



PLATFORM
ON DISASTER
DISPLACEMENT
FOLLOW-UP TO THE NANSEN INITIATIVE

PLANNED RELOCATION IN THE PACIFIC: A REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

By Erica Bower
& Sanjula Weerasinghe
August 2021



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DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

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This snapshot is part of a growing body of evidence on planned relocation. The global dataset of identified planned relocation cases is available from the PDD website, www.disasterdisplacement.org. If you have cases to contribute, please share with info@disasterdisplacement.org.

The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of GIZ.



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Executive Summary



The Pacific region is exposed to disasters and climate change impacts. Storms, erosion and sea level rise threaten the habitability of land and the viability of livelihoods. Facing such impacts and risks, communities and authorities have initiated planned relocation of people out of harm's way. While this risk reduction and adaptation tool has gained traction at the international level, and at the national level in some Pacific countries, knowledge and data gaps remain.¹ A recent global mapping by the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) and the Andrew & Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at the University of New South Wales, *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*² identified 36 planned relocation cases in the Pacific region out of a global total of 308. This regional snapshot shines a spotlight on these cases and offers insights on the features of planned relocation in the Pacific.

In the Pacific region, identified planned relocation cases:

- Largely follow the spatial pattern of single origin to single destination;
- Span relatively short distances from origin to destination site;
- Involve small numbers of households;
- Generally relate to indigenous populations;
- Occur in rural areas;
- Are often initiated by community members;
- Are often supported by non-governmental actors;
- May take place amidst histories of prior relocations; and
- May be underpinned by customary norms.

¹ For instance, the PDD 2019-2022 Strategy and Workplan acknowledges the importance of research and analysis on planned relocation to address knowledge and data gaps and support policy development. The UNFCCC's Task Force on Displacement (TFD) workplan has also included identification of effective practices on planned relocation as an area for further attention. For further normative and policy developments at the international level, see table 1 in Ferris, E. & Weerasinghe, S. (2020). Promoting Human Security: Planned Relocation as a Protection Tool in a Time of Climate Change. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 8(2), 134-149.

² Bower, E. & Weerasinghe, S. (2021). *Leaving Place, Restoring Home: Enhancing the Evidence Base on Planned Relocation Cases in the Context of Hazards, Disasters, and Climate Change*. Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) and Andrew & Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law.

These findings lead to a number of salient considerations for policymakers, practitioners and researchers engaging with planned relocation in the Pacific region. For instance:

- Consider the unique characteristics of single-origin to single destination cases, the most common spatial pattern identified in the Pacific region.
- Understand the relationship between short distances and outcomes for relocated persons.
- Pay attention to places and practices of ancestral and cultural significance, and related livelihood practices.
- Understand the role played by intergovernmental and non-governmental supporting actors to promote accountability.
- Generate insights on how political, socio-economic, cultural and demographic drivers - alongside environmental changes - influence initiation and participation decisions, including to develop planned relocation processes that are sensitive to historical legacies.
- Consider historical experiences of prior relocation and their influence on adaptability, resilience and outcomes for relocated persons.
- Understand customary and cultural norms and lessons to ensure they are captured in the development and implementation of normative instruments.

Building on these observations and implications, this regional snapshot identifies future directions to address knowledge and data gaps on planned relocation in the Pacific region. Further research to identify additional undocumented or under-documented cases, and to monitor progress and developments within identified cases, may help to enhance available knowledge. Evaluating the implementation of normative instruments may also be important to identify effective practices and lessons. Such efforts are essential to inform policies, operational tools, and approaches to practice that minimize negative impacts and protect human rights.

2

Introduction

In early 2021, the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) and the Andrew & Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at the University of New South Wales published the report *Leaving Place, Restoring Home: Enhancing the Evidence Base on Planned Relocation in the Context of Hazards, Disasters, and Climate Impacts* (Leaving Place, Restoring Home). Prepared to augment knowledge and data gaps on planned relocation within countries, the report established a foundational evidence base of cases across the world. It also conceptualized planned relocation as: *the planned, permanent movement of a group of people from identifiable origin(s) to identifiable destination(s), predominantly in association with one or more hydrometeorological, geophysical/geological, or environmental hazard(s).*

As a complement to that body of work, this regional snapshot commissioned by GIZ provides an overview of cases in the Pacific Region.³ Alongside the Asia regional snapshot and forthcoming analysis of case studies, this Pacific regional snapshot is part of a series of research efforts aligned with the goal to deepen knowledge and evidence on planned relocation.⁴

In the Pacific region, both communities and States have experience with planned relocation related to disasters and climate change. Planned relocation cases in countries such as Fiji and the Solomon Islands are relatively well documented in literature, popular media narratives and policy discussions. Some states have developed normative instruments and other arrangements that specifically address planned relocation, which may offer important lessons for other countries in the region and beyond. For instance, Fiji has developed national Planned Relocation Guidelines – A Framework to Undertake

³ For the purpose of this snapshot, the countries in the Pacific region are: American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

⁴ Bower, E. & Weerasinghe, S. (2021). Planned Relocation in Asia: A Regional Snapshot. GIZ; Weerasinghe, S. & Bower, E. (2021). Unpacking Spatial Complexity: Case studies of planned relocation with multiple origin and destination sites. GIZ.

Climate Change Related Relocation, which is currently being translated into standard operating procedures, as well as a Climate Relocation and Displaced Peoples Trust Fund for Communities and Infrastructure.⁵ Vanuatu's 2018 National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement also extensively addresses planned relocation.⁶ However, the global mapping identified 36 cases of planned relocation in the Pacific region out of a global total of 308, many of which have received far less attention. In this context, this snapshot offers evidence and insights to generate refined understandings that enable policymakers and practitioners concerned with planned relocation in the Pacific region to minimize harms to affected people, and to promote their human rights and dignity.

