported by IOM and in the spirit of participatory processes, consultations were undertaken with women, men, and youth across three provinces and four communities in the Solomon Islands. Interviews with a representative of an Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) were also undertaken to support disability inclusion. The draft guidelines will be finalized in 2022 following national consultation and validation.

The UN, through IOM, has initiated the development of evidence-based and rights-based Planned Relocation Guidelines in the Solomon Islands. **Photo:** John Rae/ UNCDF Pacific



2. Fiji and Samoa - Positive momentum promoting the independence and effectiveness of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in the Pacific was seen in the re-accreditation of two NHRIs. In June 2021 and after a lapse of 14 years, the Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission was re-accredited with B status by the Global Association of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI). In October 2021, the GANHRI renewed the Samoa Ombudsman's previous A status accreditation, indicating an important example for other countries in the Pacific.

Progress NHRI Status

FIJI

Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission was re-admitted and accredited by GANHRI with **B status.**

SAMOA

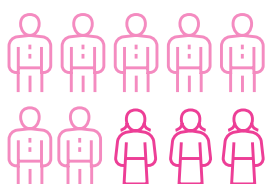
GANHRI re-accredited the Samoa Ombudsman with **A status.** Samoa is the only NHRI amongst Pacific Island Countries with an A status NHRI.

TUVALU

Tuvalu has passed legislation establishing an NHRI but it is not yet operational.

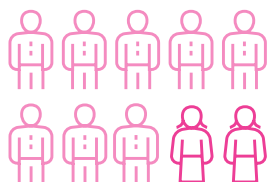
2021 Law Enforcement Training:

Police training



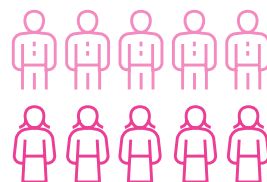
Total: **217**

Corrections training



Total: **30**

CTI regional training



Total: **25**

3. FSM and Vanuatu – the Reduction of Gender Based Violence risks and support for survivors of violence was supported in 2021. In FSM, the establishment of the first dedicated shelter of victims of human rights trafficking in Pohnpei by the Division of Anti-Human Trafficking Services (DAHTS) has strengthened victim support services. In Vanuatu, the new 'Famili i Redi' (Family Ready) programme by the Vanuatu Department of Labour aims to reduce GBV risks and related impacts on children and families that stem from labour mobility schemes.
4. Tonga and Fiji – Increased commitment by Pacific governments to meaningful adolescent and youth engagement and participation in national development, political, and decision-making processes continued to gain momentum. The re-activation of the UN Youth Interagency Working Group by UNFPA, ILO, UNICEF, and OHCHR saw strong support for the Regional International Youth Day celebration, which brought together 100 young people from FSM and other PICs remotely. National platforms that provided the opportunity for advancing the rights of young people included: the annual Tonga National Youth and Women's Practice Parliament, and in Fiji, 200 young people (102 females and 92 males, 15-35 years) from 70 registered youth clubs participated in the first National Youth Climate Action Summit. The Fiji initiative directly exemplified a commitment to youth engagement and participation in climate action and legislative development, as young people were consulted on the newly enacted Fiji Climate Change Act 2021. Some of these young people participated as activists in COP 26 in Glasgow in November.



5. Fiji, FSM, the Solomon Islands, RMI, and Tonga - Commitments have increased for countries reporting disaster disaggregated data by sex. National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs) were supported by UNDRR, the SPC, and RedR Australia to build capacity on the Sendai Framework for Monitoring (SFM). This support to NDMOs to understand the impacts of disasters on different groups enabled them to plan risk reduction strategies that address their unique vulnerabilities through a human rights-based approach. The UNDRR will work further to enhance disaggregated data by age, disability, and income in 2022.

In Vanuatu, the new 'Famili i Redi' (Family Ready) programme by the Vanuatu Department of Labour aims to reduce GBV risks and related impacts on children and families that stem from labour mobility schemes. **Photo:** UN in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu & Vanuatu



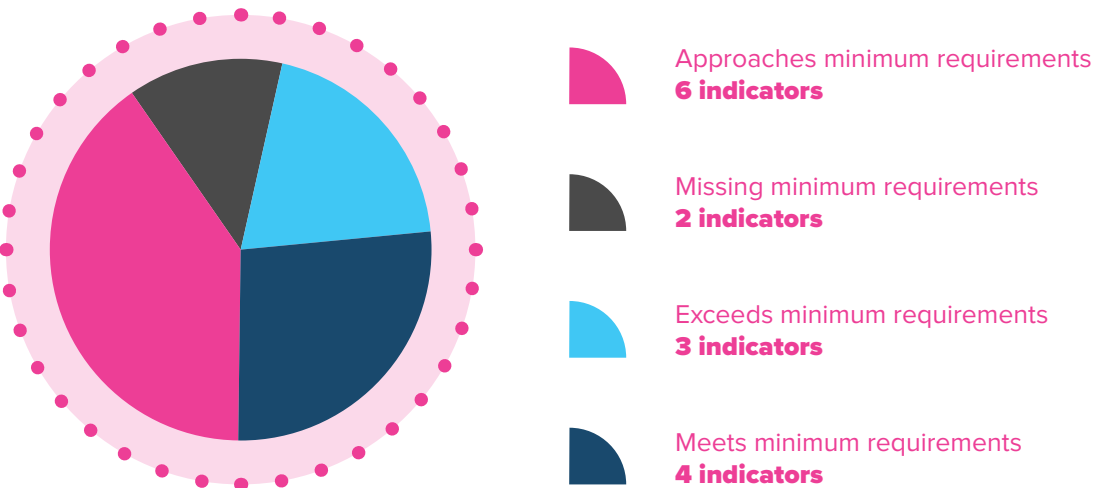
Challenges and Lessons Learnt

- 1. It is important to consider support, programming, and results at the national, sub-national, and district level.
- 2. There are opportunities to provide consolidated and joint ONE UN support through joint programming and increased links and partnerships between UN agencies, and more can be seized.
- 3. Increased engagement with civil society is an area that can be further advanced.

