



Landscape analysis of the current state of feminist organizing by civil society organizations and activists in response to the impact of climate change on the lives of women, girls and LGBTQI+ individuals in the Pacific.



Pacific Island Feminist
Climate Justice
Landscape Survey

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This landscape analysis set out to identify key actors, priorities, needs, opportunities and challenges of feminist organizing for climate justice in the Pacific region.

It found that feminist organizing in the Pacific is diverse, vibrant and expanding and the values of trust, respect and genuine relationships are at the core of partnerships and movement building. Actors coalesce to drive commitments on climate justice at all levels and yet their pathways, partnerships and strategies have been shaped by their particular contexts, experience and what is effective for the communities they serve.

There have been many milestones achieved in localizing the climate justice agenda, promoting and expanded civic space and accountability for the respect, protection and fulfilment of women's rights. Nevertheless, continued advocacy and partnerships for the coordinated implementation of commitments is ongoing and steep challenges and barriers remain.

These include: a patriarchal system that is slow to change; a lack of an enabling environment and infrastructure for feminist organizations; compounding and frequent crises and risks which expose the gaps of reaching all women which deepen gender inequality and result in the priorities of diverse women being excluded; and a tight restrictive funding environment that leaves feminist and women's organizations with little room to maneuver. In total, these factors constrain the movement and actors' ability to exercise more power and control to address persistent socio and economic challenges including increasing levels of violence, the lack of equitable resourcing and access to sexual and reproductive health services as well as under-representation in political decision-making.

These challenges can be transformed by continuing to strengthen the feminist movement across the region. Diverse women, at the front line of the climate crisis need to peel away the label of "vulnerable" to define and claim their resilience. They must be supported to bring their traditional and indigenous knowledge and experience to develop local, innovative solutions. To bring their evidence and recommendations into national and regional climate action.

This landscape survey reaffirms that a feminist vision of intersectional, intergenerational and inclusive decision-making is collectively regarded as the way forward to recognizing the diversity of Pacific women's experiences and enhance their ability to bring about transformative change – within the women's rights and feminist movement, broader civil society including faith-based and traditional structures, paving the way for a new generation of activism.

2.1 Ecosystem actors and organizing – composition, diversity, structure, and experiences

- Recognise and reaffirm the range and diversity of feminist, women-led organizations and organizations that focus on women’s rights and climate justice including by investing in a Movement Building strategy that employs a feminist intersectional and intergenerational approach.
- Such a strategy would include resourcing and supporting the co-creation of spaces that bring together Pacific feminists and their allies and network to build understanding of an enhanced and diverse Pacific women led approaches to drive climate justice demands as well as building cross regional learning from the experience of actors and movements in different regions.
- A Movement Building strategy would enable grantmaking for Pacific feminists including supporting national dialogues and convening spaces that address and diffuse notions of “climate financing power” by enabling more south-south collaborative learning, recognising and building on Pacific-led innovation and expertise and to develop the process for grant making

2.2 Pacific feminist and women led climate justice priorities: Localization of the feminist climate justice agenda

- A feminist funding model for climate action must include multiyear, longer-term funding, alongside well-coordinated rapid response funding windows for feminist groups to mobilise around key moments or crises, ensuring resources and support reaches women when they need it, to deliberate, participate, design and deliver what works for diverse women and in their communities.
- Untied, flexible and core funding supports a people centred approach while ensuring stability and sustainability for Pacific feminists and women’s rights and women-led organisations. A Movement Building Fund must support the localisation agenda with priority given to funding women’s rights organisations, including those representing diverse constituencies and the support for the development of the broader ecosystem. This could be achieved with a funding mix of direct funding (60%), movement building (20%), institutional strengthening (10%) and administration support (10%).

- Support for young women-led initiatives and investment in the new generation of feminist leaders is also critical for sustaining and growing a vibrant feminist movement in the region.

2.3 Inclusion and intersectionality and protection of dignity in practice

- Feminist organizing for climate justice means having safe spaces and processes to tackle and transforming pre-existing harmful and discriminatory practices. This means ensuring specific resources for groups to co-create innovative ways to engage with traditional leaders including older women and men, and faith-based communities.
- Resources are essential to support documentation and shadow reporting on compliance with human rights treaties and policies as part of driving greater accountability to the rights of diverse women in the region e.g., CEDAW, the ICPRD, Yogyakarta Principles etc.

2.4 Influencing the regional and global agenda

- Support Pacific feminists and their networks to actively represent themselves and bring more diverse voices and experiences into advocacy and representation in global and regional spaces, including on climate justice

2.5 Collective decision-making processes for funding

- Support the development of an equitable partnership model that builds on the distinct Pacific feminist coalitions and ways of organizing in the region.
- A Movement Building committee can bring together the current Steering Committee of the Shifting the Power Coalition with representation (initially) from the Northern Pacific e.g., WUTMI and the Pacific Sexual Gender Diversity Network (PSGDN) to enable an inclusive, inclusive, accountable and meaningful process and result.
- Consideration should also be given to a team of advisors to the Movement Building Committee who can bring additional expertise to strategy and decision making.

2.6 A Feminist Climate Fund

- Consideration should be given to pursuing the establishment of a Feminist Climate Fund by a collaborative accreditation approach and/or proposal to an existing accredited entity accredited to the Green Climate Fund by Action Aid Australia and the Global Fund for Women as part of shifting more substantial resources to women and their organizations in the Pacific.

¹ Current membership includes young women's representation, a representative of the Pacific Disability Forum's women with disabilities network, as well as representatives from the Polynesia and Melanesia sub-regions



The rationale for applying an inclusive, feminist, intergenerational and intersectional approach to climate justice is found in international policy and human rights commitments.

In particular, the 2015 Paris Agreement outlines the importance of considering the human rights dimensions of climate change, including with reference to gender equality, the empowerment of women and intergenerational equity and climate justice (see box 1)². The need for gender responsive climate action is further elaborated on in the adoption of the enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender (LWPG) and Gender Action Plan at the COP25³. For the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the Secretary General is calling for renewed efforts to address the linkages between gender, climate and security, the meaningful participation of women and marginalized groups in decision making, gender sensitive climate financing and the protection of environmental women human rights defenders in 2021⁴. These recommendations are tied to and build on commitments made under international human rights mechanisms, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the CEDAW, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and Special Procedures.

² The Paris Agreement 2015.

³ See <https://unfccc.int/news/strengthened-5-year-action-plan-on-gender-adopted-at-cop25>

⁴ United Nations Security Council Report S/2021/827, **Women, Peace and Security Report of the Secretary General**, September 2021.

Women's Rights, Gender Equality and Climate Justice in the Pacific

Box 1 - 2015 Paris Agreement, p.3

Para 2 - Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity.

Para 4 - Noting the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the protection of biodiversity, recognized by some cultures as Mother Earth, and noting the importance for some of the concept of "climate justice", when taking action to address climate change.

"Gender and climate justice is about including everyone—especially the most vulnerable people's experiences and ideas—to inform and shape climate policies and negotiations. If we leave out half of the population in our dealings, then we only have half of the population to deal with the issues" Asita Moloti – former Director of Women, Government of Tuvalu⁵.

The current approach to advancing Pacific women's rights in relation to climate justice is charted in the Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights (PPA) 2018-2030. With the recognition of the impact of climate change and the climate crisis in the Pacific, the focus on women's role and knowledge in environmental management and action and the long-term environmental effects of military and mining-related activities was one of 13 areas of the earlier 1994 PPA. It has been further elaborated on in relation to climate change in the revised PPA 2018-2030⁶.

⁵ Lockwood, D, 2017 May 29, Climate Change: a feminist issue, Women's Media Centre <https://www.womensmediacenter.com/news-features/climate-change-a-feminist-issue>

⁶ SPC, September 2021, Beijing +25: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island Countries and Territories: p.4, https://spccfpstore1.blob.core.windows.net/digitallibrary-docs/files/c0/c0e29ac9c784d2b9328862f53beea344.pdf?sv=2015-12-11&sr=b&sig=paN%2F26kF7KeH3vPJFHLJ9Pgb3TAdhT4KLY9MOXPTv1w%3D&se=2022-04-10T00%3A16%3A43Z&sp=r&rsc=public%2C%20max-age%3D864000%2C%20max-stale%3D86400&rsct=application%2Fpdf&rscd=inline%3B%20filename%3D%2258468_2021_Beijing_25_Review_of_progress_in_implementing_the_Beijing_Platform_for_Action_in_Pacific_Island_countries_and_territories.pdf%22

The new PPA recognizes climate change as an emerging issue for achieving gender equality, stating that ‘women’s full participation in climate crisis adaptation and disaster risk reduction is considered essential, given their knowledge and skills in natural resource management and energy use. However, their engagement in climate change discussions and the integration of a gender perspective in climate change policies and programmes remain marginal’⁷.

Furthermore, it situates this under its Strategic objective 1 focus on enhancing knowledge and supporting gender equality to inform policies and decision making through legislation, policies, planning and programmes and the need for further research linked to promoting resilience to climate change and disasters such as the impacts of social protection, wage gaps and income inequalities, and social and cultural factors.

The growing influence and engagement with the Pacific women’s rights and feminist movement is reflected in inclusion of language that reaffirms ‘Pacific women of all diversities’ or ‘all Pacific women’⁸ in the Outcome Document of the 13th Pacific Women’s Triennial Conference which setting the precedence for greater accountability by Pacific governments to all groups and age groups of Pacific women, including indigenous women, elderly women, girls, women living with disabilities, lesbian and bisexual women, urban poor women, women in rural and maritime areas, and women on the climate frontline’.

The Outcome Document of the 14th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women (2021) further significantly reflects the input of the Pacific women’s rights and feminist movement to ensuring the conference addresses gender-responsive climate justice as one of three priority areas for Pacific Island countries and treaties.

The recommendations of the Conference on gender responsive climate justice link climate action and disaster risk management and resilience to the impact on women and girls and provides direction to actors on implementation. This direction is provided to Government, and other entities including with the assistance of CSOs, faith-based organizations (FBOs), CROP agencies, development partners and the private sector.

⁷ The Pacific Community, Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women’s Human Rights 2018 -2030, p. 11

<https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/wordpresscontent/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/PPA-2018-Part-I-EN2.pdf>

⁸ The 14th Women’s Triennial and 7th Meeting of Pacific Ministers for Women Outcomes and Recommendations: Our oceans, our heritage, our future,

<https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/documents/14th%20Triennial%20Conference%20of%20Pacific%20Women%20Eng.pdf>

Recommendations for Governments specifically are to ensure:

- the *meaningful participation of women and other marginalized groups* in all stages of the design and implementation of gender responsive policies, strategies and plans;
- adoption of *gender-responsive and inclusive budgeting* within all policies and strategies with gender indicators; and
- the use of these Outcomes and Recommendations to *inform countries positions at upcoming sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)*, especially the 66th session on gender equality and the empowerment of women in relation to climate change.

Recommendations for other entities, including Governments are to acknowledge, utilize and support:

- a gender responsive approach that *recognises women's agency, knowledge and leadership and women's active participation* in climate change decision-making platforms at all levels;
- the national *implementation of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan*.
- the *link between gender equality and climate change impacts and considering a human rights-based approach contextualized to the culture* at the legislative, policy and programme level and strengthened coordination and capacity building on gender and human rights, including integration in climate and disaster gender policies;
- the *link between climate change, disaster risks, GBV and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)*, and for all women and girls access to GBV and SRHR information and services including in times of disaster;
- the *value of traditional knowledge, skills and expertise* – alongside scientific knowledge – and the role of indigenous, faith-based and local communities in climate action and disaster resilience.
- *gender and social inclusion mainstreaming and support*, including for meeting social and environmental safeguards with climate financing mechanisms and for and with the national women's machinery and women's organizations;
- culturally responsive, gender sensitive and socially inclusive *data collection and disaggregated data*;
- *knowledge hubs and appropriate and available platforms* for information dissemination and knowledge sharing;
- *COVID-19 recovery efforts* which present an opportunity to transform societies and to place women, especially the most marginalised, at the heart of climate change and crisis responses and the transition to a green economy;

These outcomes will provide direction for the implementation of priorities at regional, national and local level in the coming years.

Regional approaches to the impact of climate change and agreements – where are the women?

On the global stage, Pacific Island leaders have raised the visibility of the impact of climate change on the region and are advocating for accountability and climate justice. For the global agenda, the differentiated impact of climate change on groups at the national and community levels in countries has been a Pacific call for action, with increasing gender responsive climate action putting the focus on women's rights and youth participation.

According to the SPC, “many Pacific Islanders had advocated for many years to take into account the differentiated vulnerability of women and men to climate change impacts and the importance [of promoting] gender equality, support[ing] the empowerment of women, and protect[ing] human rights across climate change initiatives”⁹.

However, while the political agenda addresses the differentiated impact of climate change on women, Pacific leaders themselves are falling short of their own commitments to drive a gender equality and women's rights agenda.

These guiding principles for this approach by the leaders include inclusivity, equality and consultation, support for the role of women and youth and representation at all levels¹⁰ and gender responsive climate justice¹¹.

Additionally, there are some incremental attempts for shared spaces and forums for feminist and women led civil society and activists to engage with regional institutions on priority setting but these lack consistent resources. Lessons can be learnt from regional engagement forums with the PIF on the women, peace and security agenda.

Box 2 – Pacific advocacy on women's rights and climate change

In his preface to the regional Beijing+20 report, in 2014, the then Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Hon. Enele Sopoaga, wrote: “One area in which the exclusion of women from decision-making, the violation of their fundamental human rights and the underestimation of their knowledge and experience, is hurting our societies the most is in our efforts to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.”

