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2 Executive summary

The Paris Agreement calls upon parties to scale up climate finance to achieve a balance between adaptation and mitigation and requires capacity building and adaptation initiatives to be gender responsive. While the Pacific is recognised as a region requiring significant adaptation investment, very little climate finance is reaching the ground. This project sought to examine the types of agricultural adaptation projects that get funded in Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands and explore how gender was incorporated into these projects. The project also wanted to document the experience of civil society organisations (CSOs) in obtaining climate finance and identify the institutional barriers preventing finance from getting to the ground.

The project found that global climate finance bodies prioritised technical and scientific investments in agricultural adaptation with recipients of this funding largely being national governments, international development institutions and international non-governmental organisations. These types of projects are generally top-down in design with very minimal engagement and/or direct benefits for communities. There was found to be a significant mismatch between the proposal requirements and priorities of global climate finance bodies versus the capacity and priorities of CSOs to draft technical proposals. This capacity gap has resulted in UN bodies and large NGOs institutions securing climate finance which is then distributed to smaller CSO organisations. This work-around solution creates significant barriers to enabling locally-led adaptation.

While gender has been mainstreamed within global finance proposal and assessment processes, this project found that gender is largely understood as ‘gender balance’ (requiring the participation of women in a project team). This can be contrasted with the requirements of the Paris Agreement which require for gender responsive implementation, which instead requires projects to be designed around gender and social inclusion considerations so as to ensure that the project reflects the social relations and needs of those at the place of the project.

Collaboration with CSOs and Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) partners found that these groups generally pursued funding that was aligned to values, priorities and needs. None of our partners had been successful in obtaining international climate finance (i.e. Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund) with these funds being seen as inaccessible for grassroots organisations in the Pacific. The main barriers to accessing finance were: (1) limited understanding of what constituted climate finance; (2) lack of knowledge on the availability and suitability of funding sources for CSO-FBOs; (3) overly complex donor processes and requirements; (4) insufficient capacity on grant writing and management; (5) poor recognition of the role of CSO-FBOs in development; and (6) weak or complex power relationships with government ministries and donors. To overcome some of these barriers, most CSO-FBOs had established a legal entity, and had existing partnerships or were interested in partnering with larger regional or global organisations who could absorb the administrative burden of writing proposals and managing grants.

This project drew on the ‘leverage points for transformation’ framework to help to identify potential changes across three domains (personal, political and practical) for climate finance to better support gender equity outcomes as well as community-based adaptation approaches in agriculture. The project also explored novel future interventions to assist in navigating the climate finance institutional landscape. The key intervention identified was the building of networks and partnerships between CSOs, CSOs with governments, CSOs and regional bodies to ensure that project design was reflective of community adaptation needs and desires while ensuring capacity to meet existing arduous and complex global climate finance proposal requirements.

3 Background

There is growing pressure at the international level to increase climate finance flows to the Pacific, along with obligations to mainstream gender in climate adaptation investments. In order to ensure that future climate adaptation investments are equitable and effective, this project drew insights from existing climate financing practices to identify the types of programming which fulfil the adaptation priorities of agricultural communities and support gender equity. Specifically, this Small Research Activity (SRA) explored: 1) how the funding institutions set up by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) prioritise agricultural adaptation finance in the Pacific and assess how gender as well as community-led, collaborative and learning-based approaches have been supported within these activities and 2) understand the barriers to accessing climate finance for women and community-based approaches as well as the work-around solutions that Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the Pacific utilise.

Adaptation theory and lessons from the Pacific emphasise the importance of community-based adaptation (CBA) which is place-based and provides an opportunity to integrate existing local knowledge, capabilities, priorities and for impacts to be addressed at the scale for which they are experienced (McNamara et al, 2020). The goals of CBA align with 'soft adaptation' – actions which emphasise increasing social connection, networks, reciprocity, learning and knowledge transfer as key tools to increase adaptive responses in the agricultural sector (Grandpre et al, 2022). Soft adaptation is culturally appropriate adaptation, though this term is not commonly employed in the Pacific context, the concept supports recognising the role of faith and faith-based organisations in shifting and transforming individual and communities' beliefs, practices and behaviours (Nunn and Luetz, 2021). This project sought to explore if the concept of soft adaptation was compatible with promoting gender equality in agricultural adaptation projects. Current interpretations of gender within adaptation initiatives are limited to including the participation of women within the project as compared with more feminist approaches which would encourage deep listening to local community priorities and issues and the valuing of diverse knowledges to solve local challenges. As such, in theory soft adaptation and feminist approaches are compatible. But in practice, there is limited evidence of prioritising soft adaptation and feminist approaches in project design.