Spread across the Pacific Ocean, the 21 countries that comprise the Pacific region embody common and unique geographic, demographic and cultural characteristics. Relatively large land masses, such as Australia, exist alongside geographically dispersed atoll nations, such as Kiribati and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and volcanic islands with higher elevations, such as Fiji and Vanuatu. Tuvalu and Nauru are recognized as some of the smallest nations in the world by population size with approximately 11,500 and 12,500 people respectively.⁷ These countries are far smaller than Fiji, which itself has only about 900,000 people.⁸ Melanesian, Micronesian and Polynesian ethnicities and histories of colonialism underpin the demographic make-up of many populations. In the small island nations, traditional subsistence livelihoods are common, including among indigenous groups. In many countries, strong cultural ties and attachments to land and resources inform

decisions on human mobility. Many Pacific communities also have a strong desire to identify opportunities for adaptation that allow them to remain in place.

Similarities and differences are also found in the hazard and climate change dynamics across nations in the Pacific region. Pacific countries do not have uniform climate change and broader risk profiles.⁹ In most countries, the rate of mean sea level rise is accelerating, which poses unique concerns for a region composed of many island nations.¹⁰ For atoll nations, in the ensuing years, rising seas are expected to present severe flood and erosion risks and degrade fresh groundwater resources, with negative impacts on island communities and their livelihoods.¹¹ Tropical cyclones are among the most visible climate-related hazards in the region.¹² Some experts have rated Vanuatu among the most at-risk countries for natural hazards, including storms, earthquakes, volcanoes and tsunamis.¹³ The 2020 World Risk Index ranked it first in the world for disaster risk. Between 2019 and 2020, in some parts of the Federated States of Micronesia dry conditions have developed into extreme drought.¹⁴ Australia and New Zealand face floods, heat waves, droughts and bushfires, among other hazards.¹⁵ Many of these hazards are known to be increasing in intensity and frequency in the context of a warming planet. The rising salience of climate impacts in this

⁵ Fiji, *Planned Relocation Guidelines – A Framework to Undertake Climate Change Related Relocation* (2018). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3kfwZkn>; Fiji, Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations (2019). "World's First-Ever Relocation Trust Fund for People Displaced by Climate Change Launched by Fijian Prime Minister".

⁶ Vanuatu, *National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement* (2018). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3laFopR>.

⁷ "Tuvalu" (World Bank, n.d). Available from <https://bit.ly/2USNFV3> (accessed: February 2021); "Nauru" (World Bank, n.d.). Available from <https://bit.ly/3iaXMxb> (accessed: February 2021).

⁸ "Fiji" (World Bank, n.d). Available from <https://bit.ly/3iZHypV> (accessed: February 2021).

⁹ Nurse, L.A. et al. (2014) Small islands. In: *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part B: Regional Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, 1613-1654.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² For instance "Tropical Cyclone Harold" displaced thousands of people across Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga and the Solomon Islands in 2020. Available at: <https://bit.ly/377jdJ7>

¹³ UNU-EHS. (2015). Exposed: Why Vanuatu is the world's most 'at-risk' country for natural hazards". Available at: <https://bit.ly/2WpFhMS>. (accessed: February 2021); The 2020 WorldRiskIndex ranked Vanuatu first in the world for disaster risk. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3zO4ZJv> (accessed: February 2021).

¹⁴ ECHO & SPC. (2020). Assisting Yap State manage water supply through the current drought. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3jh2CbF> (accessed: February 2021).

¹⁵ Reisinger, A. et al. (2014): Australasia. In: *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part B: Regional Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, 1371-1438.

region implies that prospects of cross-border relocation may also need to be considered in the long term.¹⁶

In this context and drawing on the evidence gathered through *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*, this regional snapshot shines a spotlight on the unique features of identified planned relocation cases in the Pacific region. This analysis builds on previous efforts to understand planned relocation in the Pacific, by highlighting a greater number of contemporary cases across countries and mapping their contextual and design characteristics.¹⁷ The information and analysis presented in the sections that follow aim to build knowledge of the characteristics of planned relocation cases identified in the Pacific and highlight relevant region-specific insights for policy and practice.

¹⁶ One potential ongoing cross-border case in the Pacific is often referred to, however this case is not included in the mapping (see discussion in *Leaving Place, Restoring Home* footnote 17. The Government of Kiribati purchased land in Fiji in 2014 with primary intentions to ensure food security and economic development, not for relocation. See: Republic of Kiribati Office of the President (2014). Kiribati buys a piece of Fiji. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3tMyDwR>. See also: Hermann, E. & Kempf, W. (2017). Climate change and the Imagining of Migration: Emerging Discourses on Kiribati's Land Purchase in Fiji. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 29(2), 231-263.

¹⁷ Campbell, J. et al. (2005). Community Relocation as an Option for Adaptation to the Effects of Climate Change and Climate Variability in Pacific Island Countries (PICs). Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, Final Report.

Approach and methods

3

Because this regional snapshot is drawn from the evidence gathered in *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*, it does not revisit a detailed discussion of the methodological approach and conceptualization of planned relocation used to identify cases across the globe, including in the Pacific region. More comprehensive and detailed information on the definitions, methodology and limitations can be found in section 3 and 4 of *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*. Nonetheless, for the purposes of this snapshot, it is important to recognize that the methodology was based on research to identify cases initiated after 1970, from English-language peer-reviewed scholarly and grey literature that meet the elements of the conceptualization noted above (introduction).¹⁸ This process identified 308 cases of planned relocation globally, among which 36 cases were in the Pacific region.

In the review of English-language literature for *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*, it became apparent that planned relocation cases do not follow one spatial pattern. Many cases of planned relocation have single origin and single destination sites. This is perhaps the pattern most well-known among policymakers and researchers. However, other cases of planned relocation involve multiple origins and/or multiple destination sites. These insights supported the development of a typology with four distinct spatial patterns: cases involving a single origin to a single destination site (type A); cases involving multiple origins to a single destination (type B); cases involving a single origin to multiple destinations (type C); and cases involving multiple origins to multiple destinations (type D). This typology is also discussed in greater detail in section 2 of *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*, and in the complementary compilation of case studies, *Unpacking Spatial Complexity*.

¹⁸ The literature review was undertaken between June and September 2020. This means that any literature published after September 2020 was not included in this analysis.