Source: SPC 2020, **Beijing +25: Review of Progress in Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in PICTs**, p. 106

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ In the process of the development of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific, there is explicit recognition by Pacific Island leaders of ‘the fundamental principle of inclusivity and equality, particularly the role of women, ensuring increased representation at all levels, and of youth, for advancing regionalism’

¹¹ Gender-responsive climate justice was one of the three priority areas at the **14th Women's Triennial and Women Minister's Conference Statement in April 2021. The other two areas were** women's economic empowerment and gender-based violence. See

<https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/documents/14th%20Triennial%20Conference%20of%20Pacific%20Women%20Eng.pdf>

Presently Pacific governments are considering and exploring how climate change and climate justice will impact a range of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, and groups, and the implementation of measures to address this. This includes through targeted international and regional advocacy and engagement, enacting national policies and strategies, legislation and programmes and establishing institutions and structures¹². The framework is specifically set out in how human rights and climate justice is framed with regard to climate impacts and climate justice and is therefore a further opportunity to progress a women's rights and feminist agenda. (See box 3).

Box 3 - OHCHR's 'Understanding Human Rights and Climate Change' key messages

Climate change impacts, directly and indirectly, an array of internationally guaranteed human rights. States (duty-bearers) have an affirmative obligation to take effective measures to prevent and redress these climate impacts, and therefore, to mitigate climate change, and to ensure that all human beings (rights-holders) have the necessary capacity to adapt to the climate crisis.

Climate justice requires that climate action is consistent with existing human rights agreements, obligations, standards and principles. Those who have contributed the least to climate change unjustly and disproportionately suffer its harms. They must be meaningful participants in and primary beneficiaries of climate action, and they must have access to effective remedies.

Pacific Feminist and Women-Led Organizing for Climate Justice

Pacific Islanders are acutely affected by the slow onset and intensifying devastation brought on by climate change. Recent severe weather events, including category 5 cyclones, have also demonstrated the reality of rising sea levels through king tides and associated flooding.

Loss and damage are not only experienced through the loss of land, food, and water sources but the loss of places of traditional and cultural identity as a result of displacement and forced migration.

As a response to these threats and experiences, disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness, response and recovery and climate change adaptation and resilience building

¹² SPC and OHCHR, 2021, **Human rights in the Pacific: A Situational Analysis 2020**

<https://spccfpstore1.blob.core.windows.net/digitallibrary-docs/files/d7/d7971c6266aa416a94f62b68a704ca97.pdf?sv=2015-12-11&sr=b&sig=nOU96dqy7%2FOjApjyjc301%2FgFV873dNo9sUhG2Sr2Y%3D&se=2022-04-11T21%3A50%3A24Z&sp=r&rsc=public%2C%20max-age%3D864000%2C%20max-stale%3D86400&rsct=application%2Fpdf&rscd=inline%3B%20filename%3D%22Human rights in the Pacific a situational analysis 2020.pdf%22>

are at the forefront of Pacific countries development priorities and strategies (see box 4).

Localization of The Feminist Climate Justice Agenda

The Pacific women's rights and feminist movement has its roots in and is shaped by decades of advocacy by the Pacific feminist movement's drive to realize women's rights and gender equality through international, regional, and national human rights commitments ¹³.

While Pacific countries have different political, social, economic, cultural and community contexts, there are common challenges around increasing women's agency and capacity to participate and engage in political institutions¹⁴. These are shaped by and include global and local political, structural, and social barriers, systems and trends that limit women's ability to demand and claim their rights and have this respected and protected.

For feminist organizing for climate justice, means tackling a patriarchal system; inequalities; backlash against feminism; conservative and capitalist driven policies, funding and practices; impunity for human rights violations and limited or ineffective grievance and redress mechanisms. In the region, the evidence of discrimination against women in the Pacific is seen in the extremely high rates of violence against women, low rates of political representation and participation at

all levels, land ownership and access, exploitative practices, access to justice, and attitudes and behaviors. In this regard, supporting organizing through a response that recognizes women's diverse experiences in a context of a set of intersecting risks, challenges and barriers requires an intersectional feminist analysis (see box 5). This goal of recognizing diversity for social change and approach has a second dimension of not perpetuating existing systems of oppression and a 'one-size fits all' analysis.

It is addressing the gap between policy commitments and practice. While governments become stymied in bureaucracy, the Pacific women's rights and feminist movement has consistently demonstrated how it can mobilize to influence decision makers through their constituencies. The women's movement is able to respond to multiple risks and implement

Box 4: Country example: Vanuatu

The Government of Vanuatu's report for the Beijing+25 report highlights that women and girl's leadership in disaster planning, response and preparedness has also been strengthened through community disaster and climate change committees, school disaster committees and a women's weather watch programme ('Women Wetem Weta'), with the support of the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Program partners.

Source: SPC 2020, **Beijing +25: Review of Progress in Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in PICTs**, p. 105.

¹³ See the **Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration 2012 and the Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights 2018 – 2030**

¹⁴ See Bhagwan-Rolls, S & Evans, A. 2020. *Feminist Peace and Security in the Pacific Islands*, Oxfam International September 2020, <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621056/dp-feminist-peace-security-pacific-islands-210920-en.pdf>

responses that work across government siloes to ensure responses to the compounding impacts of natural hazards and the COVID-19 pandemic on women of all diversities.

Box 5 – Why a feminist intersectional approach matters

“...we must know intimately the context and conditions in which women and person of non-heteronormative non-binary sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics live, in Fiji. This is never the work of parachute activism, but of long-term accomplices and LBT women and GNC people in Fiji. Then only we can define and work on access to justice, over space and time. If not, we run the risk of continuing to assume that what is true for heterosexual women is true for LBT women and gender non-conforming people, and what is true for one Fijian LBT woman, is true for another”.

Source: DIVA for Equality, 2019, **Unjust, Unequal, Unstoppable: Fiji Lesbians, Bisexual women, transmen and Gender Non-Conforming People tipping the scales toward justice**, p. 22

Feminist organizing is addressing the disproportionate impact that climate change has on the lives of women and girls of all diversities including LGBTQI+ individuals and diverse groups.

The realities of discrimination in this environment as seen in the accounts of the diversity of women’s lived experiences by community-based women’s movements, organizations and activities¹⁵. When these sudden and slow onset events occur, the impact of this on women and their experiences is shaped by a combination of factors, interactions, intersecting risks and discrimination¹⁶. These events are experienced differently by women, with groups such as women with disabilities and those of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) being particularly vulnerable¹⁷.

It is also influencing broader civil society action. Ahead of COP26, Pacific civil society issued a collective call for *feminist, gender-just, inclusive, intersectional and intergenerational spaces, financing and outcomes on climate justice*¹⁸. While this is a hopeful unified call to action that reflects alliances forged between the feminist movement and the climate

¹⁵ See: Transcend Oceania & GPPAC, 2020, And she persisted for Peace: redesign the table <https://gppac.net/resources/and-she-persisted-peace-redesign-table>; CARE 2020, Fiji Gender, Disability and Inclusion Analysis COVID-19 and TC Harold

¹⁶ See United Nations Capital Development Fund, 2020, **Economic Impacts of Natural Hazards on vulnerable populations in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.**

¹⁷ Pacific women shaping Pacific Development, **Thematic brief: ending discrimination on the basis of sexuality, gender identity and expression**

¹⁸ Pacific Climate Justice Summit 2021, The Rising Tide: A United Pacific for Climate Justice, **A call to action**, 3 to 4 August, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GEOmJiGI5ehJxTLrC54pFDN14AllJuv3/view> and Climate Action Network Pacific, Pacific COP 26 Demands: The Blue Pacific demands climate justice and action, endorsement draft version 4, 14 October 2021, <https://www.pican.org/cop-26/cop26-demands>;

movement, there is still a need for dedicated space and resources for feminist and women-led organizations to organise for climate justice at local and community level where women of all diversities still need to claim power and voice.

Pacific Feminist Calls for Action

While the region's women's rights and feminist movement has been able to build strategic alliances with government and inter-governmental processes, there is still a need to create space for the independence and autonomy of organizing using an ally and accomplices' approach that contribute to collective action.

The Pacific Partnership to Strengthen Gender, Climate Change Responses and Sustainable Development (PPGCCSD) has become an online platform that brings attention to local action on global priorities while supporting learning and alliance building across the wide Pacific region. Feminist groups working on the women, peace and security agenda brought about the inclusion of 'climate change' in UN Security Council Resolution 2242¹⁹. Coalitions and networks such as the Shifting the Power Coalition takes feminist practice into disaster management and humanitarian action while the Pacific Sexual Gender Diverse Network (PSGDN) brings attention to the sexual reproductive health and rights agenda, while also engaging with faith based and academic forums.

In 2016, the formation of the Pacific Feminist Forum provided a regional platform that enabled inter-generational and intersectional learning and understanding of Pacific feminist vision, values, principles of engagement and recommendations for women's rights in the region²⁰. The recommendations outlined in the second Feminist Forum 2019 Charter Action Plan²¹ outline strengthening feminist knowledge sharing and activism, the creation of and facilitating expanded spaces and forums that support feminist knowledge sharing and learning and peer support resources. However, without access to non-financial and financial resources means these recommendations remain as words on paper.

Feminist Funding Mechanisms

Access to funding is a core area and challenge for organizing and the work of Pacific feminists. For a funding model, disbursement and oversight for these Pacific feminists, a preferred mechanism has been identified – the establishment of an independent Pacific Feminist Fund. In the specific area of feminist climate financing, there needs to be funding by climate finance

¹⁹ See Bhagwan-Rolls, S & Evans, A. 2020. Feminist Peace and Security in the Pacific Islands, Oxfam International September 2020, <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621056/dp-feminist-peace-security-pacific-islands-210920-en.pdf> and Transcend Oceania & GPPAC, 2020, And she persisted for Peace: redesign the table <https://gppac.net/resources/and-she-persisted-peace-redesign-table>;

²⁰ Pacific Feminist Forum 2016, **Pacific Feminist Forum Charter** <http://www.fwrn.org.fj/images/PFF/PFF-Charter-Final-2Dec2016.pdf>; Pacific Feminist Forum 2019, **Pacific Feminist Forum Charter Action Plan** http://www.fwrn.org.fj/images/PFF/WEBSITE/PFF_Charter_Action_Plan.pdf

²¹ See Pacific Feminist Forum 2019, **Pacific Feminist Forum Charter Action Plan** http://www.fwrn.org.fj/images/PFF/WEBSITE/PFF_Charter_Action_Plan.pdf

initiatives to resource climate action and emergency work by Pacific feminist and women led organisers and local front-line communities. This is in line with findings and experience that feminist organizing takes place within a particular, and challenging, funding landscape.

In the Pacific, a mapping of funding gaps, opportunities and trends painted a difficult picture for women's organizations and their ability to receive funding and found that²³:

- Only 1% of funding was found to be directed to Pacific Women's organizations;
- A gender data gap exists in relation to donor funding of Pacific Women's organizations;
- Funding for women's empowerment in the Pacific has stagnated since 2012 in contrast to global trends;
- There is a lack of transparent funding data available for gender equality and women's empowerment.

The Feminist Charter Action Plan further outlines that feminist practice in funding models means increased engagement with new funding partners funds and financing modalities; transparency of funding data; and more inclusive and informed dialogues with women's organizations and disabled persons associations²⁴.

A more enabling funding environment for women's rights and organizations also includes: adopting models of grant funding and a governance structure that are more accessible to CSOs (small, less formal and more community based), and also a stronger focus on flexible, core and longer term (multi-year) funding²⁵. Ensuring the availability of funding that enables feminist organizations to fully effectively and according to their values and priorities goes hand in hand with increased support to overcome organizations' capacity gaps. These common gaps and capacity challenges include around funding, human resources, leadership and governance, strategic planning and collaboration, monitoring and evaluation, and coordination and communication²⁶.

The realignment of funding in response to the COVID19 pandemic has further revealed the lack of untied and flexible funding, which could enable the continuation of work on SRHR, HIV and AIDS while also ensuring there is dedicated funding for women's rights and feminist led climate action. Anecdotal evidence has further highlighted the lack of dedicated resources within the Pacific region to support women with disabilities to be resourced more autonomously as well as well strengthen their own national movements within the Pacific feminist movement.

²³ Urgent Action Fund & Fiji Women's Fund, 2020, **Where's the money for women and girls in the Pacific? Mapping funding gaps, opportunities and trends: a scoping study.**

²⁴ ibid

²⁵ PIFS and SPC, July 2020, **Joint Pacific Island Forum Secretariat and Pacific Community (SPC) submission to the Australian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Human Rights of Women and Girls in the Pacific** [https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/documents/general%20SPC%20documents/PIFS-SPC%20Joint%20Submission%20\(17%20July%202020\).pdf](https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/documents/general%20SPC%20documents/PIFS-SPC%20Joint%20Submission%20(17%20July%202020).pdf)

²⁶ UNDP, 2015, A capacity assessment of CSOs in the Pacific. https://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/library/democratic_governance/A_Capacity_Assessment_of_CSOs_Pacific.html

While funding provided by mechanisms such as the DFAT supported Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (PWSPD) has enabled feminist coalitions such as the Shifting the Power Coalition to work across the peace-development and humanitarian nexus and in collaboration with women with disabilities, there remains the challenge of sustaining a programme of work developed in a consultative manner with its partners.