International adaptation frameworks in the agricultural sector use the language of Ecosystem-Based Adaptation or Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), which emphasise the importance of working with nature to adapt to climate change (Miralles-Wihelm, 2021). This project found that while CBA, NBS, Ecosystem Based Adaptation and soft approaches to adaptation are generally more consistent with promoting gender equality, existing methodologies fail to provide adequate direction on how gender should be incorporated into agricultural adaptation projects beyond including women in the project team. Findings from this project align with findings from a CGIAR project in Uganda which found a lack of nuance around what local strategies on gender should involve for agricultural adaptation (Acosta et al, 2021).

The Reach, Benefit, Empower and Transform Gender framework (Quisumbing, Meinzen-Dick and Malapit, 2019) provides a basis for starting to conceptualise gender interventions in agricultural adaptation projects. This framework has been designed at the global level and should be tailored to reflect Pacific specific agricultural gender dynamics and indicators in future projects (taking guidance from the ACIAR Family Farms approach developed in PNG). Such modification is necessary in order to reflect the culture, space and place where agricultural adaptation activities are occurring. The need to reconsider a Pacific specific gender framework in agriculture is particularly timely given the increasing awareness of the feminisation of agriculture in the Pacific being driven by Australia's Pacific Mobility Labour Scheme; and women's agricultural entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector by well-networked and strategic female leadership committed to promoting wellness and earth conscious approaches to food production and consumption.

The lack of nuance around how to “do gender” in agricultural adaptation initiatives is reflective of global level ambiguity from the UNFCCC which has tended to focus on gender balance goals rather than requiring commitments from Parties to enhance gender equality in the development of nationally determined commitments and policies and project implementation (Maguire et al, 2022). The project team prepared a report summarising the interpretation and current limitations of gender within the UNFCCC which was shared with the One CROP alliance. This report assisted Pacific negotiation teams in being aware of the current financing gaps within the UNFCCC to support the work of National Gender Climate Change Focal Point Positions (Maguire et al, 2022).

Assessing climate finance flows to the Pacific Islands Region is complex due to opaque processes and a lack of internationally or locally agreed definitions of ‘climate finance’ (SPC 2021; Samuwai and Hills 2022). However, three UNFCCC mechanisms are available to the Pacific for climate finance – the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility and the Adaptation Fund (King and Mario 2021). Top-down processes dictate access to climate finance and favour large scale, replicable and high budget projects, developed through national planning processes. This requires a high level of capacity, technical knowledge and cohesion in national planning processes.

Fiji is one of only four Pacific countries to access funds through the GCF and Fiji and Solomon Islands are two of only four Pacific countries to access funds through the Adaptation Fund (King and Mario 2021). While climate finance funders have preferred to operate with national governments, regional organisations such as SPC and SPREP are starting to play important roles in accessing climate finance (King and Mario 2021). The lack of uptake of climate finance is attributed to a lack of knowledge and understanding of funder’s criteria and priorities; lack of capacity to absorb assistance; top-down requirements for cohesion and large scale projects in a region with diversity in experiences of climate change and governance processes; lack of clear ‘national roadmaps’ and priorities for addressing climate change; and the high costs of operating in the Pacific due to isolation and logistical challenges (King and Mario 2021). The emphasis on large scale projects alone is likely to exclude women’s groups in particular and non-government organisations that focus on gender equalities as these organisations tend to operate at small scales, and rely on non-hierarchical networks for influence.

Accessing climate finance in general therefore is challenging and there is a mismatch between the top-down approaches favoured by UNFCCC processes and the diversity in Pacific processes and communities. Of funds that have been accessed, only a small number relate to agriculture as highlighted in Table 1 and funding is directed through central ministries.