Progress on the Promise to “leave no one behind”

The UNPS was designed to “leave no one behind” (LNOB), to provide an umbrella framework for strategies that embody the UN commitment to “reach the furthest behind first”, and to ensure interconnectedness between humanitarian and development assistance. The LNOB principle underpinned the design of UNPS, with all six outcome areas addressing immediate and structural challenges affecting the lives of the most vulnerable. The UNPS was envisaged to create development opportunities for those who are marginalized socially, economically, and politically, and those isolated by poverty and distance. Poverty reduction has been a key cross-cutting theme of the work of all agencies involved. In addition, the onset of COVID-19 resulted in the UNCT digging deeper and was evident in the Joint Incident Management Team (JIMT) and Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT) mechanisms as good examples of how the Pacific UNCT ensured leaving no one behind and addressing the needs of marginalized groups. The LNOB principle was also enhanced through gender assessment.

Pacific UNCT-SWAP Results Overview:



The results for the last gender scorecard, as presented in the above chart, show that the country team in the Pacific has exceeded or met minimum requirements for seven of the indicators (three exceed and four meet the requirements). Six indicators score as approaching minimum requirements, and two are missing the requirements.

Generation Equality Forum

In the Pacific, a call for youth applicants took place in 2020 and currently there are seven Pacific Gender Youth Activists from Fiji, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Their interests' range across EVAWG (Ending Violence Against Women and Girls), SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights), SOGIESC, Climate Change, and DRR (Disaster Risk Reduction). In 2021, these seven (7) individuals engaged in global and regional preparatory consultations prior to the GEF, bringing the voices and concerns of their networks to these platforms. The Fiji MCO has continued to reach out to this network to share information and opportunities to learn how to better engage young people in its work in the region.

Key Recommendations Made by Young People:

Food and health: Advocating healthier food choices, spreading words on social media, government to initiate a nation-wide effort to inform the public of the issue and address as a problem affecting peoples' lives, and starting GREEN FRIDAY where employees are given time off on Friday and Saturday to work on their farms, including young people in developmental space.

Food and livelihood: Dialogues and campaigns on the price and goodness value of food products should be held to change the mindsets of young people; there should be improved handling, packaging, quality, and pricing of local food in order to give it a competitive edge over imported foods.

Food and security: Effectively manage resources and to support youth with access to food security projects and more financial support to youth-led organisations, NGOs, and CSOs, strengthening the youth structures and support systems.

A market vendor in Samoa displays his jewelry.

Photo: UNCDF Pacific/John Rae



Voices of Young Leaders in the Pacific Through the ICPD25 Pasifika Youth Champions Network (UNFPA)

During a webinar organised in June 2021 on CSE/FLE Situation Analysis in five Pacific Countries, two members of the Pasifika youth champions participated as key panelists. They were Sohaila Ali from Fiji, a university student and a former member of the Union of Families Association (UNAF), and Zaitun Nancy Sahim from Fiji, a pioneer for the Fiji Women's Rights Movement Girls Programme.

Sohaila shared what it means to be a young person growing up in Fiji where discussions about sex and sexuality are a "taboo". She highlighted the need for support from all national and regional stakeholders to strengthen the comprehensive sexuality education programmes in school and out-of-school and to ensure young people's access to adolescent, youth-friendly, and disability-inclusive services.

Zaitun shared the meaning of transitioning from adolescence to adulthood and whether society and government are doing enough to help young people in this transition. She mentioned the high rates of teenage pregnancy in Fiji and the Pacific in general, increased school dropouts, and youth unemployment. She insisted on practical ways where education, civic, and community life can genuinely include young people in decision making so that all efforts for young people will be directly impacting youth learning, empowerment, engagement, and leadership.



24 Dec 2021, Nadi: Pacific Humanitarian Air Service flight to support TC Yasa response. **Photo:** Allan Stephen/WFP

COVID-19 RESPONSE

The COVID pandemic continued to be a major challenge during the implementation of the UNPS in 2021. The UNPS had a special in-built mechanism that enabled the UNCT to act swiftly in response to the crisis – this was the Humanitarian and Development Coordination mechanism. As a disaster-prone region, the Pacific experiences humanitarian emergencies and disasters regularly. As such, the UN in the Pacific committed through the UNPS to implementing a new way of working together based on the following elements: i) working towards collective outcomes across the UN system and the broader humanitarian and development community; ii) working over multi-year timeframes, recognizing the reality of protracted crises, and aiming to contribute to longer-term development gains, in the logic of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); iii) working collaboratively based on a comparative advantage of diverse actors. In case of an emergency/humanitarian situation, the UNCT would provide coordinated support and services through the Global Coordination Mechanisms of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the primary mechanism for response to complex emergencies and natural disasters. IASC served as the basis for UNCT's health, humanitarian, and socio-economic response to the COVID-19 crisis. It was organized by the UNCT and the RCOs under the guidance of the JIMT and PHT groups. As noted previously, the UNPS's breadth enabled UN agencies to flexibly adapt their operations to emerging needs.



Health Response

The JIMT, under the technical leadership of WHO, was launched in January 2020 by humanitarian and development partners, including UN agencies, governments, and regional organizations to support COVID-19 preparedness and response in the health sector. Key measures included technical assistance to government partners, procurement of medical supplies and personal protective equipment, capacity building of healthcare staff, and risk communications and community engagement. UNCT funds were repurposed to procure PCR tests and emergency protective supplies were also purchased to aid host governments. The COVAX facility, with UNICEF and WHO support, facilitated the supply of vaccines to the Pacific.