At both the regional and national level this is a persistent challenge for feminist groups, networks and organisations – the need to compete for the same pool of funds with larger Pacific civil society organizations and networks. This is not a new challenge or one that is specific to feminist organizations; the conditionalities of funding is a challenge found by other civil society organizations in the region. More specifically, this includes the prevalence of restrictive funding cycles, a mismatch between donor and organizations preferences, a lack of dedicated, flexible, and sustained core funding for organizations and a move towards project-based funding²⁷.

²⁷PIFS and SPC, July 2020, **Joint Pacific Island Forum Secretariat and Pacific Community (SPC) submission to the Australian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Human Rights of Women and Girls in the Pacific**

[https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/documents/general%20SPC%20documents/PIFS-SPC%20Joint%20Submission%20\(17%20July%202020\).pdf](https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/documents/general%20SPC%20documents/PIFS-SPC%20Joint%20Submission%20(17%20July%202020).pdf)



CASE STUDY

The Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI) Experience

The 2017 Micronesian Women's Conference assisted in identifying national strategies to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment goals in RMI: "Eliminating violence, economic empowerment, health, climate change and women's leadership were the most pressing issues in our Micronesian region. These recommendations are being translated into actions locally" says Elbon. "That is why the Gender Equality Act 2019 is an important legislative commitment to addressing gender-based discrimination and inequality in Marshallese society". Other key policies aimed at changing social and cultural patterns of gender stereotyping include the Gender Mainstreaming Policy 2014, Rights of Persons with Disability Policy 2015, Child Rights Protection Policy 2015 as well as the Gender Equality and Social Action Plan 2017-2020 Goals.

"Land is a source of power for women since RMI is a matrilineal society" says Daisy Alik-Momotaro who is an advisor of Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI).

In the Republic of the Marshall Islands climate change and rising sea levels pose the gravest risk when it comes to food security and physical security for Marshallese women, a culture where primary care is a traditional role afforded to women. In a matriarchal society where women are the custodian of land, culture and tradition, the threat of climate change in destroying atolls and land poses an even greater threat to the depletion of language and identity. This heightens poverty and increases the vulnerability of women.

On February 3rd, 2016 Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) President, Dr. Hilda Heine, declared a state of emergency in response to intensifying drought conditions across the country. [President Heine's declaration](#) anticipated that the drought would worsen, bringing serious consequences for public health, food supply, and economy.

Elbon said there were specific challenges for women as well: "In 2016 the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) declared a state of emergency because of the drought which had a negative effect on women's economic empowerment. Women were unable to produce handicrafts and sell them as most of the crops had been destroyed." However, our women are very resilient and creative, and soon they started recycling materials such as snack packets to weave and market a range of products including jewellery, hair accessories, purses and baskets.

The GRMI 2015/2016 Post Disaster Needs Assessment for RMI, following the El Niño Drought of 2016 revealed that *"While women and other social groups have been disproportionately affected by the drought of 2016, women's contribution to the household economy is substantial. Women play a critical role in recovery and resilience. Post-disaster recovery resources must strive to safeguard, restore and promote the economic engagement and participation of disadvantaged groups. Women's economic recovery must be protected*

and accorded the same status and importance as that of men. Targeted investment through extension, financial inclusion, soft loans and skills development must be made in areas with a high representation of women, particularly in the informal sector (i.e., in agriculture, markets and other forms of vulnerable employment). Alternative livelihoods appropriate for remote communities need to be identified and promoted in areas like aquaculture (sea cucumber farming, for example) and hydroponics. Recovery efforts must redress gender inequalities or, at the very least, not perpetuate unequal access to power and resources.”

“Their everyday life has changed. Women were heavily burdened due to the droughts. Children weren’t going to school and so they had extra care work taking care of their children as well as the overall well-being of their families” explains Elbon adding that there was also an increase stress in the house due to water shortages requiring more members of the families to be involved in the collection of water during the drought, as not all families had their own watchmen catchment.

“The impact of climate change is not just on adequate quality water accessibility for women in their daily life chores, but also on the sea level rise that erodes the land away. Urbanization and outmigration are also the outcome of climate change, and socio-economic and political threats are more pronounced. Another outcome of climate change is the increase in the number and types of pests that threaten women’s efforts to grow and maintain multi-purpose plants/trees needed in their home atolls/islands for sustenance and their livelihoods. Climate Change is intricately linked to increase in viruses causing sickness such as dengue fever, which has placed RMI on a national state of health emergency for the last nine months” says Alik-Momotaro.

Climate Change is intricately linked to increase in viruses causing sickness such as dengue fever, which has placed RMI on a national state of health emergency for the last nine months” says Alik-Momotaro.

The gravity of the health and social implications of unsafe water as well as the 2016 drought has been evident in the past decade according to Francyne Wase-Jacklick the Deputy Secretary at the Office of Health Planning, Policy Preparedness & Epidemiology: “In the past decade we have seen an alarming increase in the reported cases of gastroenteritis on the main islands of Majuro and Ebeye, as well as an outbreak of typhoid on Majuro in 2006 and, 1,500 cases of diarrhea and close to 3,000 cases of pink eye as recently as 2016.”

These conditions she says are contributing to malnutrition in children: “The recent Integrated Child Health and Nutritional Survey through UNICEF, indicates serious malnutrition in Marshallese children. Under- nourished children have lower resistance to infection and are more likely to die from common childhood ailments such as diarrheal diseases.”

Connecting with Communities

“Our economy is small and government resources limited, and we are working to increase access to services in the outer islands so that it’s the same as urban areas of Majuro and Ebeye but this takes a lot of time and resources.”” says Elbon, “The context for women in the Marshall Islands depends on where they grew up, what social and economic support they receive from their family, what island they live in, what islands they have other kinship ties with and this all affects how they’ve been coping with climate change.”

The 24 atolls and islets of the RMI are dispersed over 700,000 square miles of ocean. This makes the transportation of supplies, and personnel [to deliver essential services] a challenge, [as well as sharing information]. The local aviation service has two planes that are often grounded for maintenance and repair. Travel by boat is expensive, tedious and time consuming. It is a challenge for the GRMI to ensure they can respond to the needs of communities living in the outer island with consistency. And the Government of the Republic of Marshall Islands (GRMI) continues to struggle with achieving the proper capacity for initiating, supplying and sustaining outer island support. Human, technical and financial resources continue to be lacking and what resources are available are often unable to reach much further than the urban centres of Majuro and Ebeye.

It is important to invest in reaching women in remote communities as well as increasing sustained investment in strengthening women's resilience to address climate change in their local communities says Elbon: "We need to ensure women are part of the conversations about climate change, resilience and sustainable livelihoods in the outer islands, identifying essential services including health, education and training as well as opportunities for economic empowerment. This means supporting women's NGOs and groups and working together to reach out to as many outer islands as we can. Investment in data collection including providing training on how to collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data is key."

Training for women to increase skill levels to keep families economically resilient, safe and healthy and to better mitigate against difficult situations that arise from climate change, COVID19 and other challenges also requires investment says Alik-Momotaro: "They also need tools and skills to support family gardening activities given climate change impacts on soil salinity and limited rainfall."

Women traditional leaders must be part of the development of COVID19 prevention and response says Alik-Momotaro: "Urban overcrowding needs to be addressed. There is the role of the women traditional leaders in addressing this matter in order to ease the crowdedness in Majuro and Ebeye, but how are they being actively involved in these planning and decision-making processes? It cannot be just the government and the private sector acting on their own" The response, she adds requires ensuring resources reach women at community level through WUTMI member organizational chapters"

Such measures must also include the prevention of domestic violence which is anticipated to increase in lockdown situations and anticipated decreases in household incomes: "WUTMI has to prepare to provide increased support services and mitigate against potential rise in VAW incidents when the time comes."

To reach communities during climate change or health crises requires an appropriate and accessible information and communication system says Elbon: "What has worked is to utilize the RMI radio station that reaches all the atolls. We organised our International Women's Day celebration through radio and Facebook livestreaming, and we reached more than 2,000 people in one event. We have found continuing to do outreach programmes through radio and through the social media does reach a lot of people, and as the telecommunication network expands, so will our audience."

The Ministry of Health & Human Services is also working on improving access to healthcare in the outer islands or rural health by ensuring better access to health systems for both women and men:

Civil Society Partnerships

WUTMI is a key civil society partner ensuring national, regional, and global commitments on gender equality, are translated and shared with civil society organizations as well as implemented at the local level:

In partnership with IOM and the Marshall Islands Red Cross, WUTMI also conducted hazard and vulnerability mapping in communities surrounding all five public high schools as well as fourteen public elementary schools on six atolls. Following these mapping activities, action plans were developed to address the pressing and continuing impacts on the livelihoods of women and their families as a result of natural and climate change-induced disasters. WUTMI assisted with relief efforts during the 2013 and 2016 severe drought events. In the 2016 efforts, WUTMI conducted the Cookhouse Confidential focus group discussions with women and young girls about the impacts of disasters on their health and wellbeing, particularly looking at menstrual hygiene management. IOM and WUTMI distributed female hygiene kits during the disaster as a result of their pilot focus group discussions. These were proven to be useful for the women who received them.

In the civil society statement, coordinated by WUTMI, for the 2017 Micronesian Women's Conference, highlighted the important role of local civil society organizations and other non-state actors as essential allies and implementing partners to progress the advancement of gender and women's empowerment, climate justice and disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. It did, however, rely on good communication and information-sharing systems between grassroots led, national and regional civil society and social movements as well as with government and development partners.

WUTMI conducts annual capacity building and awareness raising during the Annual WUMTI Conference. They also make trips to the outer islands (depending on funding availability) to conduct planning exercises which include action plan development and community mapping to build capacity around project implementation and the financial management of those programs. WUTMI provides grant writing and report writing support. WUTMI acts as the voice of Marshallese women and continues to lobby the government for improved services to women in rural areas. Transportation is very unreliable and expensive for NGOs to regularly make rounds to help and support.

It is important to invest in reaching women in remote communities as well as increasing sustained investment in strengthening women's resilience to address climate change in their local communities says Elbon: "We need to ensure women are part of the conversations about climate change, resilience and sustainable livelihoods in the outer islands, identifying essential services including health, education and training as well as opportunities for economic empowerment. This means supporting women's NGOs and groups and working together to reach out to as many outer islands as we can. Investment in data collection including providing training on how to collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data is key."



The landscape analysis was conducted by the Shifting the Project Coalition landscape analysis survey team: Sharon Bhagwan Rolls and Carolyn Kitione from the Shifting the Power Coalition and Patrina Fong (independent consultant) all of whom were based in Suva, Fiji. Primary and secondary data were obtained from a desk review, and respondent interviews and an online survey conducted between 11 to 22 October 2021.

The respondents that participated in the analysis were from across Pacific countries. They represent a diverse range of organizations that are heavily involved in feminist climate justice organizing and gender equality and with a wide sphere of influence. These respondents were recommended by key regional institutions and partners in the Pacific and the Shifting the Power Coalition research team's experience and partnerships.

Through the development of the landscape analysis database and recommended respondent contacts, the organizations and activists interviewed have extensive experience in climate justice advocacy and feminist organizing at the international, regional, national and community levels. It is of note that the initial sample size and number of key respondents that the landscape analysis survey team reached out to was much larger. However, the timing of data collection and the research also coincided with organizations' critical preparations for COP26 beginning on 31 October, which was seen to affect participation in the analysis.

5.1 Ecosystem actors and feminist organizing -composition, diversity, structure, and experiences

There is a complex and diverse ecosystem of actors that coalesce to organize for inclusive climate justice.

This diverse group of actors span a range of missions, sectors and thematic areas and have different structures, levels of formality and ties. The organizations in this ecosystem include national and regional umbrella civil society and regional organizations and networks, registered and unregistered civil society and community organizations, networks that are thematic based and individual activists. For thematic based organizations and networks, this includes organizations and/or networks whose primary strategic focus areas is the environment, climate change and disaster risk reduction, faith-based and community organizations and feminist and women-led organizations and networks supporting gender equality and a range of women's rights and diversities, for example on ending violence against women and LGBTI rights.

The organizations focus on information sharing and knowledge building, including: advocacy, campaigning, education, capacity building and awareness-raising, organizing and leadership as well as aspects of service provision.

There are differences and commonalities in the way feminist organizing has taken shape in the region.

Organizations that were older, formalized, registered, and had a more well-established history were able to conduct their activities and organize with more ease than newer and emerging organizations and networks.

"I believe that WUTMI's role and being there really has been a springboard for many of the other women's organizations that have come after WUTMI was formed. I think seeing WUTMI organizing and doing all kinds of social and cultural activities, even political advocacy, I think that has given a lot of women in the country the comfort and the knowledge that women organizing can actually make a difference – Hilda Heine

Feminist organizations style of organizing, strategy, culture, group climate and systems and processes are built on a feminist ethos.

So, from the very beginning we have listened first and build constituency but not get trapped into old school forms of organising. “There was a presumption that our form of organising was going to look the same as other feminist organising, when a lot of the young women that were engaged had never even finished high school, had never had any formal organising experience, and are still on a journey of every day dealing with patriarchy and having to work out how they were going to keep doing work on human rights and social and economic and ecological justice as lesbians and bisexuals, trans and gender non binary folks. So, we ourselves are getting better at saying ‘hang on, it’s not the same set of organising’ as maybe in a mainstream feminist organisation”. Even that intersectionality has become clearer and we’re better at speaking that as the years have gone by.” – Noelene Nabulivou

To align with these values, there has resulted in active reflection and continuous assessment of whether initiatives, contributions towards learning and knowledge transfer and partnerships align with their values, do not create harm, and do not perpetuate existing unequal power relations or replicate these power relations in other forms. As such, the purpose of engagements is weighed up against a criteria of whether any engagement would be of benefit to their organization, the communities that they serve and the feminist movement. What has been common across organizations is their persistence in the face of barriers and on-going resistance. Through a process of trial and error, learning, self-reflection and negotiation, the organizations have mobilized their communities and engaged for change.

