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1. INTRODUCTION

Pacific communities are affected by a range of sudden-onset and slow-onset hazards that have been intensified by climate change. Sudden-onset hazards affecting Pacific countries include tropical storms and related storm surges, king tides, heavy rains and winds. Slow-onset processes include drought, sea-level rise, rising sea temperatures, ocean acidification, coastal erosion, temperature rises and changes to rainfall variability and the El Niño and La Niña climate patterns (IOM, 2020). In many cases, sudden-onset and slow-onset events are linked, often affecting the same communities. Climate change impacts interact with other drivers that shape mobility patterns in the region and this is likely to increase the demand for both internal and international migration opportunities. In the short-term, migration linked to climate change is likely to follow current movement patterns toward labour market opportunities in urban areas and Pacific Rim countries. Many Pacific Island Countries participate in labour mobility schemes with Australia and New Zealand and some also have special access agreements with New Zealand and the United States of America. However, some countries that experience the greatest migration pressures, including Tuvalu and Kiribati, have the fewest international migration options (ILO, 2014b) as they have no special access agreements and have been less successful under the existing labour mobility schemes than other Pacific Island countries for a variety of reasons including remoteness, the lack of diasporas in Australia and New Zealand, and lack of resources in relevant government departments.

Overview of IOM-ILO Policy Brief on Labour Mobility and Climate Change

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Background

- Climate change impacts interact with other mobility drivers and this is likely to increase the demand for both internal and international migration opportunities.
- Migration linked to climate change is likely to follow current pathways toward labour market opportunities in urban areas and Pacific Rim countries.
- This policy brief explores the link between climate change and labour mobility.
- It provides an overview of current thinking on labour mobility in the context of climate change, discusses the impact of labour mobility on climate change adaptation and makes recommendations on policy design, labour mobility programmes and research.

Potential opportunities

Lowering population pressures

- Reduces pressure on the environment
- Important for atolls and overcrowded urban areas

Diversifying household incomes

- Generating remittances
- In Tonga, remittances represent 37.7% of GDP - the highest of any country in the world.

Skills development and circulation

- English language and agricultural skills used in homeland
- Potential for green jobs – aligning environmental and employment objectives and maximizing skills gain opportunities

Table 2: Remittances in selected Pacific Island countries, 2020

Country	Remittances, 2020 (US\$ million)	Remittances % of GDP, 2020
Fiji	312	7.2
Kiribati	19	9.5
Marshall Islands	31	13.2
Palau	2	0.9
Papua New Guinea	2	0.0
Samoa	150	18.7
Solomon Islands	28	1.8
Tonga	194	37.7
Tuvalu	0	-
Vanuatu	76	8.8

Potential challenges

- *Loss of traditional knowledge, skills and labour*
 - Brain-drain
 - Shortage of agricultural labour in some sending communities, especially during peak harvest times
- *Risk of poor working conditions undermining human rights and labour rights - ensuring a just transition*
- *Ensuring equitable access to labour mobility opportunities*



Recommendations

- Consider labour mobility as a potential **climate resilience strategy** and ensure policy coherence
- Ensure climate change considerations are mainstreamed into **new national labour migration policies**, or through the process of **revising existing policies**
- Explore options to **grant special access and concessions** under labour mobility agreements to states that have experienced economic loss as a result of climate change
- Alignment with **International Labour Standards, promoting social protection and worker welfare**
- **Skills development** for the international and domestic labour markets that are required in Green Jobs and for a Just Transition.
- **Improving use of remittances:** Support migrants' investments in national and community resilience to climate change
- **Continued research**

Thank you!