Humanitarian Response Plan

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the UNCT activated the PHT. Under the technical leadership of OCHA, the PHT is a network of humanitarian organizations that work together to assist PICTs in preparing for and responding to disasters. PHT was expanded to include government representatives, UN agencies, regional and multilateral organizations, NGOs, donors, and development partners in the region to harness collective resources and assist PICTs in line with their national priorities. The PHT launched the “Humanitarian Response Plan”, which included key measures related to safe water and sanitation, food security, nutrition, and livelihoods, continued education for girls and boys, and protecting women and girls at increased risk of gender-based violence.

Socio-Economic Response Plan

The health and humanitarian plans informed the development of the “COVID-19 Multi Sectoral Response Plan” (MSRP), a joint effort between UN agencies and development partners informing targeted interventions and resource mobilization by UN agencies, governments, and development partners in response to the pandemic. Led by the Fiji UNCT, the MSRP was intended as a first step in a longer-term cycle of planning and programming, informing UNCT’s socio-economic response to the pandemic. The MSRP led to about 30% (approximately US\$ 50m) reprogramming under the JCAPs to respond to the immediate needs created by COVID-19, enabling UN agencies to revise planned programmes and interventions to be more responsive to the COVID-19 context and redeploy funding and personnel resources as required. The UN’s response to COVID-19 expanded and accelerated joint support to women and girls at risk of, or experiencing, violence and abuse, persons with disabilities, and especially women and girls facing intersectional discrimination, to those hit hardest by lockdowns and state of emergency restrictions, especially women and youth, by providing them with immediate relief and longer-term economic opportunities.



Over 200 Officers in Fiji and Vanuatu Receive Human Rights and Law Enforcement Training

Despite travel restrictions imposed in the Pacific region due to COVID-19, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Regional Office for the Pacific (OHCHR), together with its training partners, including UNDP, UNICEF, women-led CSOs such as Fiji Women Crisis Centre, and Fiji Women Rights Movement, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), and the Pacific Disability Forum, provided human rights training to over 200 law enforcement officers from Fiji and Vanuatu.

The training focused on human rights standards, professionalism, and accountability with specific attention to States of Emergencies in the COVID-19 context and natural disasters.



Officers from Vanuatu Correctional Services during an online human rights training conducted by OHCHR in partnership with SPC on 8 -12 November 2021. **Photo:** UNOHCHR Pacific

Fiji Police Force Director Training at the Police Academy, Senior Superintendent Vusonilawe Kasiano, said; *“Police officers, all too often, consider human rights an obstacle to, rather than the foundation of, their work”* and that these were crucial to change the *“fixed draconian mindsets, and to well-equip police officers to deal with challenges and serve the people better.”*

A senior female Corrections Officer participant in Vanuatu said it *“made me think deeply about all those times I have witnessed an incident in front of my eyes in the prisons. In my career, I have accepted officers using excessive force to control inmates. I know now that no inmate should be subjected to beating or refused food for days.”*

SUPPORT TO PARTNERSHIPS AND FINANCING THE 2030 AGENDA



Shift in the Financing Landscape

In 2021, the UNCT continued its efforts in bringing in quality financing and delivering joint programmes in the region, contributing to the six outcome areas of the UN Pacific Strategy. To this end, some of the key initiatives that supported UNCT efforts on this included the continued implementation of the UNPS Fund, which is the first-ever pooled financed multi-partner trust fund setup by the UN in the Pacific, delivering catalytic results in three key outcomes, gender equality, basic services, governance, and data. The investment has allowed UN Resident Coordinator's to support joint programming and joint delivery of results to the Pacific SIDS, through a pooled financing mechanism. The Government of New Zealand is currently the primary donor, investing NZ\$24.7million in the fund and supporting the work of five UN agencies, funds, and programmes across the three thematic outcomes of the UN Pacific Strategy.

Focused Support to Strengthen SDG Financing Mechanisms

Through catalytic financing from the Joint SDG Fund^[1], the UN supported the Government of **Fiji** to strengthen its Integrated National Financing Framework through the alignment of development financing to the targets in medium and long-term national development plans. Support to Fiji also included strengthening national institutional capacities via the Innovative Development Financing Machinery called the “Drua Incubator” to coordinate the identification and formulation of bankable development project proposals, as well as the identification of global, regional, and national sustainable financing instruments. In **Vanuatu**, technical support was provided to commence a Development Finance Assessment (DFA). The process will support the government of Vanuatu in developing an integrated national financing framework to strengthen the implementation of the National Sustainable Development Plan that links to the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework. The DFA process (to be completed by July 2022) will identify financing solutions and build consensus among a core constituency of actors on priority actions to unlock and mobilise new sources of financing and enhance the alignment of existing financing with national development priorities. Some of the key aspects of the overall support include: SDG budgeting, digitalisation, including e-fiscalisation, and leveraging remittances for development. Similarly, in **the Marshall Islands**, technical support was provided in 2021 on the costing of the National Development Plan 2020-2030, with a prioritized focus on infrastructure. The costing report has been validated and approved by the National Infrastructure Investment Plan committee, which includes Government Ministers and high-level Government Officials. The costing exercise, which also provided capacity-building support to key government ministries, was done in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), complimenting their ongoing support for strengthening the public finance management system. Support to the Marshall Islands included the completion of an Economic Policy Statement (EPS) for the Marshall Islands (endorsed by the Cabinet in October) and tabled in Parliament in November. Support to the Marshall Islands also included the costing of an Agriculture Sector Plan, which would allow Government to support the financing of its priorities in agriculture support and also inform donor partners on critical areas of financing in the sector. In **the Solomon Islands**, support included Nutrition Budget and Expenditure Analysis, which included completion of data collection and the consultation phase. An inception meeting was completed in October 2021. Finally, support through the Joint SDG Fund allowed the UN to strengthen its partnership with regional organizations, such as the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, in the completion of a feasibility study for a “debt for climate swap financing instrument” expected to be considered at a Pacific ministerial level debt conference in April 2022. A dedicated session on Leveraging Climate and Disaster Risk Financing was convened as part of the Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, co-hosted by the Government of Fiji and ESCAP in November 2021, which deliberated on draft findings of the feasibility study.