When reading this snapshot on the Pacific region, it is important to take note of the above-mentioned typology. This is because this snapshot undertakes a deeper analysis of a subset of nine identified type A cases that had sufficient information documented in available literature to understand so-called *context* and *design* characteristics. It also provides information on the incidence of other types (B, C and D) of planned relocation cases.

With this background in mind, the next section provides insights on basic characteristics of the 36 planned relocation cases identified in the Pacific region, and provides a deeper discussion of additional characteristics related to the nine well-documented type A planned relocation cases.¹⁹

¹⁹ See annex 1 for the sources used to analyze these nine cases.

Findings: Basic characteristics from all cases identified in the Pacific region

4

This section presents key findings of the 36 cases identified in the Pacific region. As illustrated in figure 1, planned relocation cases were identified in seven countries, with the highest numbers identified in Fiji (15), Papua New Guinea (7), Solomon Islands (5), Vanuatu (4) and Samoa (3).

Many planned relocation cases identified in the Pacific region took place in multi-hazard contexts, meaning that multiple different types of hazards informed decisions to undertake planned relocation. As noted in green in figure 2, the main hazards associated with identified cases were hydrometeorological or environmental, including coastal erosion, floods, sea level rise and storms. Some cases were initiated in association with geophysical hazards such as tsunamis or volcanic eruptions, as shown in red below.

In the Pacific region, the vast majority of identified cases (30) followed the spatial pattern of a single site of origin to a single destination site (type A), as noted in figure 3. Some cases (4) had multiple sites of origin and one destination site (type B), while few cases (2) had multiple origin and destination sites (type D). Notably, no cases involving a single origin to multiple destination sites (type C) were identified in the Pacific region.

Approximately two thirds of cases identified were noted as 'completed', meaning that the physical move from the site(s) of origin to the site(s) of destination had taken place for a majority of persons. One third, conversely, were noted as ongoing.²⁰ Some cases were initiated as far back as the 1970s, although most were initiated after the year 2000.²¹

²⁰ See Limitations in *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*, Section 4 on Methodology.

²¹ Cases identified before 1970 were excluded from this mapping. See e.g. Campbell, J. et al. (2005) (footnote 17). Others were initiated not in association with hydrometeorological, geophysical or environmental hazards, particularly in the context of mining and colonial exploits, see: McAdam, J. (2014). Historical Cross-Border Relocations in the Pacific: Lessons for Planned Relocations in the Context of Climate Change. *The Journal of Pacific History*, 49(3), 301-327.

Figure 1. Cases identified in the Pacific by country

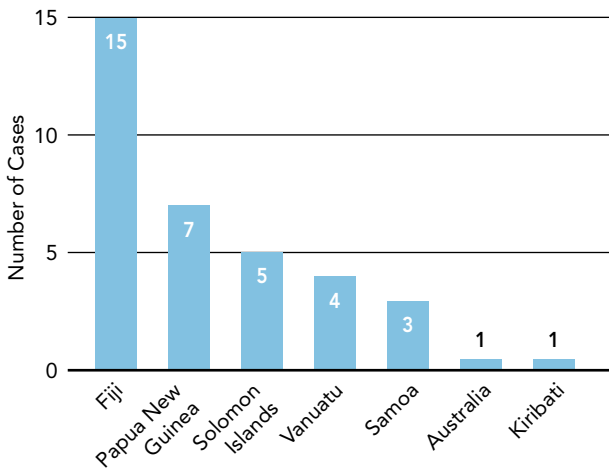


Figure 2. Cases identified in the Pacific by primary hazard. Note that red columns indicate cases initiated primarily in relation to geophysical hazards, while green columns are initiated primarily in relation to hydrometeorological hazards. Blue columns indicate cases where it is unclear if the primary hazard had meteorological or geophysical origins.

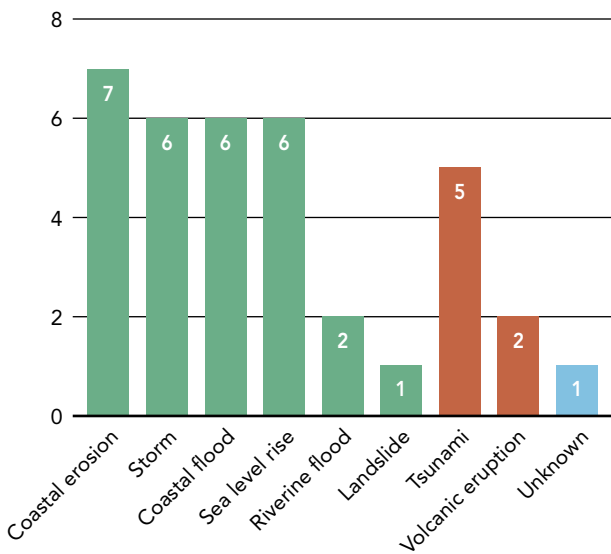
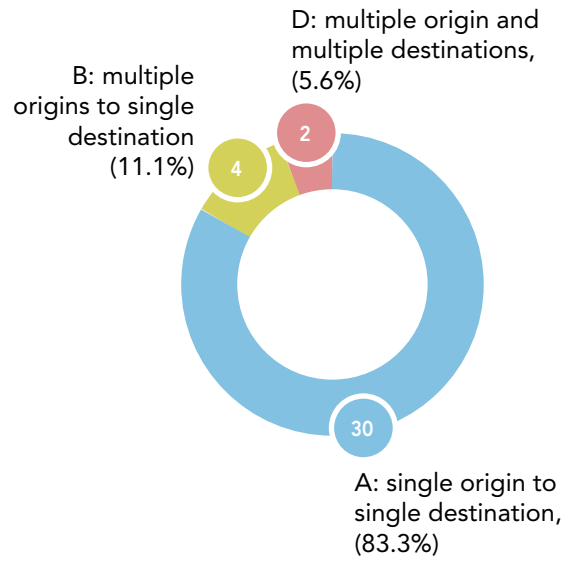


Figure 3. Cases identified in the Pacific by spatial pattern



Findings:

Context and Design characteristics from the cases analyzed

This section provides further insights about specific contextual and design characteristics of nine (out of a total of 30) type A cases following the single site of origin to a single destination site spatial pattern, drawn from information shared in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Context characteristics of cases analyzed in the Pacific

What is the country of the site of origin in the planned relocation case? What is the exact location of the site of origin in the planned relocation case?	What is the location of the destination settlement site in the planned relocation case?	Which natural hazard(s) or adverse effect(s) of climate change is the planned relocation initiated in anticipation/reaction to?	Was the initiation decision made post sudden onset hazard related displacement?	What is the approximate physical distance (in km) between the site of origin and the site of destination?	In approximately what year was the need for planned relocation first identified?	In approximately what year was the physical relocation to the settlement site completed for the majority of people?	Approximately how many households (people) have relocated, or are identified for relocation?	Does the relocating community identify as part of an indigenous tribe or community?	Does the relocating community identify as rural or urban?
AUSTRALIA Grantham, Lockyer Valley, Queensland	Grantham	Riverine floods	Yes	0.05 km	2011	2013	115	No	Rural
FIJI Biausevu Village at Busadule, Viti Levu	Koroinalagi	Riverine flood, tropical cyclone	Yes	0.5 km	Unclear	1983	(150 people)	Yes	Rural
FIJI Denimanu Village, Yadua Island	Korovou	Cyclone, coastal floods, sea level rise, coastal erosion, storm surge, landslide	Yes	0.5 km	2012	2013	19	Yes	Rural
FIJI Vunidogoloa Village, Vanua Levu Island, Cakaudrove Province	Kenani, Vanua Levu Island, Fiji	Coastal erosion, coastal floods, tidal inundation, saline intrusion	No	2km	2006	2014	26	Yes	Rural
FIJI Vunisavisavi Village, Vanua Levu Island, Cakaudrove Province	Vunisavisavi Village	Coastal erosion, coastal floods, king tides, sea level rise	Yes	< 0.5 km	Unclear	2015	4	Yes	Rural
FIJI Narikoso Village, Ono Island, Kadavu Island chain	New site, another mataqali in Narikoso	Sea level rise, coastal erosion	No	< 0.5 km	2011	Ongoing	28	Yes	Rural
SOLOMON ISLANDS Taro (provincial capital), Choiseul Province	New site across the channel (adjacent to mangrove swamp)	Sea level rise, tsunami risk	No	2 km	Approx. 1998	Ongoing	120	Yes	Rural
SOLOMON ISLANDS Mondo Village, Matara District	Keigold Village	Tsunami, earthquake, soil erosion, strong winds, changes in extreme weather patterns	Yes	1 km	2007	Unclear	80	Yes	Rural
VANUATU Letau, Tegua Island	Lirak	Tidal wave, coastal floods, erosion, tsunami, sea level rise, saline intrusion, scarcity of potable water	No	0.5 km	1997	2005	(100 people)	Yes	Rural

HAZARD TYPES

Seven of the nine planned relocation cases analyzed took place in the context of hazards associated with coastal geographies. Observed impacts and/or future risks associated with coastal erosion, coastal flooding and inundation, and sea level rise informed the decision to relocate in many of these cases. Tsunami risk and saline intrusion were also noted in many cases. The two exception cases, Biausevu, Fiji, and Grantham, Australia, were linked to inland riverine floods.

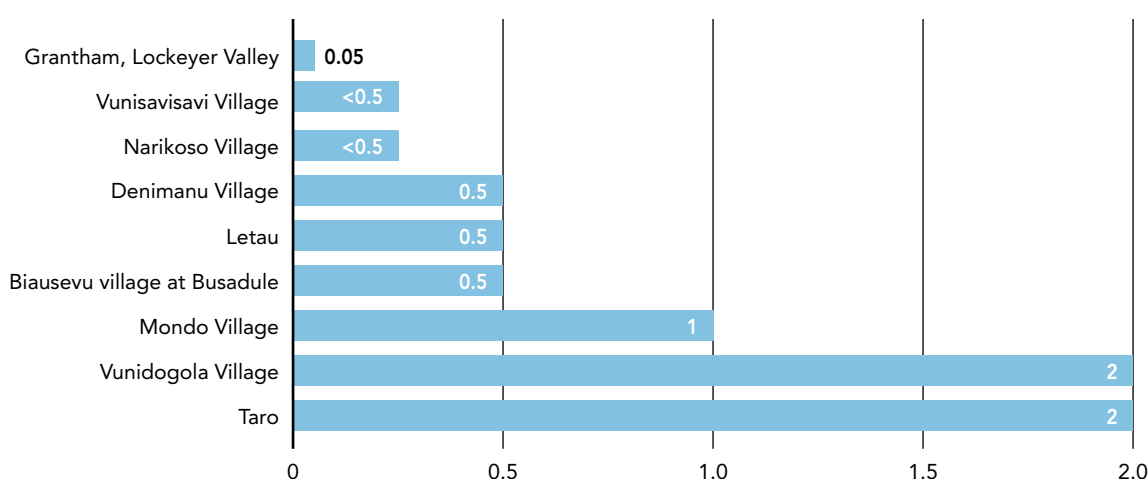
DISPLACEMENT DYNAMICS

Five of the nine cases were initiated after displacement had occurred in association with an observed hazard event, while four cases were initiated in anticipation of risks and were not connected to prior experiences of displacement. For instance, the relocation of half of the village of Denimanu in Fiji took place after 19 households were displaced by the storm surge associated with Cyclone Evan.²² In contrast, the planned relocation of Taro, provincial capital of Choiseul in the Solomon Islands, was initiated before any community members were displaced, in anticipation of future risks.²³

DISTANCE FROM SITE OF ORIGIN TO DESTINATION

All of the nine analyzed cases involved very short distances, less than 2 kilometers (km) from the site of origin to the site of destination, as shown in figure 4. This does not mean, however, that all of the other 27 cases from the Pacific region involved similarly short distances. In cases that involved movements between separate atoll islands for instance, relatively larger distances between site(s) of origin and sites of destination(s) were noted, although these were not analyzed systematically. For instance, the relocation of Avar Village in northern Vanuatu involved movement outside customary land tenure boundaries of the original village.²⁴