Table 1: Climate finance relating to agriculture, prepared through information available on the GCF, GEF and Adaptation Fund websites¹

	GCF		GEF		Adaptation Fund	
	Focal Point	Agriculture related projects	Focal Point	Agriculture related projects	Focal Point	Agriculture Related Projects
Fiji	Ministry of Economy	Agrophotovoltaic (1)	Ministry of Waterways and Environment	Land degradation (3), Food Security (1)	Ministry of Economy	0
Samoa	Ministry of Finance	0	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment	Climate change impacts on agricultural production (1 - completed), Land degradation (1 - completed)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	0
Solomon Islands	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology	0	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology	Strengthening capacity in agriculture, land use and energy sectors to implement and monitor NDCs (1)	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology	Enhancing resilience of communities in agriculture and food security (1)

Lack of access to climate finance meant that this research considered how gender is likely to be considered within climate finance based on more generalised reviews of gender in climate finance in the region (Aipira et al. Samuwai et al. 2020), and gender in agriculture (particularly FAO 2019 a, b, c). This was undertaken to provide an indication of how gender is likely to be considered within climate finance that may be accessed for agricultural projects. Overall, addressing gender in climate finance will require considering two major barriers: the complexity in general in accessing and tracking climate finance; and the challenges in implementing gender mainstreaming through government policy implementation.

Where gender has been considered in climate finance, this tends to be treated in superficial ways, such as including equal numbers of men and women in consultations, or through assumptions that funding women's groups will mean that gender has been 'done' (Aipira et al. 2017). CSOs and NGOs play important roles in implementing policy as an 'extension' of

¹Table current as at November 2022, refer to <https://www.greenclimate.fund/>, <https://www.thegef.org/> and <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/>

the arms of the government (Aipira et al. 2017). In Fiji this is most pronounced due to the infrastructure provided by long-standing women's organisations who have played leading roles across the region (Aipira et al. 2017; FAO and SPC 2020 a, b, c). Yet whether this is being backed up with funding and support remains to be seen (Samuwai et al. 2020). Women have reported that there is a lack of support for women's groups and inclusion of them in climate change adaptation (Mcleod et al. 2018). For gender inequality and climate change to be linked more substantially in policies, programs and finance there is still a need for responses to climate change to be viewed not just as a technological issue but also as a social issue.

Within Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands there is a lack of understanding and recognition of women's work in agriculture and a lack of resourcing to support gender mainstreaming across the agricultural sector. While women and men tend to divide roles in agriculture based on labour intensity, family structures and management of farms means that distinct divides in gender divisions of labour may not be as pronounced and family farms approaches are important (SPC and FAO 2019). Across the three sites gender mainstreaming processes in government also tend to be articulated yet not widely implemented. There is still a heavy reliance on women's departments or women's desks to inform other departments on how gender could be considered within policy and programs.

CSOs play critical and pivotal roles in supporting local communities with climate change adaptation, including agriculture and rural livelihoods within the Pacific. CSOs have grassroots connections to communities and have locally informed understandings of adaptation priorities and issues. In this project, three research sub-contracts were awarded to three different CSO organisations: 1) House of Sarah (a faith-based organisation in Fiji), 2) Samoa Women's Association of Growers (women-led growers organisation) and Coalition of Youths for Environmental Sustainability COYES, (Youth led CSO in Solomon Islands). The CSOs were encouraged and supported to define their own specific research questions and methodology around climate finance and gender, to ensure the findings contributed to their priorities and needs. This approach enabled Pacific Island experiences to be documented and shared according to their own voice and narratives. There is a lack of existing literature discussing Pacific CSOs' experiences in accessing climate finance through UNFCCC and other channels and this project had led to the creation of a CSO-led publication (forthcoming) documenting the knowledge and experience of CSOs on gender and climate finance.

This research fills some important gaps in the literature on climate change finance. Firstly, there has been little research to date examining gendered institutional climate finance issues and more particularly women's climate finance in relation to agriculture. This SRA filled an important gap by examining the global frameworks and processes on climate finance and gender and then examining the experiences of grassroots organisations in accessing these funds. Secondly, there has also been little research about ways to leverage change for women's access to climate finance in the agricultural sector. This research used a framework called the 'leverage points for transformation' (Meadows, 1999 and O'Brien, 2018) to take a systems approach to making sense of current context and opportunities for change. Taking such a holistic perspective recognises the multiple drivers and actors involved in climate finance, and more particularly for women in agriculture sector. The final phase of the research involved developing a conceptual understanding of the overall climate finance system, and identified key leverage points for inclusion of soft adaptation and gender transformative approaches including collaborative, participatory and feminist methods.

4 Objectives

Long-term

Improve the effectiveness of climate finance for agricultural adaptation projects in the Pacific by ensuring that finance is accessible at the community level, supports soft adaptation interventions and involves mechanisms to support gender transformation.

For this SRA

This SRA aimed to provide insights for ACIAR, its Pacific partners, and Pacific civil society groups on the current options for climate finance that may best support gender equity outcomes as well as soft, community-based, locally-led adaptation approaches in agriculture. The project also aims to identify potential novel future interventions that could change, or at least better navigate, the climate finance institutional landscape to finance gender and systems change outcomes.