Fijian women in Vanua Levu carry kuta on their backs to make traditional mats. Photo: UNCDF Pacific/John Rae



Fiji will issue their first sovereign blue bond in its 2022-2023 financial year. It will focus on raising capital market finance to support Blue Shipping, Sustainable Fisheries, Blue Investments and Financing, and Sustainable Waste Management.

Photo: UNCDF Pacific/John Rae

Catalysing Blue Economy Interventions in the Pacific

The Fijian Government, with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), will be issuing **Fiji's first sovereign blue bond** in its 2022-2023 financial year. The issuance will focus on raising capital market finance to support projects in four priority sectors. These are 'Blue Shipping', 'Sustainable Fisheries', 'Blue Investments and Financing', and 'Sustainable Waste Management'.

Furthermore in 2021, UNDP and UNCDF have worked with the Fijian Government to develop the Sustainable Bond Framework to enable the issuance of specialised bonds related to Fiji's sustainable development ambitions. This Framework builds on experience and the Green Bond Framework of the Fiji Sovereign Green Bond issuance in 2017[2], with the intention of issuing other thematic bonds, starting with a Blue Bond in 2022. The Framework is now with the Fijian Government for final Cabinet endorsement. A successful high profile launch event was also organised on the margins of COP26 in Scotland to officially launch Fiji's Sovereign Blue Bond process. UN is also working in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (Blue Shipping and Blue Investment and Financing) and World Bank (Sustainable Fisheries) to undertake techno-economic feasibility studies and use findings to incorporate eligible blue projects into the 2022-2023 National Budget for Blue Bond financing. Fiji's Blue Bond issuance has not been designed only as a climate centric initiative, but as a development mechanism to support COVID-19 recovery efforts. In fact, the sustainable aquaculture component is expected to combat structural unemployment after COVID-19 for coastal communities. It will finance hybrid electric interisland shipping to bridge the rural urban divide and improve



access to markets in an effort to unlock the economic potential of Fiji's maritime sector. It will help derisk innovative blue economy projects and enable access to concessional financing for non-government organisation. It will help manage waste pollution and enhance the value chain of waste products, helping to create green jobs. Funds for the work has been sourced through the Rapid Response Facility of the UN and from the Government of the United Kingdom.

Through a multiagency initiative, funded by the Joint SDG Fund and the Global Fund for Coral Reefs, known commonly as the "Coral Reef Project[3]", UNDP, UNCDF, and UNEP have been working closely to enhance the investment potential of promising blue economy sub-projects. These are summarised in the infographic.

The Coral Reef project implementation is overseen by a Steering Committee co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Fiji Government's Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Economy. The initiatives are expected to support **SDG14 at its core** and will also **support SDGs 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 15**. In 2021, the project worked on incubating the five sub-projects and providing a combination of grant and debt impact financing to get them ready for on-ground implementation and co-financing. The sub-projects are in various stages of development and have dedicated support from the Fijian Government, along with interest from the Global Fund for Coral Reef Investment Window, for large scale investments in the Wester Landfill project. The overall aim of these initial investment is expected to raise a total of US\$50million of additional financing from public and private investors.



Strategic Partnerships to Support SIDS

The UN also developed significant partnerships with research institutions, weather risk agencies, and other global partners to develop Climate Risk Financing and Insurance Products for SIDS. In 2021, UNCDF worked with the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) through its Munich Climate Insurance Initiative (MCII), the University of the South Pacific, and the University of West Indies to create a research cooperation arrangement, focusing on vulnerability and Climate and Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance (CDRFI) solutions for SIDS. This cooperation will produce high quality, peer reviewed research as well as more action-oriented policy briefs and reports, which will support CDRFI product iteration in Fiji first, then to other Pacific countries. Additionally, the UN has partnered up with the Weather Risk Management Services (WRMS), based in India, to develop Fiji's and the Pacific's first market based parametric microinsurance products to improve the disaster resilience of the poor and most vulnerable populations in Fiji. WRMS provided the technical assistance to develop the climate risk model, trigger levels, index insurance product, and continues to provide ongoing support to local insurance companies and aggregators for capacity building and claims intimation.

The UN's partnership with the Global Access to Insurance Initiative (a2ii^[4]) has supported the development of CDRFI Regulatory Best Practice Guidelines for regulators, with the objective of improving the regulatory enabling environment for CDRFI products across the Pacific. Regional regulators were actively involved in the development of the guidelines, which will be published in 2022. Work through the UNCDF implemented support to Fiji includes the "Developing Climate Disaster Financing Framework and Parametric Insurance in Fiji" project, supported by the India-UN Development Partnership Fund. Under the project, a total of 12 catalytic partnerships with the private and public sector and CSOs have been forged to pilot the region's first ever climate disaster risk insurance product.

The UN also strengthened its partnerships with regional organizations to support the development of the Pacific Digital Economies in 2021. A new partnership formed between the UN and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFs) to support the implementation of the Pacific Regional E-Commerce Strategy and Roadmap. Additionally, a new partnership was established with the Pacific Community (SPC) to offer online training to National Statistical Offices to build capacity around the production of statistics on the digital economy.

[1] UN Joint SDG Fund supports the financing of the "Unlocking SDG Financing in the Pacific" programme funding the UNDP, ESCAP, and UNICEF to deliver technical and capacity building support in Fiji, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands on strengthening national capacities on integrated financing frameworks and around SDG financing alignment with national development plans and processes.