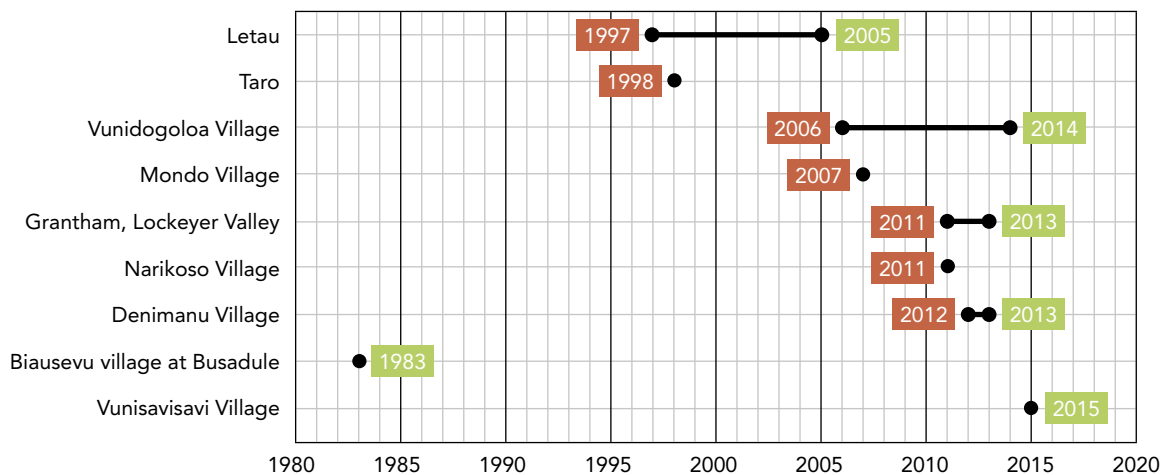
Figure 4. Distance from site of origin to site of destination



²² Piggott-McKellar, A. E. et al. (2019). Moving People in a Changing Climate: Lessons from Two Case Studies in Fiji. *Social Sciences*, 8(5), 133.

²³ Albert, S. et al. (2018). Heading for the hills: climate-driven community relocations in the Solomon Islands and Alaska provide insight for a 1.5C future. *Regional Environmental Change*, 18, 2261-2272.

²⁴ See footnote 17.

Figure 5. Duration of process from initiation to physical move

DURATION OF PROCESS FROM INITIATION TO PHYSICAL RELOCATION

The physical move from the site of origin to the site of destination has been completed for six of the nine cases, while two are ongoing and the status of the other case is unclear. The duration of time that elapsed from the decision to initiate planned relocation until the completion of the physical move to the destination site for a majority of persons varies substantially. For the completed cases, the duration spanned from approximately two years, to approximately eight years (see figure 5). The ongoing cases appear to involve protracted processes, with cases initiated in 1998 and 2011, still ongoing at the time of the publication of the relevant literature.²⁵ The duration of the process was influenced by many factors, including the level of funding, availability and accessibility of land, and community engagement.

LOCATION, NUMBER AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF RELOCATED HOUSEHOLDS

The nine type A cases analyzed in depth all took place in rural locations.²⁶ Eight of these cases involved communities who identified as indigenous. The exception was the case of Grantham, Australia, which involved the relocation of people living in a flood-prone suburb. The nine relocations involved household sizes spanning from four (Vunisavisavi Village, Fiji) to 120 (Taro, Solomon Islands).

²⁵ Bertana, A. (2019). Relocation as an Adaptation to Sea-Level Rise: Valuable Lessons from the Narikoso Village Relocation Project in Fiji. *Case Studies in the Environment*, 3(1), 1-7; Albert, S. et al. (2018) (footnote 23).

²⁶ While Taro is the Provincial Capital, it is nonetheless a rural community of 120 households.

Table 2. Relocation Design Characteristics of Cases analyzed in the Pacific

What is the COUNTRY of the site of origin in the planned relocation case?	Which actor(s) initiated the planned relocation?	Which actor(s) supported the planned relocation?	Is there evidence of at least one formal assessment of the 1) location of origin to determine the need for the planned relocation; 2) settlement site to determine suitability for relocation?	Is there evidence to suggest that affected communities were participating during the relocation process?	Is there a domestic legal or policy framework applicable or relevant to relocation?	Is there evidence to suggest that similar livelihood opportunities exist in the site of origin and in destination?	What challenges have been identified during the relocation process or in the settlement site? Do any of these challenges relate to gender dimensions?
AUSTRALIA Grantham, Lockyer Valley, Queensland	Government (Local)	Government (National, sub-national and local)	1. No evidence 2. No evidence	Yes	Yes	Yes. Project to revitalize the economy and provide employment opportunities in agribusiness.	Challenges with coordination across levels of governance (local, state, national).
FIJI Biausevu Village at Busadule, Viti Levu	Community members	Community members	1. No evidence 2. No evidence	Yes	Unclear	Yes. Close proximity.	Access to water supply; ongoing hazard exposure
FIJI Denimanu Village, Yadua Island	Government (National)	Government (National)	1. No evidence 2. No evidence	No	Unclear	Yes.	Distance to health center; limited septic tanks; ongoing hazard exposure at new site (landslide).
FIJI Vunidogoloa Village, Vanua Levu Island, Cakaudrove Province	Community members	Government (National); Donor Government; IGO; NGO	1. No evidence 2. No evidence	Yes	Unclear	Yes. Additional livelihood initiatives of fish ponds and copra dryer in destination.	Kitchens not built although promised; reduced access to ocean for fishing; exposure to other religious denominations.
FIJI Vunisavisavi Village, Vanua Levu Island, Cakaudrove Province	Unclear	NGO; Donor Government	1. No evidence 2. No evidence	No	Unclear	Yes. Short distance relocation ensures continued kava production, subsistence farming and fishing.	Concerns about equity of access to funding.
FIJI Narikoso Village, Ono Island, Kadavu Island chain	Community members; Government (National)	Government (National); INGO; Donor Government	1. Yes 2. Yes	Yes	Unclear	Ongoing.	Ecological damage from dynamite to level new settlement site; uncertainty and unclear timeline; lack of funds; concerns about village fragmentation; cultural value of place (Vanua); lack of mataqali land.
SOLOMON ISLANDS Taro (provincial capital), Choiseul Province	Government (Sub-national)	Government; Unclear	1. No evidence 2. No evidence	Yes	Unclear	Ongoing.	Lack of access to customary land (i.e., customary land tenure regimes restrictive in government-led relocation efforts); challenges of relocating critical services; concerns about ongoing hazard exposure in low-lying new site; lack of resources.
SOLOMON ISLANDS Mondo Village, Matara District	Community members	Government (sub-national), NGO	1. No evidence 2. No evidence	Yes	Unclear	Yes. Although fishing livelihoods are impacted by distance to the coast.	Land tenure; housing cost; distance to origin; generational differences; cultural connection to place; psychological challenges; portion of the population refused to relocate.
VANUATU Letau, Tegua Island	Community members	Governmental (National or sub-national); Donor Government; IGO; NGO.	1. No evidence 2. No evidence	Yes	Unclear	Yes.	Ongoing hazard exposure in new site (flood); potential secondary relocation.