“You, base build. Mobilize and then organize so that it is coherent as well as build a structure within your own feminist organisation so that even the funding stream is feminist. We have had experimentations. Sometimes it has gone well, sometimes it has been scary. The way we’ve negotiated has taught us over time how much we can and can’t push past our own red lines. Being aware of what is not safe for us to move past as feminists. DIVA is at a point now where we are quite clear on who we are internally and our strengths and weaknesses. So that when we are saying ‘the yes or the no’ it feels a lot easier to do that and negotiate on that.” – Noelene Nabulivou

Within the climate justice space and feminist movement, a feminist organization that is well known for its work on intersectional feminist climate justice is the Diverse Voices for Action and Equality (DIVA for Equality).

The work of DIVA for Equality on climate justice emerged from various sets of organizing. The management collective (MC) has primarily been made up of and has now become a set of focal points, like a concentric circle that widens including the Women Defend the Commons Network (WDCN), including women from the Pacific Partnerships to Strengthen Gender, Climate Change Response and Sustainable Development (PPGCCSD) set of work that was around the Small islands Developing States (SIDS) Conference in 2014 and has grown into this lovely loose set of affiliations. One of the main focus areas in the DIVA for Equality 2021-2025 Action Plan, is supporting and accompanying women and gender non-binary people working on organic agroecology and low-cost backyard aquaponics.

“To DIVA for Equality FIJI, this is about much more than production of food. It is about care of ecosystems and ecosphere, of other species, care of place, of Vanua, care of our own bodies and all generations of those who live now, and are to come. It is about defending the Commons” - Noelene Nabulivou.

The Pacific feminist climate justice ecosystem is expanding and being nurtured by organizations and activists.

Partnerships are being formed based on feminist, women-led organizations and climate change actors’ recognition of the value of an intersectional and intergenerational approach for change. Partnerships and networks were seen as becoming increasingly more representative of women of diversities’ experiences of climate change. Closer collaboration and ties have been made between organizations of persons with disabilities, faith-based and indigenous women’s organizations and groups, young women’s organizations and organizations advocating for LGBTI rights.

Feminist organizing for climate action was based on a collective vision of inclusive climate justice and partnerships, networking, and movement building. It was also regarded as strategic for advocacy, expanding outreach and pooling resources where required. Notably, even with different perceptions of feminism in the Pacific, the perceived value of this approach was not dependent on whether the organization, network or actor self-identified as ‘feminist’.

“They might be doing mainstream programmes where women with disabilities are part of that program and then there could be disability specific programmes that could be run by OPDs. So, if it’s a mainstream programme, we should be included. It doesn’t need to be done as a separate thing or workshop. If we are in the same room with other feminist organizations, they are also learning from our experience, and we are also learning about their work. We see that as an advantage and more and more of that is already happening. Most of the feminist organizations whether it be regional or national level, are beginning to be aware of issues of women with disabilities and are including in their programmes.” – Angeline Chand.

“We’ve realized in the long run, from making so many mistakes, that there’s a lot of duplication of activities. So, if we invite all of these people into a room and they say we are doing this, we check this and we don’t have to do this and this because they are already doing that. So, we save quite a bit of money when we bring everyone together and realize we don’t have to do this because they are already doing this. Or you’re already doing this, so can we piggyback, and you do this? So, there is a lot of sharing of resources.” – Lucille Apis Overhoff.

The 2019 Feminist Forum Action Plan offers a solid framework for analyzing Pacific feminist organizing for climate change priorities and diverse women’s experiences.

These feminist climate justice actors’ experiences, priorities, needs, opportunities, and group dynamics can be situated within and against the following Action Plan Principles:

Revolution: ‘Declare a global and local economic, ecological and climate emergency. We commit to an urgent and just shift from fossil fuels to safe, renewable energy, recognition of loss and damage experienced by climate frontline communities, and for the polluters to take main responsibility, according to common but differentiated historical responsibility for imperial, colonial and other inequalities’:

Resistance and Solidarity: ‘Support dialogue and actions of grassroots feminist work in order to challenge patriarchy in all its forms’; and ‘Build material and structural change for Pacific women and girls and people of all diversities in all areas of life and through their life course’;

Resistance: ‘Support dialogue and actions of grassroots feminist work in order to challenge patriarchy in all its forms and Solidarity: ‘Build material and structural change for Pacific women and girls and people of all diversities in all areas of life and through their life course’;

Solidarity: ‘Co-create and build transparent, accountable and new forms of partnerships, coalitions and alliances between Governments, NGOs, community organisations, faith-based groups and others’;

Revolution: ‘Amplify the call for an increase in dedicated, flexible funding to sustain the transformative work of diverse Pacific women. We call for the establishment of an independent Pacific Feminist Fund, and demand that the Green Climate Fund and Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and other climate finance initiatives immediately resource climate emergency work led by Pacific feminist and women led organisers and local front-line communities.

5.2 Influencing the regional and global agenda - feminist climate justice priorities

‘Declare a global and local economic, ecological and climate emergency. We commit to an urgent and just shift from fossil fuels to safe, renewable energy, recognition of loss and damage experienced by climate frontline communities, and for the polluters to take main responsibility, according to common but differentiated historical responsibility for imperial, colonial and other inequalities’ - Feminist Charter Action Plan Principle on Revolution

For global and regional climate justice advocacy, actions and solutions, the feminist climate justice movement is querying the status quo and framing the climate justice impact and solutions that are required through a Pacific approach, framework and dialogue.

Feminist organizations are drawing on their experiences and that of their communities to highlight the impact and effects of climate change in formulating their demands for

accountability. This approach and Charter principle is widely agreed upon and used in the climate and feminist movements to demand concerted action. At a more granular level, it is in the specific advocacy calls and demands on climate justice put forward in these forums where feminist organizations have differing positions, and this is deliberated on.

An example of this was in the lead up to the development of the Pacific COP 26 CSO demands where the concept of net-zero was initially put forward and called for. After disagreement with the use of this approach by the DIVA for Equality, the use of net-zero was not used in the document and instead included the call for 'Sustained, radical and socially just cuts to emissions are required now, not later'²⁸.

Feminist organizing has positively shaped the development of collective Pacific climate demands on the global and regional stages.

When working with feminist and women-led organizations, sharing knowledge, and learning from exposure to the feminist movement and women-led networking and experiences was valued by actors. Where this occurred at the international level at climate action forums, feminist knowledge sharing provided a critical means and exposure that strengthened the organization's climate demands and position.

Beyond one-off meetings in climate action forums, and where interactions between organizations were sustained over time and based on a shared vision, it resulted in strengthened relationships.

"Today, like never before, you will see organizations like the Haus or partner, partnering up with various other sister organizations, we've been able to partner up with the Pacific Sexuality and Gender Diversity Network (PSGDN), and ILGA Oceania to co host side events and bring forth conversations and propositions that matter to us, in relation, for instance, of the ecological injustice that we've been experiencing from the previous years. So that's the kind of movement building that we've already begun". – Miki Wali

"We use the ally and accomplice approach such as with the WPS agenda and being clear on the politics as well. Where there is no clarity and where we feel we need to push a certain agenda we will get more directly involved. For sexual reproductive health and rights while we feel the reproductive rights are well covered (by IPPF) we want to see a greater shift on language on sexual rights. SRHR therefore has to remain as one of our top priority areas. But part of the challenge is having enough time and energy and resources to go there. We don't do gender and health well. HIV and AIDS has fallen out. We are holding on to SRHR and are starting to worry especially because of COVID, there's a need to rebuild and remind states". – Noelene Nabulivou

The presence of feminist and diverse women in leadership and traditionally male dominated spaces is a source of inspiration for women, communities, and young and future activists.

Getting women into decision making forums and the negotiating table is a first step. However, just having higher numbers and more visibility of women in these spaces is not enough to effect the change that is needed: women need to be present as lead negotiators and experts in climate negotiations. Women making headway into these spaces - whether international, regional or at the national level - provides tangible examples of social change for younger

women. This increased representation of women in climate negotiations spaces is tied to the need for increased women's representation in and at the highest levels of decision-making across the board and especially in politics. This is particularly of note for the very low levels of women's political representation in the region and for reversing trends where a decrease has been seen in women's political representation, for example, in the RMI.

“It’s so refreshing as a Pacific woman to see other Pacific women in spaces that I grew up seeing as predominantly male....it allows people to see women are an essential part of this conversation and be present in these spaces. You’re also just setting an example for future generations as well where you have young girls looking on and they can say hey I can do this too. It’s not a space only men are in, when I get older, I can present in these spaces too. Even when they’re young, just having women being a part of organizing these movement, it allows for that sort of inspiration.” – Mia Kami

“We need to have more women participate in international climate negotiations as lead negotiators, not just people who run errands and get information and do the research and all that. I think we need to push for more of that. That needs to happen in the next five years” - Hilda Heine

“It is possible that I as Senator might not have gotten elected if an organization like WUTMI wasn’t around to pave the way, to show what women’s capabilities are and what they can contribute to the country overall. WUTMI has been a catalyst not just for other women’s organizations, but for women seeking political office and other important positions in the country” – Hilda Heine

On the global stage, climate justice demands, and solutions are framed in relation to ‘Pacific’ power, experiences, responses, resilience and solutions.

This is shaped by the experiences of Pacific history and other social movements supporting decolonization and self-determination. Articulating climate justice demands for accountability with this lens has involved deconstructing and dismantling power, structure, systems, and ways of working and thinking about climate change and climate justice. Actors are drawing on traditional, cultural, and indigenous experiences, practices and art and culture to challenge Western models and approaches. This includes for those that do not align with Pacific actors and communities’ goals and worldviews and paint a picture of Pacific Islanders as powerless in climate change action and at the mercy of other regional and international powers.

“When it comes to Pacific issues, you need to have a Pacific approach. So, for example the one that I’ve noticed in that sense is people are starting to have a lot of ‘Talanoas’. Which even using the term Talanoa instead of saying it’s a meeting it’s like decolonizing these spaces to remind us that we are talking about Pacific issues, for Pacific people, with Pacific people. Just by using that term Talanoa its already decolonizing that space. For me that’s one of the accomplishments that I’ve seen in the spaces I’ve been present in. The focus on relationships and connection to Pacific people through our natural resources and not just seeing it as these commodities we are trying to preserve but seeing it as an essential part of our future and future generation.... Every opportunity that I’m lucky enough to get where I’m given the space to share and tell these stories is always such a gift for me. Just being a Pacific woman in that space advocating on an issue where I feel most empowered which is through music is just such a privilege”. – Mia Kami

“We do not want to be seen only as we are just a vulnerable group that needs your help. Because there are already solutions being identified at different communities, they are doing their own projects”. – Frances Namoumou

The climate justice positions of feminist organizations and activists and their connections with the global feminist movement and network is a resource for the climate justice movement.

In particular, the feminist movement’s principles, network and attention to language, detail, meaning, context, and feminist partner experiences has shaped effective Pacific climate justice advocacy. This focus on language as a construction of reality and the lived experience of feminist climate justice advocacy, outreach and outcomes by other actors supports the communication and depth of analysis within the climate justice movement. With a Pacific approach and lens taken to articulate and push climate justice demands, the ecosystem actors are actively discerning and learning from the experience of actors and movements in different regions.

“You are new to this space, but those women who are already in the space, welcome you. You will add value to the group, but at the same time, that’s a learning space....If there’s a sounding board like that, that continuously tells us look you are using this term here, and it often comes from the feminist group. I guess maybe it’s because of their experiences being in the revolution, the knowledge of the different terms, how does this look in the global frame. That’s probably where I find feminist groups are very very particular used about the words used, policy demands, I guess because of their experiences in that area. They bring that force, that sounding board, that a lot of us may not have had. We’re just reading the sentence, nodding our head. With feminists they are very particular with every word. What this word would mean and how it would change the context and the whole paragraphs” – Frances Namoumou

“Case in point for the triennial that just happened recently, we’ve collaborated the side event, we’ve ensured that through the side event that we had as the Africa Caribbean Pacific, we were able to provide propositions on successes from the Caribbean feminist charter and the African feminist charter, as well as what we’ve done through the Pacific feminist Forum and the outcomes as well. And how these can also be linked to support recommendations on the triennial as well”. – Miki Wali

5.3 Localization of the Feminist Climate Justice agenda

Feminist Charter Action Plan Principle on Resistance: ‘Support dialogue and actions of grassroots feminist work in order to challenge patriarchy in all its forms and Solidarity: ‘Build material and structural change for Pacific women and girls and people of all diversities in all areas of life and through their life course’.

Effectively localizing the climate justice agenda is critical for actors because of their close ties to their communities and their work at the community level to effect change and promote diverse women’s engagement.

Actors are working at multiple levels and often focus on a combination of these levels – international, regional, national and subnational. What has emerged is that grassroots feminist and community frontline work and experiences is still not being adequately prioritized, valued or funded for the level of change that needs to occur.