Project Objectives

- Analyse the extent to which soft adaptation approaches in the agricultural sector are compatible with agricultural interventions contributing to gender equity and identify the degree of match or mismatch with dominant policy framings of the UNFCCC institutions shaping gender, agriculture, and finance interventions.
- Examine if soft approaches are informing how the UNFCCC is directing climate finance within the Pacific. What is being funded, who is receiving the funding and how much agency and benefit do Pacific communities gain from adaptation projects?
- Explore Pacific civil society experiences in accessing climate finance through UNFCCC and other channels and assess whether existing climate finance supports the processes and activities sought by civil society. Identify the types of adaptation finance prioritised by civil society and assess if this aligns with soft adaptation approaches.
- Synthesise project lessons to provide a conceptual understanding of the overall climate finance system and identify key leverage points for inclusion of soft adaptation and gender transformative approaches including collaborative, participatory and feminist methods.

5 Methodology

The project followed a collaborative approach with Australian and Pacific researchers working with Pacific partners to generate useful lessons on climate finance and gender for CSOs, national governments, Pacific regional organisations, UN agencies and academic communities. The project team was committed to equity among co-researchers as evidenced by the dissemination model which includes Australian and Pacific researchers on all project outputs and a CSO Pacific led publication. As the project involved analysis at the global, regional and local levels, a synthesis analysis was required to draw findings across the range of methodologies employed in the SRA.

Objective one of the SRA focused on exploring the conceptual framing of soft adaptation and gender equality in the agricultural sector. This involved a desk-based review and analysis of existing literature on soft adaptation and gender equality to generate a conceptual framework for the project team to use in exploring the research questions and activities. In order to assess how the UNFCCC conceptualises issues of climate finance, gender equality and agricultural adaptation the Carol Bacchi – ‘What’s the Problem Represented to be’ method (Bacchi, 2009) was used. This research method is suitable to use for policy analysis as it provides a structured way to critique how the framing of problem dictates the knowledge valued and responses initiated to solve the problem. This methodology showed that UNFCCC primarily problematises climate finance as an issue of lack of finance (versus accessibility of finance); gender as an issue of gender balance rather than gender equality and agricultural adaptation as one which emphasises scientific knowledges over local and traditional knowledges.

Objective two of the SRA focused on a regional analysis of agriculture adaptation projects to determine which types of institutions and projects are being prioritised. In addition, scholarly literature and literature from agricultural research and development organisations was canvassed to see if women have been asked what they want from key agricultural adaptation interventions in the Pacific. The researchers also worked remotely with key Pacific regional organisations in the space of gender, climate change and agriculture (SPREP, SPC, FAO, FFA, UNDP, UN Women and World Bank) as well as officials in Samoa, Fiji, Solomon Islands policy documents and programs/projects. Findings from both literature reviews were shared at a workshop in October 2022 with stakeholders from the Pacific as well as ACIAR for feedback. The project team also networked and engaged widely with other organisations (domestically and internationally) working to improve the effectiveness of climate finance in the Pacific (UNDP, SPC and SPREP).

Objective three of the SRA involved a collaborative co-design method involving the research team and women-led CSOs in Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands, working on agriculture and rural livelihood adaptation initiatives to gain insight into the practical lived experiences of women in the Pacific accessing climate finance. Research activities were co-designed with CSO research partners to explore how to improve access to climate finance supporting soft adaptation and gender equitable approaches. CSOs explored and shared their experience of accessing climate finance, pursuing soft approaches and embedding gender within agricultural adaptation projects. The methods used included key informant interviews, and focus group discussions held in workshop settings to learn about access to climate finance. The focus was on successes as well as enablers, barriers and challenges, and identifying recommendations for reform and opportunities to strengthen CSO access to climate finance. During the in-country research activities CSOs engaged with key country-level stakeholders (e.g., House of Sarah, COYES) or their own members (e.g. SWAG) as part of the inquiry process and to share emerging findings through ‘reference group’ style engagements. Ongoing sector engagement will support up-take of completed research findings. Country-level case study reports were prepared by CSOs, supported by Talanoa Consulting and UTS.

Objective four of the SRA involved a synthesis process to draw together findings from across all the objectives. The key methods for Objective four are presented below.

Design of workshop activities

The synthesis workshops (described below) were designed with a view to be highly participatory and inclusive of different stakeholder perspectives. A combination of presentations, plenary discussions, individual reflections and small group activities were incorporated into the workshops' design. Plans for facilitation and note taking were made to ensure smooth workshop processes and collection of workshop data to feed into final synthesis activities.