INITIATING AND SUPPORTING ACTORS

Community members initiated five of the nine planned relocation cases, while government actors initiated three cases. In one case the initiating actor was unclear. Government actors at national or subnational levels provided support to implement planned relocation in seven cases. The relocation of households from Biausevu Village, Fiji, appears to have been carried out largely by community members with no evidence of external support, while support for the relocation of Vunisavisavi Village, Fiji, appears to have come entirely from a donor government and NGOs.

PARTICIPATION MECHANISMS USED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Participation mechanisms to enable relocating people to engage in the planning and implementation were evident in six of nine cases with some evidence of variation across cases. However, this research did not analyze the quality of participation mechanisms such as the frequency of opportunities to engage or the inclusion of all community members across gender, age and other categories.

ASSESSMENTS CONDUCTED AT SITES OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION

There was little evidence that environmental risk, cost-benefit or other impact assessments had been conducted at the site of origin and/or the site of destination. Only one of the nine cases (Narikoso Village, Fiji) noted assessments conducted at the site of origin to determine the need for relocation, and assessments at the site of destination to determine site suitability.²⁷ This does not necessarily imply a failure to conduct assessments in the other

planned relocation cases. Assessments - including by community members themselves - may have taken place. However, the literature upon which this analysis was based did not discuss or document such dimensions. Indeed, some evidence suggests that even if formal assessments did not occur, community members understood and monitored changes in the environment and evolving impacts on livelihoods, health and living conditions.

POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

The case of Grantham, Australia, was initiated and undertaken pursuant to a normative framework developed to support the implementation of the planned relocation process.²⁸ The literature on the other eight type A cases of planned relocation did not discuss the normative architecture under which planned relocation was undertaken. Given the remaining eight cases involved indigenous communities moving no more than 2 km from their site of origin, and many were initiated by community members, it is conceivable that no formal policy frameworks underpinned the process, even if customary rules may have been relevant. As noted earlier, in 2018, the Government of Fiji adopted national Planned Relocation Guidelines, which may have been spurred, at least in part, by experiences of cases documented here.²⁹ Similarly, and also as noted earlier, in 2018, over a decade after the completion of the physical relocation in the case of Letua on Tegua Island, Vanuatu also adopted a National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement, which includes provisions on recognizing planned relocation as a measure of last resort, and including safeguards to protect human rights and minimize impoverishment and other harms.³⁰

²⁷ Note that this research did not evaluate the scope and quality of assessments.

²⁸ Okada, T. et al. (2014). Recovery and resettlement following the 2011 flash flooding in the Lockyer Valley. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 8, 20–31. As with assessments, this research did not analyze the scope, content of legal frameworks.

²⁹ Beyond this analysis, “at least 45” communities have been identified for future relocation. However, further information about these cases was not available in publicly accessible literature. See: <https://bit.ly/3tTjR7K>.

³⁰ For further information on human mobility policies in some Pacific countries, see e.g. Vinke, K. et al. (2020). “Home Lands: Island and Archipelagic States’ Policymaking for Human Mobility in the context of Climate Change”. GIZ. Available at: <https://bit.ly/39cEjXu> (accessed: February 2021).

LIVELIHOODS

Similar livelihood opportunities were available at the sites of origin and destination in all of the planned relocation cases for which the physical relocation stage has been completed. While distance to the coast was a noted challenge for access to fishing in the case of Mondo Village, Solomon Islands, distance to former livelihoods was not a major challenge in most cases - in part as a result of the relatively short distances between sites. In two of the cases, supporting actors carried out initiatives to stimulate local economies and train community members in new livelihood skills. For instance, the local government led efforts to build momentum around agribusiness for relocated persons in Grantham, Australia, while a donor government and inter-governmental and non-governmental actors led training on fishponds and copra (coconut) dryers in Vunidogoloa Village, Fiji.

CHALLENGES

A number of challenges were identified from the planned relocation cases analyzed in the Pacific region. Some challenges related to procedural dimensions, such as equitable access to relocation resources, uncertainty about timelines, and challenges with coordination. Other identified challenges pertained to the destination site itself, including lack of access to water supply, and ongoing hazard exposure with implications for secondary relocation. Access to health services and the provision of housing and related infrastructure were also highlighted as challenges in some cases. In other cases, challenges were cultural and psychological in nature, regarding the value of place and heritage, continuity of culture and religion, and intergenerational differences relating to mobility choices among community members.

Implications: Insights for region-specific policy and practice

5

Drawing on the findings presented in the previous two sections, this snapshot offers a series of insights to inform and guide policy, practice and further research on planned relocation in the Pacific region.