Importantly, strategic engagements and investments need to be tailored to the respective level and community for which it is intended, and it is then that community-based support for feminist organizing, and climate resilience can be supported. This is done through **intersectionality in practice** and women’s lived experience and realities and the strategies that they employ for outreach and diversity which include: **working within the culture and utilizing international human rights mechanisms and a human rights-based approach.**

When promoting local action and solutions and responding to expected and unexpected circumstances, there is a disconnect seen between the implementation of regional and national level strategies.

While regional policies and guidance exists, greater support and funding should be tagged to national level interventions. At a lower level than this, the community and grassroots level is where organizations cited their membership base and it is at this level that they regarded as important to mobilize. The community provided direction for the organizations’ strategic vision, priorities, and modes of support. It is also at the national and sub-national level that the understanding of culture is more nuanced, and organizations developed and adapted their strategies for change and organizing respectively.

“An important part of organizing is community and its community engagement. I think here in the Pacific it’s so important to include your community. Not just at the top, but you need to organize around the grassroot level. Our communities are not just this one part of society. There are so many people of different classes. From my experience, we try to centre a lot of our organizing around engagement with the community. Because in the end we need voices, people need to be heard, they need to be present. We can’t just depend on our leaders to go up and speak on our behalf if we’re not speaking up at all. We can’t expect our leaders to go and speak on issues about their communities and their islands when the people of the islands and the community haven’t even said anything at all or contributed to the conversation”. – Mia Kami

“That’s a strength, they are very linked to the women at grassroots level. A lot of them are able to relate to what women are facing at grassroots level. The struggle, economic livelihood, health issues that’s related to climate change. And how this can exacerbate other, the issues, that would lead to GBV. So, there’s always an interconnection of issues”. – Frances Namoumou

“We are focusing on the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration and using that within the Pacific Feminist Community of Practice. We continue to engage with the Gender Technical Working Group. It is also about changing politics as well”. – Noelene Nabulivou

Notably, movement-building and grassroots feminist mobilizing takes shape in support of this goal, but how this occurs differs according to several factors.

This includes: the national and sub-national and community context; the types and structure of CSOs and feminist and women led organizations; and the relationships and dynamics between organizations and between networks working in this space. In Fiji and Kiribati, for example there is recognition of the importance of building clear, strong and sustained links between individuals and also between networks and groups of national and community-based umbrella organizations for climate justice and movement building.

Examples of these include strengthened ties between individual organizations such as the Pacific Conferences of Churches and DIVA for Equality in recognition of DIVA's grassroots feminist climate justice work, the 350 branches and in Kiribati through the Kiribati Climate Action Network (KIRICAN) which supports the work of several umbrella groups of women, faith based and youth groups and organizations. At the same time, the formation of these networks, partnerships, and formality of ties between organizations is under flux and organizations weigh up the benefits of association in a larger group, especially where the ties are more formalized. A critical consideration and dimension of supporting movement building at the community level is that individual organizations, groups and networks' priorities, links and decision-making is driven by and directed from their membership trends, needs and priorities.

“Our general consensus is climate justice, climate action and movement and organizing. What’s interesting for each branch is they do certain movements that are specific to their country or wherever they are. And so, for example, in Australia they do movements regarding fossil fuels, or they do protests for certain corporations that are in their countries regarding fossil fuels. And then in Tonga, they’ll target concerns that are specific to the country there. And here it’s the same thing and in Papua New Guinea it’s the same thing. It’s like this one big team that’s looking at different issues specific to each country which I think is really special and important because it just means we’re all learning from each other and staying updated on what’s happening in each person’s country...the differences it does have a lot to do with resources, accessibility and capacity. But in terms of how we tie it together, is for a week we have a week of action in October where every 350 Organization organize a week of action, and everyone does it different but we’re given a theme where we can tie our organizing around so there is common ground for us.” – Mia Kami

“So AMAK is the umbrella group, it’s supposed to be for all women in Kiribati. The Catholic women’s group has pulled out of AMAK. So AMAK now is left with women from all other churches... you have these very big groups as part of your network and when you have a big group like this the question, they ask how can we benefit from this network? How can we benefit as a group of too many, there is so many of them...? Its so the benefit that comes to you is sustained. Maybe that’s one reason why the Catholic women’s group pulled out and set up their own so they can get the benefit for their members. Which is, that’s not bad the way I see. Because you have to look at how you can develop your women. If they cannot develop because you’re all stuck in one group that it doesn’t give equality for your membership than that’s a problem. I can understand why they left and now they are working so hard and they are really really working very well in their own centre and looking after the Catholic women in Kiribati and that’s good” – Pelenise Alofa

In the North Pacific, the political and administrative structure that actors organize in adds layers to localizing the feminist climate agenda.

In addition to the geographical spread of communities across islands and large rural/urban divide, the Federal and State administration structure in the FSM and women's ownership of land and matrilineal inheritance as highlighted in the WUTMI case study were two factors that shaped feminist organizing and the uptake of feminist principles and equality for changing attitudes and behavior. The Government is more actively assessing and supporting greater consultation between the National and State Governments and with a range of Government and Non-Government stakeholders prior to the development of a national strategies as a way of bridging the gap between these layers of Government and groups.

At the community level, feminist organizations are highlighting the disconnect and mismatch between expectations and proposed initiatives of their partners and what their communities and the diverse women they work with need and face in their lived experiences and realities.

This is at the core of intersectionality is understanding and taking direction from specific diverse groups based on their experience instead of designing and advancing initiatives that are based on generalized understanding of the experiences of women. It also highlights the expectation that groups of women can, will and should fit within this framework and system and what is of value to them. Some specific examples of this include feminist organizations highlighting that for some at-risk and marginalized groups' access to justice, there is opposition to the use of the formal justice system and independent statutory legal bodies because of a lack of trust in the system and prior experiences of institutions. Instead, the use of a 'friend lawyer' where there is established trust and a history of working together is favored. More generally, there is also a mismatch of what communities are seen to need versus their actual needs and what is relevant.

Another example of this is in a (missed) opportunity that was highlighted by a feminist organization and a lack of relevance to their communities of women; at an important national event that was convened and that had a wide and diverse representation of women, for example from rural and maritime areas, instead of the respective Government Minister having proper real engagement and dialogue with the women to discuss their experiences, needs and required information, only an opening speech and photo opportunity was undertaken before the Minister left.

Organizations' priorities evolve based on their communities' experiences and in reaction to a combination of global, regional, and national trends and developments.

The climate movement started as a response to the impact of climate change and natural disasters. With a greater focus on gender and intersectionality, many organizations and activists working on climate change and disaster risk reduction also have several other thematic priorities related to women's rights and gender. These top priority issues and organizational milestones and goals include addressing gender-based violence and women's economic and political participation, youth development, disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness, climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience, human rights and the rights of specific groups, including persons with disabilities and SOGIESC community.

To be responsive and organize accordingly to emerging issues actors closely monitor political, social, and economic trends, how these interact and how their communities are affected by it. This ensures pointed and more targeted support and responses. At present, the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact has changed the way actors organize. With the restrictions in place, organizations are adapting their ways in an already challenging context. This includes revising and adding new thematic priorities as well as target groups to expand their outreach and an increased focus on online organizing.

“It is not only about cyclones that are disrupting but health pandemics like COVID determine whether you can leave the safety of your home.....In 2015 we added an internal goal to our work because we were seeing so much poverty and need within our networks (and they were saying to us) can we do work on food security. As the number of cyclones increased and with COVID19 that set of work has become integral to the work we are doing. We are already experiencing ecological and economic loss and damage. (In terms of feminist action on climate change) the biggest thing for us since 2015 has been integrated so we do gender, socio-economic, ecological and climate justice.” – Noelene Nabulivou

“Because during the COVID, as we still are in COVID, we noticed and picked up that a lot of communities left out particularly gay men and Indo-Fijian community members. And so we had to prioritize them. And we also had to prioritize our friends in Rotuma, some of our friends who are from the Banaban community, and ensure that the outreach is there. And so for us, despite the fact that we have a current mandate, we are open to, you know, moving into spaces, and places in a time where we can expand the outreach.” – Miki Wali

There are many common priorities and milestones in the work of organizations, networks and activists to localize the feminist climate justice agenda.

At the national and sub-national level this has included: legislative and policy change; representation and participation, national funds for women, access to information and expanding outreach into hard-to-reach areas, for example with more rural based communities; collaboration with partners and increased mainstreaming of inclusive approaches.

The results and milestones of successful lobbying, advocacy and partnerships in these areas include:

- ***Policy and legislative change:*** the introduction of new legislation or amendments to legislation that is lacking or discriminatory, for example national Domestic Violence legislation in the RMI, detailed plans by community governments on disaster management in Bougainville, and a draft Disaster Risk Management Bill and Strategic Roadmap for Emergency and Disaster Risk Management in Tonga.
- ***Representation and Participation:*** the representation of women in politics and decision-making.
- ***National funds for women:*** the establishment of a revolving women's fund at the national level, highlighting the link between violence against women and economic empowerment in the RMI.
- ***Access to information:*** advocacy using digital platforms to provides information about COVID-19 to women such as the 'Meri Gat Pawa, Meri Gat Infomesen' project in Papua New Guinea.
- ***Safe spaces:*** particularly at disaster emergency centres for women and girls.
- ***Collaboration:*** partnerships have expanded between Government and non-Government partners; and
- ***Mainstreaming an inclusive approach:*** targeted programmes and outreach to engage specific and diverse groups, such as youth and young women specifically.

At the same time, each of these areas still require improvement, implementation and further joint effort to overcome the gaps, divides and barriers that diverse women face demanding and claiming their rights.

Effectively engaging youth and diverse young women is still a gap in implementing an intersectional and intergenerational approach to climate justice. A prominent challenge was bridging sub-national divides particularly the rural/urban divide and ensuring two-way intergenerational dialogue, conversation, and skills transfer. On the latter point, this was particularly around traditional knowledge, the vision of elders and ways of organizing for climate justice based on experience and vice versa for elders, how online organizing can be used to reach and include young people in climate justice action more effectively.

Additional gaps included during humanitarian action as well as more generally in relation to access to information, accessibility for information for women with disabilities; women's

representation in politics and national leadership; and for safe spaces, the presence of this and clear processes around natural disaster preparedness and response. Within the movement, actors also identified that partnerships could be further strengthened with more organizations working with diverse communities be part of the climate justice network and at the decision-making table.

“It would be good if I could go back and run training on DRR, mapping and learning and just making sure that the people in outer islands receive the same information that the people in the main island receive. So far with our training and workshops, we’ve been able to contact a few young women with disabilities which are willing to come but hardly because most of them have other jobs as well, that they stick to, so most of our workshops we don’t have any person with disabilities and that’s the case we are dealing with.....For the women, we need to target the young people, so many young people or school leavers are unemployed...we hope that many of them can join our work on climate change. There’s a big gap between the older women and the young ones. The gap is that the skills need to be passed onto our young girls. And boys. At the same time, these young people lack the traditional skills to become useful back in the village. Most of us we know they get stuck in the town and they do not want to go back to the village because they do not know their skills. I feel that’s a big gap here for our young people. We need not to just educate them about climate change, but they need traditional skills to become resilient. We need to encourage them to go back, use their land they have when they can’t get a job in town” – Pelenise Alofa

In the feminist ecosystem, change in one area impacts on another area.

The climate justice milestones referred to were gains made across the climate and feminist movement by organizations at different levels. There is a perception of the interconnectedness and intersections of between women’s rights across the board and climate justice and the importance of addressing structural barriers that discriminate against women and prevent progress on gender equality. Providing an overall enabling environment for the rights of diverse women, with attention to the effects of and implications of multiple compounding disasters is tied to the interconnection of issues and intersecting risk and discrimination.

“Feminist organising must allow young women to breathe. The COVID pandemic has made us re-frame how we organise. Now we are teaching rural young women how to learn online organising (with 350.org). Qaqa will be different because this is a bridge from being a young woman and preparing you to move into the women’s movement. We learnt from our 2nd WDCN annual meeting was that most young women get left out either when they age-out from youth age (35 years) or when they get married or when they have a child. They have to wait until they are in their 40s or 50s to be considered a leader in the SSVM or church spaces. Data is also showing that this is also where women experience the most violence. We will enable those conversations because at the end of the day if we don’t teach our young women bodily autonomy and the right to make decisions then there won’t even be a chance for them to organise freely”. – Viva Tatawaaqa

Inclusion and intersectionality in practice

Implementing a truly intersectional and intergenerational approach to feminist climate justice in communities and within the movement has come with many lessons learnt and challenges.

Based on the premise that women are not a homogenous group, feminist organizations have nuanced analysis of how these risks, discrimination and factors interact within a system of power relations and culture in their Pacific communities. With an intersectional and intergenerational approach identified as the way forward, organizations adapt and design their interventions and organizing with target groups in mind. This means traversing linked factors of identities, affiliations, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and location to name a few. It involves navigating a complex terrain of negotiating ethnicity, body politics and North-South politics, feminist knowledge transfer for example, within communities, when assessing or expanding relationships with new partners, and in the feminist movement itself. A critical point in this discussion is that who sits and speaks in decision-making spaces as representatives of a community requires careful consideration. This is centred on feminist values and with the purpose of changing unequal power relations. This intersectional and intergenerational feminist approach also needs to be further incorporated into (the design of) funding models.