[2] <https://www.rbf.gov.fj/category/fiji-sovereign-green-bond-update/>

[3] The Coral Reef Project is a signature project post-UN Reform, bringing in significant initial capital of USD\$10million combined from the Global Fund for Coral Reefs and the UN Joint SDG Fund to support the "blue financing" and "blue economy" initiatives in Fiji.

[4] The a2ii initiative was created in 2009 to respond to requests from policymakers, regulators, and supervisors for learning and advice on access to insurance. The A2ii was established by the following organisations: the IAIS, BMZ, CGAP, the International Labour Organization, represented by the International Labour Office (ILO) and subsequently renamed the Impact Insurance Facility, and the FinMark Trust. The Microinsurance Network, the IAIS, and the Joint Working Group (JWG) also played a key role in the creation of the initiative.

Better Cross-border and Sub-regional Responses to Today's Development Challenges that Know no Borders

The efforts on the Food Systems Summit (FSS) national dialogue processes in member states provided a renewed emphasis on how the UN system was bringing cross-border and sub-regional issues for discussion at the national and sub-national levels and ensuring that Pacific issues were highlighted at the global levels. Through a whole UN system effort, including lead support from the RCOs, almost all countries under the UN in the Pacific participated in the FSS dialogue with very high-level representation from all countries under the Pacific SIDS.



A Fijian woman husks coconuts. Ten Pacific Islands countries participated last year in the inaugural Food Systems Dialogue. **Photo:** UNCDF Pacific/John Rae

**RESULTS
OF THE UN
WORKING MORE
AND BETTER
TOGETHER:
UN COHERENCE,
EFFECTIVENESS
AND EFFICIENCY**





Men in Samoa work together to cut open and scrape coconuts. **Photo:** UNCDF Pacific/John Rae

The third year of implementation of the UN development system reform brought many positive changes to the work of the UN in the Pacific. As a result of the reform, and of the Multi-Country Office Review, a new MCO was set up in Micronesia. The reform brought increased collaboration across agencies. In 2021, the UN entities developed regional, as well as country, specific Common Country Analysis – a comprehensive assessment of the country's situation – which was conducted by the UNCT for every country under the three MCOs (Multi Country Offices). The UNCT also came together, under the leadership of the three UN Resident Coordinators, for more accurate and complete joint workplans for the implementation of the UN Pacific Strategy 2018–2022. The implementation of joint projects and programmes continued in 2021, with additional joint programming initiatives being pursued by the UNCT, where UN entities worked on the implementation of 80 joint programmes and projects.

In 2021, the UN continued to optimize its business operations by simplification, harmonization, and optimization of business practices, achieving operational efficiency through Business Operations Strategy (BOS) aligned with the 2018-2022 UNPS to ensure a more focused, strategic, coherent, and cost-effective business operations while ensuring accountability and transparency. The BOS aims to help UN in the Pacific to further sharpen operational efficiency, harness resource mobilization, and strengthen implementation of UN Programmes by guiding the UNCT and operational teams in their business relations with key suppliers and vendors, implementing partners and other operational stakeholders. Effective cooperation on procurement, human resources, and information and communications technology at the level of the UNCT resulted in cost savings. The Operations Management Team (OMT) in 2021 worked towards coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness through shared actions in procurement, including joint Long Term Agreements, the BOS, common premises management, monitoring, among others. Long Term Agreements for common services have reduced the transaction costs of obtaining services. Joint actions have led to efficiency gains for all UN agencies. The list of joint actions includes; joint rental reimbursement for One UN House, joint review on banking services, cash transfer solutions, undertaking a joint HACT exercise, assessment of assurance services, DSA surveys in some PICs, management support of Common Premises in Tonga, transfer of common premises responsibilities to the OMT in FSM, LTAs for internet, mobile services, support to joint mobile and internet services in Fiji One UN House, salary surveys in 10 PICs, hardship classification surveys started, and the start of the One UN House Common premises project with the Government of Fiji in Suva, Fiji. In 2022, the focus will be on the Common Back Office, leveraging further BOS efficiencies, the One UN House project in Fiji, and expanding on increasing the common service line to efficiency and costs reduction. With adopting of common services, the UN in Fiji was able to achieve an overall total benefit ratio of 7.1% as the total benefits achieved for Common Administration Services, including Common Premises was USD \$6,695,304. The benefits achieved under Common ICT was USD \$15,279 and under Common Logistics Services the total benefits achieved was USD \$119,038, adding to an overall total benefit USD \$6,829,621 for Fiji.

EVALUATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED



Evaluation of the UNPS

The end of cycle UNPS evaluation concluded in March 2022. The purpose of this evaluation was to promote greater accountability, learning, and operational improvement. It covered activities, achievements, and results of the UN for the period 2018-2020 in the 14 PICTs. The scope also covered all strategic areas and activities carried out by resident and non-resident UN agencies under the UNPS. This included all project and non-project activities and results. The upcoming CF requires evidence from this evaluation for informed decision making and prioritisation. The primary users of the evaluation results will be the UNCT, governments, donors, development partners, DCO (Development Coordination Office), and UNCTs (United Nations Country Teams) of other countries and sub-regions.

The implementation of the UNPS has been through extremely challenging circumstances. The Pacific is known to be a vast and complex region, with significant geographical dispersion of the countries and extraordinary distances and limited connectivity. The development needs and characteristics of each of the 14 countries are unique. These countries have diverse administrative and political arrangements. In addition, the scale and nature of challenges faced by the PICTs is enormous. These challenges include unique vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), given their exposure to climate change, impact of COVID-19, limited access to international financing, increasing debt, devastation of their economies, etc.

On the flip side, there is also complexity in the UN architecture in the region, with three MCOs covering 14 countries. From early 2020, the UNPS have been implemented in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, which has presented significant challenges for the UN system, as for all national counterparts and development actors in the region.