- **Consider the unique characteristics of single origin to single destination (type A) cases, which are the most common spatial pattern in the Pacific region.** The global mapping conducted for *Leaving Place, Restoring Home* identified 36 planned relocation cases in the Pacific region. The vast majority of these cases (30 out of 36) followed a spatial pattern where communities and households relocated from a single site of origin to a single site of destination. The dominance of this planned relocation spatial pattern makes the Pacific region unique relative to the rest of the world, where the same spatial pattern comprised a little over half of the identified global planned relocation cases.³¹ Identifying implications specific to this spatial pattern may provide important insights for policy and practice. For instance, is this spatial pattern preferred because communities wish to stay together in destination sites? Are communities more likely to initiate a planned relocation that follows this spatial pattern? Does this spatial pattern offer better opportunities to ensure community participation? Are there relationships between relocations that follow this spatial pattern and other characteristics, such as cases involving indigenous groups, small numbers of households, short distances, or rural geographies, among others? The PDD report *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*, raises a series of further questions for consideration.
- **Further analysis may be valuable to understand the relationship between short distances and outcomes for relocated persons.** The nine planned relocation cases analyzed in depth in section 4 involve relatively close physical distances of no more than 2 km between the site of origin and the site of destination. This characteristic has

³¹ See page 32 of *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*. In the Asia region by contrast, a much broader array of spatial patterns has been implemented.

allowed some relocated persons to maintain connections to places of origin, enabling the continued pursuit of similar livelihoods in all seven completed cases. However, in some cases relocated persons have faced hazard exposure at destination sites. Further research to better understand if shorter distances between origin and destination sites correlate with more desirable outcomes, may offer important insights for policy and practice. For instance, are shorter-distance destination sites selected because they are within a community's customary land? Are shorter distances preferred because relocated persons wish to maintain livelihood and other connections to the origin site? Are less hazard-prone destination sites unavailable, including due to lack of support, funding or legal barriers? Or, are shorter-distance destination sites selected to avoid extensive resources, time and effort?

- **Pay attention to places and practices of ancestral and cultural significance, and related livelihood practices.** Planned relocation cases in the Pacific region involve communities that identify as indigenous. All but one of the nine planned relocation cases analyzed involved indigenous communities; this may be a unique feature of relocations in the Pacific relative to other parts of the world.³² Actors supporting planned relocation in the Pacific may need to pay particular attention to the significance people ascribe to places of origin and destination due to ancestry, heritage, culture, and livelihoods, among others. Such insights help to identify the importance of maintaining connections between origin and destination sites, such as through relocation of graveyards or the ability to maintain translocal lifestyles between sites.

- **Understanding the role played by intergovernmental and non-governmental supporting actors is important for accountability.** Only three cases analyzed were initiated by government actors, and all were initiated after displacement had occurred. Relocations in the Pacific region are often supported by donor governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental entities, and not all cases involve extensive government oversight.³³ For instance, four cases involved support from donor governments. The frequency of engagement by such actors in this region suggests a need to better understand the roles they play in initiating and supporting planned relocation processes and their motivations for engagement. When non-State actors are engaged in such processes, the obligations they owe to affected populations and applicable accountability frameworks are not always clear. Generating knowledge on roles played by supporting actors may be important for accountability and for developing attuned oversight mechanisms.
- **Insights on how political, socio-economic, cultural and demographic drivers - alongside environmental changes - influence initiation and participation decisions, may be particularly important for developing processes that are sensitive to historical legacies.** Historically situated political, socio-economic, and demographic drivers - alongside environmental changes - may influence the need for and decisions to undertake planned relocation in the Pacific region. Many planned relocation cases in the Pacific region take place amidst legacies of colonialism. Historical legacies may also underpin drivers for planned relocation, alongside evolving changes in the climate and environment. The manner in which historical legacies influence political, socio-economic, cultural and demographic drivers is less well understood. Generating deeper understanding of these historical dynamics may promote community-supported, sustainable planned relocation processes.

³² See page 36 of *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*. Of the 34 cases analyzed, only 16 involved communities that identified as indigenous.

³³ See page 38 of *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*.

- Historical experiences of prior relocation may influence adaptability, resilience and the outcomes of relocation processes.** Communities in the Pacific have experience of multiple relocations. Some communities undertaking or contemplating relocation in the Pacific have prior experiences of relocation in their ancestral or contemporary history.³⁴ For instance, Biausevu Village in Fiji had relocated at least three times before the relocation analyzed in this snapshot.³⁵ This may be a unique feature of relocations in the Pacific region, relative to other regions. In this context, it may be valuable to understand how shared, historical experiences of collective relocations correlate with adaptability, resilience and outcomes.
- Understanding customary norms and lessons that have underpinned planned relocation cases may be valuable, including to ensure that they are captured in the development and implementation of normative instruments.** As in other parts of the world, the reviewed cases provide limited insights on the types of legal and policy frameworks that have underpinned planned relocation in the Pacific region. Only the case of Grantham, Australia, referenced legal and policy instruments. That case was carried out through project-specific instruments within the context of a broader legal architecture. Formal legal and policy frameworks underpinning planned relocation were not identified in the other eight cases. However, these cases may have been carried out pursuant to customary norms that were not understood, or explicitly discussed in the literature. Understanding customary norms that underpin planned relocation cases may provide insights and lessons that must be taken into consideration and complied with in future cases. To what extent are customary norms sufficient for undertaking planned relocation? Are additional normative frameworks necessary in contexts where communities have initiated and support their

own relocation? To what extent do recently developed normative instruments consider and account for customary norms and lessons from planned relocation cases in the region?

³⁴ Indeed, evidence suggests that in addition to multiple relocations, populations in the Pacific also face multiple and compounding displacements. See: Peters, K. & Lovell, E. (2020). Reducing the risk of protracted and multiple disaster displacements in Asia-Pacific. ODI. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2XiYPTI> (accessed: February 2021).

³⁵ See footnote 17.