“For the work around movement building, we must be able to recognize that you know, we have different people of different class and privileges and hierarchies and status etc. But to be able to have a conversation, recognizing all of that, and to be in the same room can be very, very intimidating, but at the same time it brings about fireworks.... In the trans community and the gender nonconforming community, things are a bit more different. For instance, or in someone when an older person speaks, there is an immediate silence and respect is accorded if a younger person was to speak in that sort of culture, for example, it would mean an immediate dismissal or that you know, you don’t belong, so trying to just have those conversations with a more regional perspective, these often are challenging to navigate, but we continuously try to host these, you know, uncomfortable conversations where it’s needed”. – Miki Wali

“Neoliberal capitalism anyway is one of the reasons why we are all over the place and continue. So brown bodies, indigenous bodies have always moved around because we have had to and we don’t want to close that down. But if you pretend that you are homogenous then you end up with those who have a lot of social protection and infrastructure telling other people that is how it is. We struggle with that. It’s not just the Caucasian politics but this idea that I am Pasifika and I am in Australia and therefore I know what you are going through in the Pacific. We see a lot of pain in conferences with young people from Australia and New Zealand who are representing pacific young people”. – Noelene Nabulivou

“I worry about branding of initiatives. That is also in my mind which is also why I am also trying to assertively ask the question – what is the use of this set of information? We are continually getting asked for input into reports and so-called development initiatives and the vast majority we never see them again. For us that is the loss of feminist movement

knowledge. So, we prefer to do it internally and with close accomplices because we found it is the safest way for us to honour where the work comes from and where it's going". – Noelene Nabulivou

"It first of all has to be it has to have an intersectional understanding, right? And the ideology, and the model has to also recognize sexuality in its totality. And then you also to ensure that with intersectionality, comes queerness. And we have to ensure that there is a form of querying that takes place within the model of financing. And part of the philanthropic transformation that we're also trying to ensure is that the inclusivity is not just tokenistic, that it really, you know, speaks to it. It really speaks to the value of what it means to be inclusive and inclusivity. For our community, that is a very sacred term. In fact, it's something that is used often. But these are the three most key things that the funds should very much have, it has to also be driven by the communities. The models need to be co designed by the communities".

While the ecosystem has expanded, there are challenges that specific groups faced when organizing for climate justice and being more integrated into this decision-making space.

Groups that were seen to be 'left behind' and facing particular difficulties included women with disabilities, especially women with intellectual disabilities and SOGIESC organizations and activists. This stemmed from external factors to the movement such as the effects of compounding discrimination and multiple layers of marginalization and being overlooked, especially in humanitarian responses. There are clear examples of this in disaster preparedness and emergency response. In line with previous findings by organizations and the literature, the impact of multiple and compounding disasters is even more pronounced for marginalized groups.

This was specifically highlighted as a response to anticipated, frequent and compounding disasters and its cumulative effect on women of all diversities in the Fiji 2020 TC Harold gender, disability, and inclusion analysis. The finding that the negative impact and challenges of TC Harold and COVID-19 on communities was also compounded by their recent experiences of two other cyclones in 2019 and 2020 is echoed by the experiences of the Shifting the Power coalition members. The trend of marginalized communities being left out of humanitarian action and not being able to access the resources for *survival* that they need, puts them in a further and even more precarious position.

"For marginalized communities like ours, we struggle in terms of getting assistance and accessing services. One is because of the stigma and discrimination associated to us, our gender, and our profession. It prevents us from accessing these services because they are so unfriendly, and we get discriminated in these kinds of spaces. In my work over the years, I've seen worse situations. One is during natural disasters and the other is now during this pandemic. In natural disasters, for example cyclone Winston, when relief supplies went out most of our members really didn't get any form of assistance. So, we were left out from these kinds of assistance. It was a lesson learnt for us. Even as an organization, what were we going to do about it and the plans. So, we learnt from them. From this pandemic, there was assistance, but we were left out. It adds more into the situation that we are already in and it really deprives us of some many assistance and privilege and support. For us we were fortunate because we have a network of loving families and a network of feminists, women that really understand us." – Bonita

An emerging theme in the climate justice space is around inclusion, displacement, and relocation and how this affects women.

This is an important, albeit sensitive area for Pacific communities as it highlights the issue of choice, integration, resilience, and community engagement when planning, proposing and preparing for this as an option or worst-case scenario. As this affects aspects of community dynamics, life, and dimensions of human security – economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political – there are important human rights, conflict prevention and peacebuilding issues at stake.

Utilizing a human-rights based and feminist intersectionality approach to focus on diversity and climate justice for diverse women and their rights should also consider factors and lines such as: being part of an indigenous or minority group and ethnic, religious, and linguistic identities; refugee/immigration status; and land ownership and use, including by those living in informal settlements. This support ensures that a differentiated lens and a human rights-based approach is utilized for a tailored response to community support and mobilization.

While an inclusive approach is gaining momentum and being actioned in many spaces, it has not come without experiences and perceptions of tokenism.

In some cases, being inclusive was seen not to be in the spirit of supporting real and meaningful participation; rather it was a ‘tick the box’ exercise. The goal and benchmark should not be the presence alone in a space but valuing the contributions of actors and this matching actors’ expectations and experiences. This was seen in several different spaces, with examples of organizations being told by other actors that they were consulted when they were not or activists feeling that their intended participation was superficial.

“I’ve had this experience, where they call me on to talk about something, but in the end, I just feel like I’m the token Pacific presence there. It feels exploitative almost. What’s important when these spaces are hosted, is that the women present should feel like they are there for their thoughts, there to actually contribute and that their contributions are valued. This isn’t just for women, it’s also just for any members of the LGBT community, members of the disabled community. I just think it’s so important for any groups that are present in any space, they should always feel like they are valued, their opinions are valued, their thoughts are valued. And they’re not just there to be like a token piece, just to look like the space is inclusive and diverse”. – Mia Kami

There are successful experiences engaging men and boys for climate justice at the community level, but challenges remain for engaging them in feminist organizing and integrating them into the movement.

There are some positive changes seen at the community level for men and boy's support for women's rights and climate justice. In the area of ending violence against women and climate justice relocation discussion, the space for women's participation and decision making is slowly opening up. For the movement though, there was difficulties seen with pulling in a male audience in women led and feminist organizing, to the point where there is resistance by men to engaging in climate change conversations if it was centred on, or led by women.

There is still a strong perception that feminist organizing is tied to ‘women’s issues’.

This extends to climate change also being seen as a ‘woman’s issue’, as opposed to the intention of dismantling power structures that oppress women for climate justice. It is of note that in the development of the database of the ecosystem of actors and this report, there were men that provided direction on which actors and individuals were undertaking important work in this area, but no men were recommended as contributors or expressed interest in being interviewed. Understandably, while the focus of this analysis is on women’s diverse experiences and the intention is not for women to be excluded at the expense of men’s participation, the perception by movement actors of who leads and is involved in feminist organizing is one that shapes the extent to which men and boys are involved in these efforts.

Strategy - Working within the culture beside partners for a feminist and human rights-based approach

A common strategy between actors on how to effect change for climate justice, feminism and human rights is built on a nuanced understand of culture and working within the cultural context they are in.

To challenge harmful and discriminatory norms, attitudes, and behavior, building relationships and gaining the trust and acceptance of people and communities was critical for introducing new ideas and change. These strategies included approaching change by being non-confrontational and working with community leaders as ‘gate-keepers’ to the community. It also includes reaffirming and recognizing the importance of cultural identity, art and expression, which are a key means of reaching and engaging communities for change.

Change at the community has been seen over time in relation to engaging men and boys and male dominated leadership. Positive examples of this change include traditional leaders giving space for women to speak in meetings and the use of ‘male champions’ for gender equality in communities. Additionally, the process of engaging communities was done through observing and a respect for cultural and traditional protocols to gain access. While this process of going through the appropriate traditional channels is critical for engaging a wide cross section and diverse groups, it can also be long and cumbersome and actors have at time weighed this up against other considerations, such as time constraints. consider other avenues for creating awareness.

“Wherever we work we have to be mindful of the culture. If you’re mindful of the culture and you work within the culture, they will accept you and work with you. You come in and you respect the culture, you build their trust and respect and then you do the things that you want to do. That’s how you do it. So that access protocol is really important.”- Lucille Apis-Overhoff

“One of the questions was what are the women’s contribution to this? Without the men having to answer the question for the women, the women were all seated at the back, the Turaga Ni Koro invited the women – ladies can you please come up and share what your experiences were? This was new to me because in the past, we would just have a focus group on women, focus group on youth. But to have everyone in the room and having the men allowing the women to engage in that space, that was quite interesting.” - Frances Namoumou

“In terms of humanitarian work that we do is also sort of acknowledging the need for arts and culture as mentoring. The need to acknowledge that arts and culture is also sort of a fundamental basis for implementing humanitarian work into our communities. A lot of our community members are sort of engaged already in artistic expression. And so in order to get through to them, they need to acknowledge that our cultural identities as well as our expressions through the arts, is sort of a key basis to get to our communities. And that’s something that’s sort of always neglected because a specific Island people we come from a community that is based on our culture, as well as our religion, and sort of acknowledging that these foundations that we can use as pillars to initiate conversations, and also implement procedures.” - Benji Patel

Working with older, indigenous women

DIVA found a way to work with the indigenous women’s network in Fiji. This was not only about acknowledging the history of the Soqosoqo Vakamarama (SSVM) as well as its role in representing indigenous women as well as being the largest representative membership network of women in Fiji. It required a clear authentic voice of DIVA to negotiate through the power dynamics including questioning the lack of engagement with LGBTQI people by the SSVM and being clear that inclusion for DIVA was a non-negotiable in any working relationship or partnership. It has been a journey of more than 10 years of working in a non-traditional space for DIVA and has resulted in a clear pathway of collaboration work supported further by the engagement of rural women leaders of the SSVM in the DIVA hubs.

Strategy: Utilizing international human rights mechanisms and a human rights-based approach

Actors are tying feminist and inclusive climate justice to a human rights-based approach and the SDG agenda at the national level for more effective outcomes and coordination of work.

For the rights of their communities, these efforts support ensuring that the human rights dimensions of climate change impact are monitored, recognized and documented under reporting under human rights mechanisms. For some actors the institutional bodies and structures set up at the national level for climate change reporting is closely and intentionally linked to same structures and actors that are involved in reporting for the Voluntary National Review (VNRs) and SDGs. Additionally, countries and organizations are utilizing the range of human rights mechanisms under the Human Rights Council mandate for highlighting the Pacific climate justice context and call for increased accountability for climate action on the global stage.

“We want to be aligned with the human rights report. We want to make sure we achieve what’s in there, the CEDAW and all other treaties and conventions that we’re supposed to be party to. We’re also very much involved in the UPR, the human rights report. That one is very important for us. We’re very conscious that climate change impacts everything.

Gender, LGBT is cross-cutting, we're all in it together so we have to work together. That's what SDG17 is: Partnership". – Lucille Apis-Overhoff

"In terms of climate justice and human rights, I'm hopeful that the Human Rights Council in the next 5 years will come out with its report, as you know they've appointed a Climate and Human Rights Rapporteur. We're very pleased that the Pacific was quite instrumental in getting that done". – Hilda Heine

5.4 Building and negotiating partnerships

Feminist Charter Action Plan Principle on Solidary: 'Co-create and build transparent, accountable and new forms of partnerships, coalitions and alliances between Governments, NGOs, community organisations, faith-based groups and others'

Actors are negotiating partnerships and alliances with different sectors and are calling for trust-based, genuine relationships that are based on shared values. This takes place within the broader context of **safety, security and sustainability, civic space – expand and remedy, and also Government-CSO-Donor coordination**. There have been successful partnerships that have been built over time, including with traditional leaders and organizations, governments and donors, feminist and women led organizations, but this has not occurred without many lessons learnt and reflection on the overall environment in which this takes place. Actors deliberately weigh up, challenge and shaping the nature and basis of these relationships to ensure that the outcomes of partnerships are of value to organizations and their communities and that these align with feminist principles.

"One of the biggest lessons in my years of organizing from my teenage years and now 53 years old is the artificial coordination of movements is not movement, it's something else. It's the creation of networks, it's the creation of coalitions, all of those are necessary but I feel like the missing element is the explicit work on liberation and freedoms for social movements ourselves – for feminist social movements to move as we wish" – Noelene Nabulivou

Safety, security and sustainability

The provision of safe spaces within communities and in the feminist climate justice movement is the foundation for allowing a feminist intersectional and intergenerational approach and movement building to flourish.

There several positive examples of creating safe spaces for women – at the national level, in communities and within the movement. At the same time, there were still gaps in how to ensure and apply this approach to provide a safe space for women of all diversities. Importantly, this was built on whether there was trust, strong and productive relationships and if the actors themselves considered the space to be safe regardless of the support that may be in place for this.

Like any other movement, the dynamics and support system within the group can either enable the participation of actors or act as a barrier towards it. Providing a conducive environment for the participation of movement actors was seen to be based on structural factors and (a lack of) enabling conditions and processes. For example, feminists were seen to be underpaid which required a system change and while movement building could be supported by greater acknowledgement of and investments in self-care, this alone would not remove the structural barrier.

Furthermore, and importantly, dynamics and inter-group relations highlight that communication, shared understanding and vision and solidarity is central to movement building.

The presence of open communication where all voices were heard, recognized, and appreciated is required and one where not only a few dominated the conversations. This was regarded as a challenge and especially the case on two accounts - there were many clear, firm and unwavering, yet valued, positions put forward, and the observation that in some cases some of the 'louder' voices were captured, and others were not able to speak.

Additionally, this calls for extending and efforts to ensure that within the movement this is a safe space for collaboration. Importantly, being at the decision-making table is only possible if the actors can participate in it, as highlighted in the experience of persons with disabilities. At the movement level, this support for building a safe space also takes place through efforts to make institutional and organizational culture change. Supporting safety, security and sustainability also involves a joint approach to advocating for partner organizations issues on their behalf if the partners themselves are not at the decision-making table.