Workshop One: Research Synthesis Workshop

On October 11th, 2022, the SRA research partners (QUT, ANU, UTS and Talanoa Consulting) came together in Suva, Fiji and were joined by CSO partners (COYES, SWAG and House of Sarah) to collectively sense-make and validate research findings. The Workshop was primarily designed as an in-person event, however online participation in the earlier presentation sessions was enabled via zoom to allow for those unable to travel.

The Research Synthesis Workshop began by providing space for researchers leading each objective to share their key findings and take-aways. The remainder of the Research Synthesis Workshop focused on bringing together common threads and areas for further interrogation.

As noted in Section 2, the 'leverage points for transformation' framework (Meadows, 1999 and O'Brien, 2018) was used to support synthesis of findings across Objectives one – three and used in Workshop One. Using this framework as shown in Figure 1, findings from global, regional, national and local levels were analysed to discern changes at personal, political and practical levels.

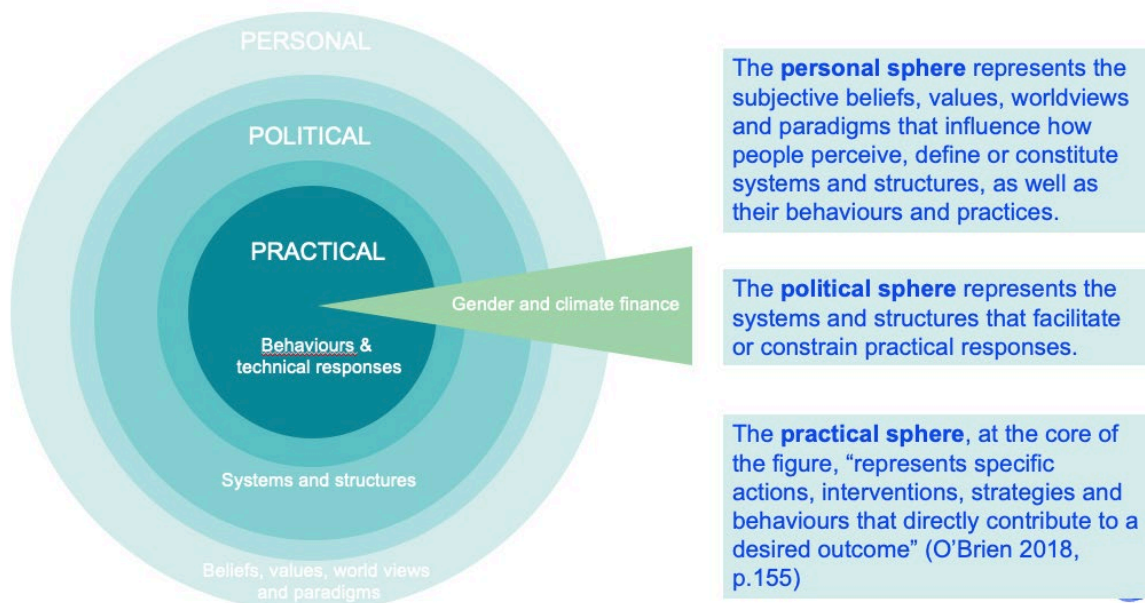


Figure 1. Leverage points for transformation

In practice, the leverage points framework formed the basis of discussion in a 'World Café' style activity. Workshop participants moved around three tables which focused on global, regional and national / local insights from the research. Discussions at each table drew on the personal, political and practical aspects of the framework. CSO perspectives were prioritised during this activity, ensuring the findings particularly at global and regional levels were validated from the reality of CSO experiences.

This was followed by an affinity mapping activity, grouping responses across global, regional and national / local into 'like' themes around the personal, political and practical spheres.



Workshop Two: Research Synthesis Workshop and Next Steps

The second face-to-face workshop on October 12th 2022 in Suva, Fiji involved the core SRA research team (QUT, ANU, UTS and Talanoa Consulting) to further synthesise and make sense of findings from day one and to develop recommendations for further research. The group analysed the outcomes from Workshop One, mapping

results in terms of key thematic areas (see Section 5). Next steps were discussed, including for the finalisation of this SRA as well as a potential larger research project that draws on the SRA's key lessons.