6

Conclusion

This snapshot on the Pacific region complements the global mapping conducted in the PDD report *Leaving Place, Restoring Home*, and the other complementary studies noted earlier. By shining a spotlight on the Pacific region, a number of unique characteristics and important insights emerge. For instance, in the Pacific region, identified planned relocation cases:

- Largely follow the spatial pattern of single origin to single destination;
- Span relatively short distances from origin to destination site;
- Involve small numbers of households;
- Generally relate to indigenous populations;
- Occur in rural areas;
- Are often initiated by community members;
- Are often supported by non-governmental actors;
- May take place amidst histories of prior relocations; and
- May be underpinned by customary norms.

These insights lead to a number of critical considerations for policymakers, practitioners and researchers engaging with planned relocation in the Pacific region, as noted in the above implications.

Disaster and climate change-related risks pose threats to communities across the Pacific. In this context, Pacific States and communities must continue to identify ways to adapt and reduce risks. Developing a robust understanding of planned relocation cases in this region offers important insights on the merits and potential but also challenges of this adaptation and risk reduction tool. Further research to identify additional undocumented or underdocumented cases, and to monitor progress and developments within identified cases, may help to enhance available knowledge. Evaluating the outcomes of past relocations and funding approaches, and monitoring the implementation of ongoing cases and normative instruments may also be important to identify effective practices and lessons. Such efforts to address knowledge and data gaps on planned relocation in the region are essential to inform the development of policies, operational tools, and approaches to practice that minimize negative impacts and protect human rights.

ANNEX 1.

ANALYSIS OF THE SOURCES FOR NINE CASES ANALYZED IN DEPTH

What is the country of the site of origin in the planned relocation case? What is the exact location of the site of origin in the planned relocation case?	Data Collection Methods Employed	Type of Stakeholders Interviewed	Number of Interviews	Date of Field Work	Full Citation of Primary Source, Secondary Source (as applicable)
AUSTRALIA Grantham, Lockyer Valley, Queensland	In-depth interviews, focus group discussions, field observations, and document analysis	Local government officials only (including the Mayor)	Approx. 6 Interviews Total 1 focus group (4 Lockyer Valley Regional Council officers); 2 Interviews (Mayor and the Executive Liaison Officer)	April & October 2017	Okada, T., et al (2014). Recovery and resettlement following the 2011 flash flooding in the Lockyer Valley. <i>Int. J. Disaster Risk Reduct.</i> 8, 20-31
FIJI Biausevu Village at Busadule, Viti Levu	Focus group discussions, community mapping, document analysis	Community members only	Unknown Focus groups with both men and women	Unknown	Campbell, J, et al (2005) Community relocation as an option for adaptation to the effects of climate change and climate variability in Pacific Island countries (PICs), Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, Final Report
FIJI Denimanu Village, Yadua Island	Interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation	Community members only (Chief, church representatives, teachers)	Approx. 30 Interviews Total 2 women's focus groups, 1 men's focus group (approx. 23 people); Interviews (approx.7) [One of multiple communities]	Nov-Dec 2017	Piggott-McKellar, A.E.; et al (2019). Moving People in a Changing Climate: Lessons from Two Case Studies in Fiji. <i>Soc. Sci.</i> , 8, 133.
FIJI Vunidogoloa Village, Vanua Levu Island, Cakaudrove Province	Interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation	Community members only (Chief, church representatives, teachers)	Approx. 38 Interviews Total 2 women's focus groups, 2 men's focus group (approx. 31 people); Interviews (approx.7) [One of multiple communities]	Nov-Dec 2017	Piggott-McKellar, A.E.; et al (2019). Moving People in a Changing Climate: Lessons from Two Case Studies in Fiji. <i>Soc. Sci.</i> , 8, 133. McMichael, C., et al (2019). "Planned relocation and everyday agency in low-lying coastal villages in Fiji." <i>The Geographical Journal</i> 185.3: 325-337.
FIJI Vunisavisavi Village, Vanua Levu Island, Cakaudrove Province	Interviews, focus group discussions, observation	Community members only	124 Interviews Total 12 focus groups (80 people), and interviews (44 people) [One of multiple communities]	Unknown	McMichael, C., et al (2019). "Planned relocation and everyday agency in low-lying coastal villages in Fiji." <i>The Geographical Journal</i> 185.3: 325-337.
FIJI Narikoso Village, Ono Island, Kadavu Island chain	Interviews, document analysis	Community members, unknown	Unknown [One of multiple communities]	Unknown	Bertana, A. (2019). Relocation as an Adaptation to Sea-Level Rise: Valuable Lessons from the Narikoso Village Relocation Project in Fiji. <i>Case Studies in the Environment.</i>

What is the country of the site of origin in the planned relocation case? What is the exact location of the site of origin in the planned relocation case?	Data Collection Methods Employed	Type of Stakeholders Interviewed	Number of Interviews	Date of Field Work	Full Citation of Primary Source, Secondary Source (as applicable)
SOLOMON ISLANDS Taro (provincial capital), Choiseul Province	Interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis	Community members and government	Unknown	Unknown	Albert, S., et al. (2018) Heading for the hills: climate-driven community relocations in the Solomon Islands and Alaska provide insight for a 1.5 C future. <i>Regional environmental change</i> 18.8: 2261-2272.
SOLOMON ISLANDS Mondo Village, Matara District	Interviews, household survey, document analysis	Community members only	119 Interviews Total	2015 - 2017	Otoara Ha'apio, M., et al. (2018). Transformation of rural communities: lessons from a local self-initiative for building resilience in the Solomon Islands. <i>Local Environment</i> , 23(3), 352-365. Email exchange with local contact on October 9, 2020.
Letau, Tegua Island	Interviews, household survey, participant observation, document analysis	Community members (including Chief), government officials and non-governmental actors	41 Interviews Total (20 "internal" interviews, 9 of whom also participated in the household questionnaire; 21 "external" interviews with government and non-government)	March - April 2011	Warrick, O. (2011) The adaptive capacity of the Tegua island community, Torres Islands, Vanuatu. Australian Aid.. Available at: https://www.nab.vu/sites/default/files/documents/usp-adaptive-capacity-vanuatu.pdf



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