"Sometimes, you know, voices get lost along the way, because there are clashes in terms of the you know, just power dynamics, really. And therefore, people are affected generally. So, these are some of the things that we try to do better in the future. We've already started by recognizing that, you know, we have to be able to sit around the decision-making tables, and be able to be open, to listen to these conversations, and to also respond, where we see us...where we can respond to these kinds of conversations, and it's critical for us". – Miki Wali

In order for feminist organizing for climate justice to sustain and to grow, it needs strong support system from women, needs a lot of understanding as different feminists have their own way approaching things and paces of doing things. – Vanessa Heleta

"The common needs that I really see that we're in need of: one is more collaboration and two is within this collaboration, a space for us to be represented in all actions of response or petitions. If we're in the network that we have and that can only happen when there is good collaboration and good understanding. Some of the challenges I can see is maybe for us here in the West, is really patriarchy. For us here in the West, because we are grassroot community, we have to go to Government assistance and most of the times they are just filled with men and they have this patriarchal system its quite a challenge for us feminists, but we don't shut up, we don't really bow to these things. These are some of the challenges that are still something that we face" - Bonita

“A safe space for us in practical terms, for us what that means is a safe space might be there but if it is not accessible, that probably not a safe space for us anyways because we can’t even enter that meeting. And once we are in the meeting, feeling comfortable that our views, our opinions are taken into account. Whatever we share is actually valued so that’s how we think that safe space would look like for women with disabilities or persons with disabilities” – Angeline Chand

“I have to also say that movement building isn’t something that’s necessarily new. It’s been around for many years and it hasn’t been completely documented. And the reasons for that, because a lot of our communities do, do have a form of resilience. That doesn’t always need documentation. And there’s also another argument where there is a document that there must be documentation. And so these kinds of conversation and the politics of it all pop up. In the process of movement building, we also – as you’ve asked - in terms of the politics of the coordination, we’ve, we’ve also recognize the diversity within the power dynamics, and who gets to be speaking and intervening on behalf of the entire communities” – Miki Wali

Civic space – expand and remedy

The overall state of civic space can support or hinder feminist organizing and mobilizing.

At this point in time and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of Pacific countries are still under States of Emergencies with varying degrees of restrictions in place. Global and partner experiences highlight the need to protect and expand civic space in the COVID-19 environment, noting the risk of shrinking civic space in light of the restrictions in place²⁹.

Aside from the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic, these restrictions have impacted feminist organizing. Like elsewhere, there is an increasing use of the online and digital space for organizing and this move has come with learnings and resource implications, one of which is the need for dedicated time and resources to manage outreach to communities of women in the rural, outer islands and informal sectors.

The political, legislative, economic, and social environment along with the approach of Government to actors in the movement has shaped strategies and the ability to organize and mobilize effectively.

Government’s perception of the role of civil society organizations as a collective and their work, as well as their relationship with individual actors in the ecosystem, was a key factor for actors’ ability to: conduct their work, form partnerships, expand community engagement and facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue.

²⁹ See OHCHR, May 2020, **Civic Space and COVID-19: Guidance**, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/CivicSpace/CivicSpaceandCovid.pdf>

This relationship has changed over time in different context and in relation to specific issues.

Some CSOs and networks for example were actively sought out by Government and seen as a bridge connecting Governments and communities for climate justice. The process of amplifying community concerns and experiences to inform the development of Government policies and frameworks, for example by the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) and their focus on accompaniment and dialogue was regarded positively. Other examples of this includes changing perceptions of civil society in RMI and for WUTMI, a significant milestone in their organizing history is being recognized by the Government and recently receiving Government funding to support their work.

Other civil society organizations have had to reach out to Government actively and continuously prior to commencing their activities initiatives to prevent potential resistance to their work. And other organizations still, particularly those in the SOGIESC community, faced more entrenched resistance because of Pacific Islands laws and attitudes criminalizing consensual same sex sexual activity and perceptions of this group.

“If countries can put in place plans, when you provide them this space, they might be able to share their fears, the fear of losing their culture, losing their identity. Is there a way to protect this? How do we protect this when we move?” – Frances Namoumou

“When we first got ourselves organized, we didn’t get any necessarily support from Government. But now we are getting some funding from the Government. We still complain that it is not enough. But now we are getting close to 100,000 for the Early Education Programme. So that has been funded over the last I’d say more than 5 years and we’ve been getting funding from the Government. So, in itself that’s an achievement, something that twenty years ago, we couldn’t have gotten from Government. Same thing with the Domestic violence programme that we have. We’re also getting close to 100,000 a year. Again, not nearly enough but it’s a beginning and it’s an indication that the Government sees the value of organizations such as WUTMI. Not just the Government, but other people have appreciated the work WUTMI has done.” – Hilda Heine

For civic space and climate justice, ensuring successful prevention efforts and inclusive spaces are in place is bolstered by, and closely linked to available avenues for effective redress and addressing grievances at all levels.

These two sides of the coin support climate action accountability as it centres it in (creating) an enabling institutional environment. This is one which has established and functioning structures and systems for democratic governances and the means to translate the ‘respect, protect and fulfil’ approach to human rights into action. The effective functioning of Human Rights institutions whether at the regional level (RHRI) or the national level (NHRI) is a critical part of the infrastructure for linking and responding to State, Non-State and Community relationships and interrelated issues, for example the business, human rights and climate change sphere.

Establishing and ensuring effective redress through State and Non-State grievance mechanisms allow for human rights violations and climate loss and damage claims to be pursued further.

CSOs, women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and communities are mobilizing to voice and amplify concerns, human rights violations and complaints about non-compliance with social and environmental safeguards, However, without the infrastructure in place to take these claims forward and seek justice, there is limited effort to lower the likelihood of cycles and a lack of justice from repeating itself.

Government – CSO – donor interaction

The exclusion of civil society from Government-led forums with donors and development partners prevents more effective organizing for inclusive and joint coordination for strategically advancing national commitments and ownership of the climate agenda.

CSOs are being left out of these spaces because of perceived competition by Government and if the actors are seen to receive large funding from donors. Governments as ‘duty bearers’ for climate action and human rights are in a position to set and expand civic space and dialogue between the range of State and Non-State actors for climate justice: NGOs, the private sector, international organizations, donors and community-based organizations. In addition to this space being a key decision-making forum for feminist climate justice organizations and activists, it is also one which offers an opportunity to seek funding and resources. CSOs have highlighted the difficulty getting information about donors funding priorities and if there are respective windows for NGO engagement in this. For organizations, these types of spaces can provide for engaging new potential funding partners and accessing resources based on joint, strategic and complementary alignment of Government-CSO-Donor priorities.

5.5 Access to funding and feminist collective decision-making for funding

Working with older, indigenous women

Feminist Charter Action Plan Principle on Revolution: ‘Amplify the call for an increase in dedicated, flexible funding to sustain the transformative work of diverse Pacific women. We call for the establishment of an independent Pacific Feminist Fund, and demand that the Green Climate Fund and Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and other climate finance initiatives immediately resource climate emergency work led by Pacific feminist and women led organisers and local front-line communities.

In the existing funding environment and relationships with donors, the ability of actors to negotiate, disagree with or not forge partnerships with donors is hindered by the limited available sources of funding available and lack of access to **financial and non-financial resources**. At the same time, feminist organizations are challenging these power relations with donors and between donors and this determines their strategies or decision to engage with partners.

There are a range of reactions to donors and experiences, spanning expressions of the sentiment of ‘beggars can’t be choosers’ and ‘the donors dictate protocol’ to more actively challenging the status quo and ascertaining the ‘backstory’ of grants to determine if the funding was appropriate for the actor – for example questioning and assessing the source of grants and if it could be linked to the fossil fuel industry and corporations.

This decision-making process about extending or continuing partnerships also depends on the organization’s feminist vision and capacity. Across the organizations, there are common capacity challenges, but the degree and extent to which an actor experiences this differs. It is especially more pronounced for newly established, young women’s organizations and grassroots feminist and community-based organizations. Moving forward, among the options of feminist funding models, the ideal structure to ensure funds reach feminist organizations is through the establishment of a feminist climate fund and a supporting movement building committee that is based on a participatory, equitable partnership model, see **collective decision-making for funding**.

“And so, for us changing the game is really about transforming philanthropy, by ensuring that the models of funding also have a couple of human rights centered principles. And not just human rights, but also gender justice and feminist qualities that are also embedded in the model sort of designed and not just designed by folks in the global north, or where people from the Global South, particularly in the Pacific Island countries are also part of where they can co design and co create some of these models”. – Miki Wali

We’ve been very clear that in order for a feminist group to do planned and emergent work always has to have feminist untied funding. You cannot experiment with project-based funding. We have also been careful about over-funding and changing the way in which we work. We have had some important lessons learnt on political resourcing around your political red-lines” – Noelene Nabulivou

“If we’re able to be clear from the forefront, from the very beginning, that this is our values, our principles, this is what we’re for, it’s really up to the funder if they continue”. – Frances Namoumou

“On the ground we do things differently. It needs to suit the community, it needs to be very friendly....as grassroots networks, some of the required things from the donors, it really don’t work well with us and it needs to change. Some of the things we do on the ground needs to be understood well by the donors. If that happens, you know things can really flow freely right down to us as grassroots level.” - Bonita

Financial and Non-financial resources

Accessing sources of available funding and the experiences and relationships with donors were the primary factors that affected feminist and women-led organizations ability to effectively conduct their work and expand their outreach.

Access to funding in the existing funding environment remains extremely challenging as the literature has found. Funding sources that were referred to and discussed were in relation to were Governments, traditional donor countries in the region and churches. There was no explicit mention of philanthropic funding or private sector funding.

Furthermore, mobilizing funding was tied to donor's priority areas and their decisions about which areas and focus what was or was not a priority, sometimes regardless of what the actors' experiences were. For disability rights, funding was seen to be available and increasing, to the point that for some organizations offers of increased funding by donors had to be turned down because of a lack of human resources for implementation. On the other hand, funding for LGBTI rights and transgender equality and groups has always been seen as particularly difficult to get.

As you know, when it comes to donors, everyone is fighting for the same piece of the cake. Sometimes, the piece is already a small. So, it depends what's the priorities. Is disability a priority? You can get funding. Sometimes it might be, sometimes it might not be.

“The funding it comes from the community. What they want, that's how it comes up and then all I do is I look for the resources and I do the work for it, in terms of applying for the funds. It's what they want, what they are going through. And it's something that I found that is quite different from other organizations. Other organizations focus on something in this particular time and we are focusing on something else. It's because we have different needs at different times in different situations and that's something that's really different about us” - Bonita

The conditions attached to funding are rigid and do not support feminist organizations and activists' ability to executive their work in a more strategic, responsive and agile fashion.

Overall, the lack of available funding and non-core project funding was the primary challenge stated. This hindered the organization's ability to branch out and be more strategic and in touch with the realities of women and communities. Because funding was primarily project based, when the organization's vision was outside the project parameters, there were examples of negotiation and efforts to creatively work around this.

For this example, at the end of the day though, where donors received exposure and public visibility this was received positively, even if this was objected to by the donor at the beginning.

The need for funding organizations fixed costs was called for by organizations. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic adds to this as there have been delays to planned initiatives. It has especially highlighted the need for funding flexibility, contingency planning and re-allocating resources when required. For organizations to be agile and responsive to the needs of women on the ground and their changing circumstances, feminist funding needs to be untied, flexible, core multi-year and direct to the actor where the organization has adequate capacity to manage it.

“We had unconditional feminist funds which means we could work with a group of women from Kadavu who needed a bridge built (after Cyclone Winston). We said we would work with them in a certain way so that it is feminist. So that we could co-create. So, we worked with the Soqosoqo Vakamarama (SSVM) – the women's group in the village and the turaga ni koro (village headman), the provincial council and everyone else you have to work with in order to build a bridge and taught ourselves. We ended up building a bridge that enabled access both for children and older women to access the school. For a long while they had been travelling across two coconut trunks. There is now also a whole set of work around sea walls, infrastructure, social-floras and social infrastructure and technology.

Women are able to articulate their priorities from their base has been incredibly important for us – they are making the case to government”

“The main resources we might need right now is a stable base for our meeting because have been conducting our meetings at different locations which has cost money too but if we were to have our own base it would be easier and less expenses”. – Kuinileti Kolia

“So now we try to make contingency plans and try not to set our plans in stone, so if something like this happens, we want to be proactive. We set out with funding set for this or that but when something like this happens and there’s no funding because its already set for something else, I’m trying to think of ways to get around that. Because there’s no such thing as miscellaneous funds for this. We want to do annual reviews of all our plans and work. So, we know where we are at, what we need to do based on the current situation.” Lucille Apis Overhoff

Feminist actors’ sources of funding and their decision to enter into funding arrangements is based on their values and this determines their ability to hold others to account.

For some organizations, with Government being their primary or only source of funding and with limited alternative funding sources, this hindered their ability to hold the Government to account or re-direct or expand their work based on their preferences. For other independent civil society organizations, being able to access Government funding for their work on women’s rights was viewed as a milestone indicating progression in this partnership to address women’s rights. An area that requires further discussion around funding and engaging with donors was around donor coherence for women’s rights and feminist funders ‘speaking to each other’.