Children in the Solomon Islands. **Photo:** UNCDF
Pacific/John Rae



Evaluation Findings

Despite all these challenges, the Pacific UNCT has made improvements in its capabilities to implement in a more coherent, coordinated, and integrated fashion under the UNDAF (United Nations Development Assistance Framework) framework. The UNDS (United Nations Development System) reform and the implementation of the MCO Review recommendations have invigorated the coordination and coherence of the UN system in the region. There has been improvement not only in agencies' awareness and understanding of the "joint delivery" approach, but also their commitment to joint coordination structures. The reform has also enabled the RCOs to beef up their human resources, a crucial requirement for a more effective coordination of the UN system. The MCO Review has led to the establishment of the third RCO responsible for the North Pacific. Another important result has been the introduction of country-specific JCAPs, country-level UNCTs, and annual country-level consultations with the key national stakeholders. Other important developments have been the provision of integrated policy advice in key areas such as social protection, SDG financing, etc., through an increased number of UN joint programmes and improved analytical support and advocacy for SIDS through the newly developed Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for SIDS. Another remarkable achievement has been the improved resource mobilisation results.

Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

The inter-agency coordination infrastructure needs to be further strengthened across the board. In particular, the outcome groups and thematic groups need to be made fully operational and effective in their functioning and outputs. Roles and responsibilities within the UN system in the region will have to be discussed and defined more clearly. The UNCT should be the main platform where this shared understanding of roles and responsibilities is forged. Cooperation and coordination among agencies have been more focused on information sharing and less targeted at the establishment of collaborative arrangements based on complementarities. UN agencies come with strong brands and strong partnerships with national partners consolidated over decades of engagement. In the context of the UNDS reform, they have to have the will to be more open to engagement in joint activities and delivery under the coordination of the RCs. There is also a need for greater engagement at the level of the UN system with national governments, CSOs, private companies, development partners, IFIs, etc.

The building of a cohesive and well-coordinated UN system in the Pacific remains a work in progress. The achievement of the objectives of the UNDS reform agenda and the recommendations of the MCO Review require further work.





A Samoan man prints onto yards of material.
Photo: UNCDF Pacific/John Rae

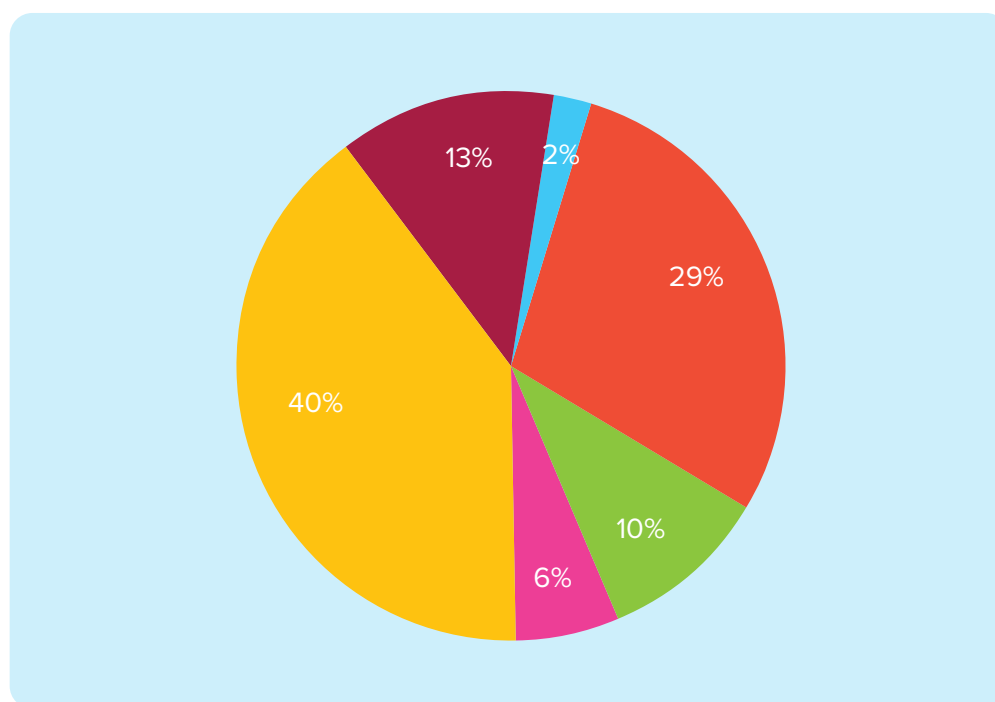
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



In 2021, a total of approx. US\$185m was expended across the region. The UN agencies, funds, and programmes spent 40% of their budgets towards equitable basic services (health, education, and wash); followed by 29% on climate change, disaster resilience, and environmental protection; 12% on governance & community engagement outcomes (women's political participation, effective, responsive and inclusive institutions, and on data support); 10% on gender equality (EVAW, women's leadership, women's economic empowerment, and gender & climate change); 6% on sustainable and inclusive economic empowerment; and 2% on outcomes related to human rights.

2021 EXPENDITURE BY OUTCOMES

Sum of total expenditure (US dollar), 2021:



Climate change, Disaster Resilience and Environment Protection



Equitable Basic Services



Gender Equality



Governance and Community Engagement



Sustainable Economic Empowerment

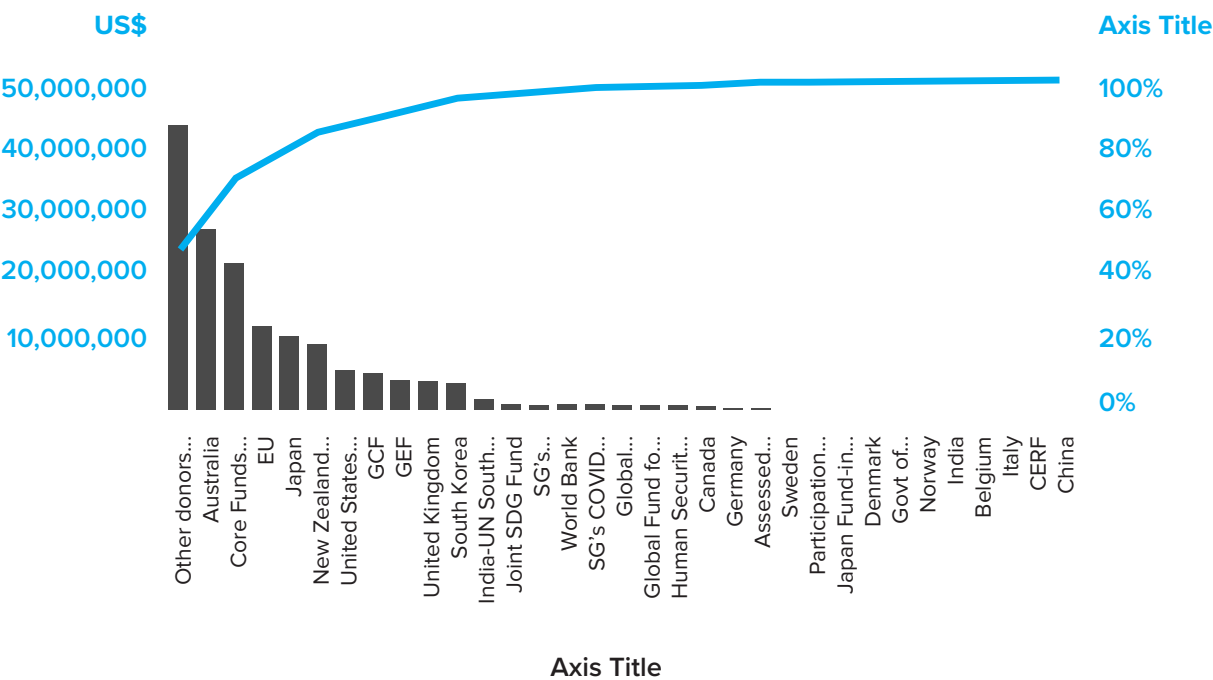


Human Rights

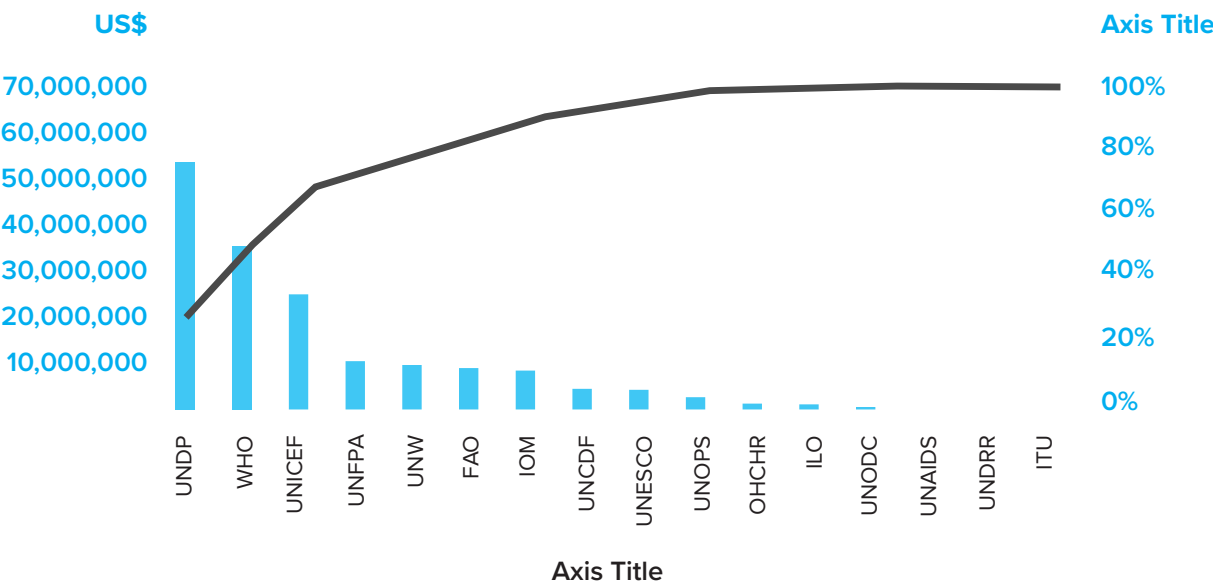
The high share of resources mobilized and spent in the areas of Climate change, Disaster Resilience and Environmental Protection, Equitable Basic Services, and Governance and Community Engagement are consistent with the needs and priorities of the Pacific SIDS, which are at the forefront of climate change and impacts of natural disasters, including priorities around basic services and on governance (and data needs). This outlook also depicts the comparative advantage and technical specialization of the UN in these niche areas of work, including the strategic positioning of the UN's work to match the priorities of the Pacific region.

In terms of the contributions, the largest donors are Australia, EU, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States, followed by some of the vertical funds, such as Global Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), considering their contribution to UN's work on areas relative to climate change and environmental protection in the region.

