

Climate Security in Asia-Pacific: Key issues and challenges

Climate Displacement in Fiji: Challenges, Solutions, and Priorities

19th December, 2023

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Overview

- ▶ **Fiji's Vulnerability to Climate Change**
- ▶ **Key measures Taken by the Fiji Government**
- ▶ **Challenges**
- ▶ **Priority Areas**
- ▶ **Conclusion**



Narikoso Village

Credit: National Disaster Management Office

Vulnerability to Climate Change

Fiji's high land-area to coastline ratio and coastal concentration of human settlements, infrastructure, and livelihoods makes the nation highly exposed to sea level rise and coastal inundation

Climate change as a threat to 'ontological security' – it threatens the very nature of being' and identity in vulnerable Fijians

Climate Change Impacts – threatens food security and livelihood options for coastal dwellers



Vunidogoloa village head showing erosion of coastline that prompted them to relocate

Challenges

- ▶ Community relocation can be met with resistance due to cultural and social ties to land
- ▶ Difficulties in ensuring proper compensation and support for displaced communities
- ▶ Consideration of the psychological and social impacts of relocation remains unclear
- ▶ Failure to recognize or account for the significant variance involved with the context-specific needs, views, and dynamics within and between communities
- ▶ Sustainable financial mechanism

Measures Taken by Fiji Government

- ▶ Lessons learned from relocated communities have prompted the Fiji government to acknowledge the importance of planned relocation as a last resort.
- ▶ The Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for planned relocation in Fiji serves to support the successful operationalization of the Planned Relocation Guidelines (PRG)
- ▶ Climate Change Act – *“The Minister, with the assistance of the Fijian Taskforce on Relocation and Displacement, must operationalize the Fijian Planned Relocation Guidelines through developing standard operating procedures which enable pro-active processes for addressing the risk of climate and disaster driven displacement”*



Standard Operating Procedures for Planned Relocation in the Republic of Fiji



Planned Relocation Guidelines A framework to undertake climate change related relocation



Priority Areas

- ▶ Post-relocation monitoring and consultation to identify any long-term issues for relocated or host communities
- ▶ Securing adequate funding and resources to support climate adaptation initiatives and displacement prevention strategies.
- ▶ Post relocation studies to update NAP and PRG
- ▶ Income Diversification Strategies



Vunidogoloa village, Vanua Levu

Conclusion

- ▶ Climate change impacts and the current and future local implications of these impacts now threaten long-established social narratives and value systems in the Pacific
- ▶ Community characteristics, circumstances, perceptions, understanding, histories, preferences, and social narratives are likely to play a more significant role in the conceptualization of risk and approaches to mobility issues than stepwise procedures, assessments, and policies
- ▶ More frequent community wide consultations to better understand community dynamics and adaptation strategies
- ▶ NAP must focus on strategies for income diversification

Vinaka Vakalevu