Additionally, and in relation to engagement between Pacific feminists and international feminist organizations, groups or activists, there is a need to question who is in the driver’s seat for Pacific feminist funding and decision is making and not ‘replicating patriarchal power and systems’.

There were gaps and areas that donors and potential funders could support that would provide for feminist organizations to engage with women and their communities more closely.

Firstly, there is a need to ensure that a ‘two-track’ approach to funding and investment is supported: this involves funding for the organization and direct funding that is accessible to women in communities. Funding for the organization was seen as only one part of the support for the grassroots feminist and community frontline work that is needed, and this is tied directly to feminist organizations link to their membership base and the communities they work with and for. With this, there is also an identified need to support capacity development and knowledge sharing for women in communities. While actors note traditional knowledge and experience that women have in farming for example, there are other areas where women can still be supported through knowledge sharing at the community level to enable them to venture further into these areas for resilience.

Additionally, there was also the donor’s lack of understanding of culture and provisions required to attend to the cultural protocols around accessing a location and community. This

was an area that feminist grassroots organization understand very well and were clear about, but this was a challenge when working with some donors.

Secondly, and linked to this point was that movement led climate justice investment could be further supported through investment in assets such as land, infrastructure and also safe spaces for women.

The provision of accommodation for women and especially for enabling women from rural communities and outer islands to engage and participate more fully in social, economic and political life was seen to support and more sustainable feminist and community led initiatives and be of direct relevance and help women.

The UNWomen and Ministry for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation 'Markets for Change' project in Fiji component on the provision of specific safe and secure overnight accommodation and infrastructure for women market vendors and in Tahiti's the provision of accommodation specifically for young women and women from the outer islands to enable their travel and work in Papeete were seen as promising examples of direct support for diverse women that recognize the challenges that they face. These are interesting and also challenging areas for further support as: firstly, investment in this type of approach is a marked and complete shift from project based and non-core funding that is not flexible and does not cover fixed costs for example, and secondly, in the Pacific, land ownership is largely communal and the use of land and building infrastructure and investment for initiatives in this realm raises the critical need to engage closely with Government, communities and landowners and observe human rights commitments and cultural protocols for successful ventures and the equitable distribution of benefits.

"Financial support must go in two ways. One that supports the organization, on the other hand support that provides the tools for women to put this into action or add value.... when you are were talking about resources, what came to mind was the YWCA building. The self determination of our feminist group, our women's groups, to have the resources that will accommodate women, young women to come if they are attending a conference, they are able to stay in these safe spaces. This is something that the feminist or women's group can build on. They're resources that generates their own revenue and sustains the movement or the organization. Farming, I mean working in Navosa for 3 years, you see women on the farm daily more than the men. If we have a farm and then we get some of these women: we have agriculturalists, we have organic officers, women are already farming. How do we build on these network or pool of women that the movement can look into to provide support to" ...? if the YWCA were able to afford that building, I think it shouldn't be hard to obtain funding to have something similar that can accommodate women that are coming from rural areas. I guess having land and growing this land, I guess it's the self-determination of women in that area [referring to the Tahiti example of a building with accommodation specifically for women]" – Frances Namoumou

"For us at grassroot communities for example doing work at the riverside or planting on the riverbank, we need utensils to do this work. We need resources and another thing that we need is knowledge. We need a lot of knowledge. It's not only specific knowledge about climate change, it's also knowledge about agriculture, things that women don't usually do, like carpentry. These are all things that help us building a community in this crisis. The third one is finance. We really need finance. For us grassroots mobilizers, most

of the time, we do our work voluntarily from of our pocket, one dollar, two dollar, you know we mobilize out of nothing. We walk from here to there. And financing is something that we need, it helps us protect ourselves as grassroots mobilizers and it also guarantees our safety and security and protection. So those are the top three” - Bonita

Additionally, online organizing is an important area that is being utilized by feminist organizations and actors.

There are differences in the style of organizing and extent of use of online organizing by activists and organizations. Support for online organizing was a deliberate choice to reach specific audiences but also at the same time can be tied to resource constraints. There were advantages and disadvantages for using these different styles, but overall, an approach that engagement the broadest audience possible and a mix of more formal and informal styles and modes of organizing is seen as effective.

“For example, newer or younger activists a lot of us use means like social media, that’s the best resource that we can tap into because it’s not financially demanding, it’s the best way for us to engage with our certain demographic. But in comparison to more formal actors they have the funds to reach out a bit more, at like a more national level, at a more international level... it’s a good and a bad, because I guess in comparison, like I said, with social media it’s so much easier to engage and tap into that kind of organizing and movements. But at the same time, it still does have its limits because you end up only reaching a certain demographic. Especially depending on the kind of social media that you’re going to be using...whereas in comparison to formal actors they have funds to do a little bit more and they also have the capacity to also act more and do things at a higher level, in that sense. But they also lack the kind of engagement that a young person would get just simply through social media. You don’t really get the same one from a formal party at that level. That’s why I think it’s important why intergenerational and intersectional conversation are so important because you need these hand in hand, so you’re reaching out and you’re engaging everyone and you’re not just set on this target audience.” – Mia Kami

For funding that is directly linked to actors’ membership base, there is a focus on whether and how climate justice and women’s rights was translated into the Government national budget.

A promising approach that was seen was government’s earmarked funding for civil society initiatives, as well as more specific funding for supporting women’s rights and gender equality. Examples of these are the Republic of the Marshall Island’s new and specific Non-State Actors item in the budget and the recently established women’s revolving fund that supports women’s economic empowerment. At the same time, there was a lack of clarity expressed about the national budget was developed and CSOs role in shaping priorities, indicating that CSOs were not part of the budget consultation and development process.

“Recently the Government has set up a Non-State Actors Government item in the budget. This is a new budget item. This year they put 300,000 in that Non-State Budget item in our national budget and NGO organizations are supposed to apply to either the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Women and Youth”. - Hilda Heine

Relationships between organizations and donors that are based on trust and a shared understanding and vision should form the basis of partnerships.

In the past, this has determined whether new and productive relationships were formed and sustained. One aspect of relationships with donors that worked well and was regarded positively was the support provided by donors to really understand the organization and work with it in the lead up to the grant finalizing process. This understanding also included efforts to provide a safe space for actors and organizations to engage and one that had specific funding for this purpose, for example for providing accessibility and sign language interpretation for persons with disabilities to participate.

If donor funding was not provided to support these ‘pre-conditions’ for participation and organizing, it was regarded as unintentional on the part of donors and due to a lack of awareness and understanding about the situation, experiences, challenges and discrimination that a group faced.

For some marginalized groups, the donors’ refusal to provide funding for transport that enabled the group to safely travel to the site prevented the group from participating in decision making. As a group that faced hostility, the threat of violence and discriminatory attitudes and behaviors on a daily basis, compromising their members safety was not a risk worth taking.

“Having that discussion where they really support us...having that conversation before actually finalizing the grant is something that really worked well for us. For us it was special because we knew that they really understood what we were doing, how we were really working on the ground and that was something special for us.” – Bonita

Overall, the difficulties of accessing resources are further compounded by the capacity gaps and challenges that organizations face.

These are the same ones that civil society organizations as a collective and which are identified in the literature. This was seen to be linked to differences in size, history, country context, membership base and life stage of civil society actors and networks across the region. Using the dimensions of earlier UNDP CSO capacity assessments, organizations continue to face the same common cross-cutting capacity gaps but to different degrees.

These gaps were around: funding, human resources, leadership and governance, strategic planning and coordination, monitoring and evaluation and communication. It is also across dimensions of organizational capacity and sustainability and resourcing capacity, namely organizational strategy, culture and climate, systems and processes, outputs and performance, infrastructure and international management structures of the organization, manpower and human resource management of organization, resource mobilization strategies and efficient use of funds.

The difference in the ability between older and established organizations and activists accessing resources and younger activists is more pronounced. It is seen to be in part because of a lack of experience navigating the funding landscape and the practical ‘know-how’ of accessing funding and experiences of organizational learning. It is also particularly challenging for grassroots and community-based organizations to access these resources

because of their experience and most of their members being volunteers, holding other jobs and supporting climate justice work at the same time.

“This situation that we have with the bank account. Because we had a bank account once and because we didn’t get any funding for a few years, it had closed. At the time we were struggling to reopen another one and we were using personal accounts. I think in those periods, you know we missed out on a lot of opportunities and assistance that could have come to our communities. And we saw how hard it was. But then there were a few grants and funders that understood our situation and said ok, we’re gonna give you this, we know you guys are gonna do it. For example, Urgent Action Fund and a few others that really suited us grassroots communities”. - Bonita

“What’s most needed for us is, I guess this isn’t really something people can provide, but it’s something we can do internally. I think this is very common in a lot of organizations. It’s consistency, I mean consistency of engagement, consistency of our presence in what you’re doing and of course that is hard because especially as an organization where our team is majority volunteers, and we already have other jobs as well. I’m not sure if you’d say consistency is a resource, but it’s an essential part of being in this line of activism and advocacy”. – Mia Kami

Collective decision making for funding

Collective funding for decision making should be guided by feminist principles and Pacific ways of organizing.

These principles include being feminist, intersectional, intergenerational, and participatory. The experiences of past collective decision-making spaces highlight the need for clear criteria and a link and structure that highlights the relationship and ‘feedback’ mechanism between donors, organizations, and communities. A clear criteria and a description of the target group, for example what constitutes rural women and the distance that they live from the closest urban centre, was highlighted as needed to reach out to women.

The decision-making model structure itself is not spelled out, but it is based on the principle of having ‘equal say in the funds’ and it should suit the context and structure of the group. This could include if it is based on majority, consensus or decided on by the membership base.

Other recommendations put forward in support of an intersectional, intergenerational and participatory approach include: representatives of diverse women should be in the governing committee or board if it uses this model; allowing for new members in the decision-making body and their contributions throughout cycles; rationalizing the equity of how funds are allocated and spent including across groups; implementing measures and procedures to support confidence building and active participation within the group; and the resolution of disagreements and conflict.

“You can have everybody from the very beginning, that doesn’t mean they will all stay until the end. Some will leave because of the term. The mat will continue to be spread, some strands are short, it will come to an end. So, when it ends, you will need to add some new strands on. So those who finish their term, it’s probably their term to finish. They’ll

be new ones to join the mat, new strands to join that. At the same time while weaving, you will identify toxic strands, the one that's broken, just not right. Either you will remove the toxic strand or will try and understand it. Maybe try and understand, if you're able to understand that, how do we negotiate a win-win for these 2 differences. That's probably where you have the black strand to come in and make it that colourful mat. But the weaving continues" – Frances Namoumou

"So, things are changing, I think for the better, now there is a lot of stakeholder partnerships, collaboration, it's happening. So, we treat everyone equal. We just invite everybody. In a meeting we have 1 most important rule which is 'hats off'. Hats off means you don't carry your traditional hat, leadership hat, your church leadership hat, your government leadership. In the meeting, we're all equal. That's how we get around this. We don't like to have big discussion groups, so we always break into 5 people per group so everyone can speak comfortably and freely. They're not worried about their being a traditional leader or a Secretary there. I think it's working so far but we still have a lot of room to go" – Lucille Apis-Overhoff

"So, I think that's the first thing that, you know, no funding model or philanthropy in the future is possible if it's not intersectional. If it's not queer, if it's not led and driven by community, and if it's not rooted from the values of the communities, our values are different within feminism. There's also trans feminism. And within trans feminism, there's a couple of other values and principles that must also be clearly understood, recognized and utilized in the process of the entire development of whatever philanthropic support or response recognize. Well, the measures are simple. I mean, it's not just temporary, special measures, it's measures that are that are recognized, to be embedded in the system of decision making. And that's what we'll be pushing for many years and ensuring that there's a connection there. The second thing would have to be ensuring that the seat at the table is a genuine offer. And as part of this genuine offer is ensuring that of the contribution and so, the diversity and the power that is brought to the table" – Miki Wal

The ideal model for the distribution of feminist funding for climate action is through the establishment of a specific Feminist Climate Fund.

Alternatively, other models that have been proposed include funds and grants go through a CSO network, for example the Pacific Islands Alliance of NGOs (PIANGO) or at the national level through the respective PIANGO member or the Government itself. Each of these have advantages and disadvantages. These include considerations around whether and the extent to which it is explicitly feminist, governed and managed according to feminist principles.

Establishing an independent specific Feminist Fund would support this goal. If it is not an independent feminist climate fund and existing mechanisms are used, then it is critical to ensure that it has a strong gender policy, a specific example provided being the Green Climate Fund (GCF) gender policy.

For CSO networks and their members, if the body has the capacity to take on this function, this was an option for funding distribution across organizations at the national level. It would also promote complementary approaches between national partners.

Interviews:

1. Noelene Nabulivou, DIVA for Equality
2. Viva Tatawaqa, DIVA for Equality
3. Miki Wali, Haus of Khameleon
4. Benji Patel, Haus of Khameleon
5. Hilda Heine, Former President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and co-founder of the Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI)
6. Lucille Apis-Overhoff, Assistant Secretary, Climate Change Division, FSM Dept. of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management
7. Frances Namoumou, Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC)
8. Angeline Chand, Pacific Disability Forum (PDF)
9. Pelenise Alofa, KIRICAN
10. Mia Kami, 350 Fiji
11. Bonita Qio, Pacific Rainbow Network

Online questionnaire:

1. Vanessa Heleta, Talitha Project
2. Vika Savieti, Talitha Project
3. Ramona Tugaga, YWCA Samoa
4. Kuinileti Kolia, YWCA Samoa
5. Georgina Ariki, YWCA Solomon Islands