2021 Expenditure by Donors

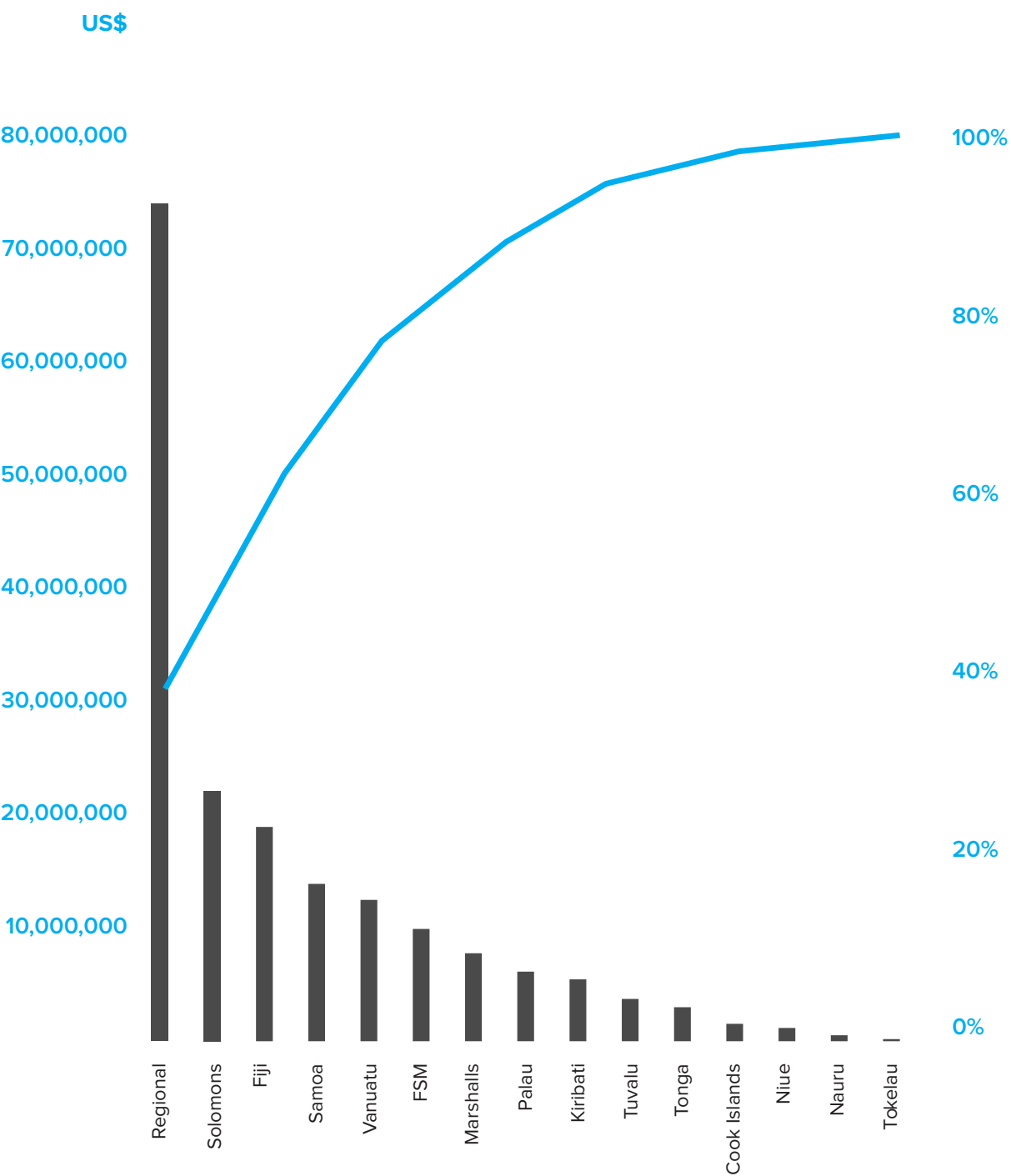


2021 Expenditure by Agencies



While the regional expenditure accounted for 40%, the UN's actual contribution varied from approx. US\$1m to US\$22.3m. This is depicted in Table 3.

2021 UN Expenditure by Countries



The tables and figures have been developed based on contribution of data from the following UN agencies, funds, and programmes: FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNCDF, UNDP, UNDRR, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, UNW, and WHO.

UNCT KEY FOCUS FOR 2022



The UNPS Cycle and Direction of Results

The current UNPS cycle concludes at the end of 2022 with the new CF commencing immediately thereafter (2023-2027).

The CF guides the entire programme cycle, driving planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of collective UN support for achieving the 2030 Agenda for countries under MCOs Fiji, Micronesia, and Samoa for the period 2023-2027. The Cooperation Framework is anchored in national development priorities of the Pacific countries, the 2030 Agenda, and the principles of the UN Charter and will clearly articulate the United Nation's collective response to help Pacific countries to address national priorities and gaps in their pathway toward achieving the 2030 Agenda, its SDGs, and internationally agreed human rights norms and standards.

While the 2021 CCA is completed and reviewed by the UNCT, reports on the end-of-cycle UNPS evaluation and the 2021 UN Country Results will be finalised by end of March 2022. These reports will form the basis and the direction of the new CF.

Key results leading up to the 2030 Agenda have been hindered by the onslaught of COVID-19. The onset of the pandemic has not only strained the health sector, but had strong bearing on the socio-economic corridors of all the island states. With tourism, remittances, fisheries, and agriculture being major sectors in income generation in the Pacific, there was dramatic decline across the board which severely impacted island economies with GDPs declining by up to 23%. Consequently, businesses were drastically affected in varying degrees, with people losing jobs and homes and having difficulty putting food on the table, which resulted in re-location to their villages. Simultaneously, state infrastructure was slow in its upkeep and could not keep up with deterioration. The education sector was also affected as annual syllabus were not completed with appropriate quality. These were exacerbated by the frequent cyclones and unfriendly weather conditions.

Going Forward

Going forward, the new CF needs to be remolded to adequately respond to the region's new development landscape. Also, a stronger sense of ownership of COVID-19 related assessments needs to be forged among national counterparts.

The inter-agency coordination infrastructure needs to be further strengthened across the board. In particular, the outcome groups and thematic groups need to be made fully operational and effective in their functioning and outputs.

UNCT should conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the work of the UN during the COVID-19 crisis, with a view to understanding the impact of that work and using it as the basis for the development of the new programme which, going forward, should inevitably encompass activities focused on COVID-19 recovery. The whole COVID-19 response should be seamlessly integrated into the broader CF.



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