Stakeholder sharing session

Following the two Synthesis Workshops, the SRA research team hosted a stakeholder sharing session in Suva, Fiji on 13th October 2022. Around 30 participants joined from organisations including Fiji government, SPC, PIFS, UNDP and several NGOs. The event generated significant interest and discussion, and participants received a summary of emerging research findings following the event.

Further synthesis and write-up

A final synthesis of workshop outputs, drafting a separate Synthesis Report for sharing with ACIAR, SRA research partners, participating CSOs, and other relevant stakeholders in the Pacific. The Synthesis Report was deliberately developed to be easily accessible and included visual design to encourage uptake of time-pressed readers. The draft Synthesis Report was made available for UNFCCC COP27 negotiations in November 2022.

6 Achievements against activities and outputs/milestones

Objective 1: To analyse the compatibility between soft adaptation and gender equality and the level of mismatch between policy framings of UNFCCC on gender, agriculture and climate finance.

no.	activity	outputs/ milestones	completion date	comments
1.1	Desktop review of adaptation and systems literature to identify soft agricultural adaption and gender equality.	Literature review SRA Workshop Objective 1 Presentation	September 2022 October 2022	Peer review publication in preparation: The Injustice of Climate Finance – peer review publication in Special Edition on Geographies of Climate Justice in Oceania, <i>Climate Action</i> , (forthcoming) This publication draws together findings from across all objectives. All SRA researchers are authors including all CSO partners.
1.2	Documentary analysis of UNFCCC COP instruments on agriculture, climate finance and gender	Literature review SRA Workshop Objective 1 Presentation	September 2022 October 2022	Additional output: Peer Reviewed Paper: UNFCCC@30: Reposition Gender: Past, Present and Future, <i>Environmental Law and Policy</i> 2022.
1.3	Identify alternative agricultural adaptation approaches based upon the desktop review	SRA Workshop Presentation and discussion	October	Findings as an input into Objective 4 Synthesis Report.

PC = partner country, A = Australia

Objective 2: To examine flow of climate finance in the Pacific, what is being funded, who is receiving the funding and how much agency and benefit do Pacific communities gain from adaptation projects?

no.	activity	outputs/ milestones	completion date	comments
2.1	Desktop review of UNFCCC funded agricultural adaptation initiatives in Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands	Literature review	September 2022	Informed Pre-Workshop Reading for SRA Project Team.
2.2	Literature review summarising the types of interventions that women want from climate finance	Literature review SRA Workshop Presentation	September 2022 October 2022	Informed Pre-Workshop Reading for SRA Project Team.

2.3	Identify the gendered implications of existing agricultural adaptation finance and role of Regional Bodies	SRA Workshop Presentation and Discussion.		SRA Workshop Global Café discussion point.
2.4	Early findings presented at key regional Pacific meetings addressing climate finance and policy and academic conferences.	Presentation at One CROP Gender Deep Dive, September 2022		Release of Briefing Paper to assist Pacific UNFCCC Gender Negotiators: <i>Gender and the Glasgow COP: Please do more</i> https://research.qut.edu.au/centre-for-justice/briefing-papers/

PC = partner country, A = Australia

Objective 3: To Explore Pacific civil society experiences in accessing climate finance through UNFCCC and other channels and assess whether existing climate finance supports the processes and activities sought by civil society.

no.	activity	outputs/ milestones	completion date	comments
3.1	Secure services of Pacific civil-society research partners	Contract signed with House of Sarah, SWAG and COYES.	March 2022	Equitable and effective partnerships build with CSO partners. Support to strengthen capacity of CSOs to lead locally-relevant co-designed research.
3.2	Refine and confirm project focus on climate finance, soft adaptation, gender equality.	CSO workplan developed.	March- August 2022	House of Sarah: focus on faith-based organisations experiences in climate finance (soft adaptation as culturally appropriate adaptation). SWAG: focus on access to climate finance for women growers in Samoa. COYES: focus on local CSO difficulties in accessing climate finance, led by a youth organisation.
3.3	Pacific Women CSO led-research activities.	HoS Report SWAG Report COYES Report	April-September 2022	House of Sarah: key informant interviews, workshop. SWAG – key informant interviews, workshop. COYES- key informant interviews and workshop.

3.4	CSO Knowledge Products and CSO led Publication	Additional outputs- beyond what was promised under SRA.	November – January	<p>House of Sarah: Factsheet (drafted)</p> <p>SWAG- social media posts and video (tbc)</p> <p>COYES- to be determined -e.g. factsheet.</p> <p>CSO Peer Review Publication: Special Issue of Development Policy Review – <i>Pacific people’s perspectives on foreign aid and development</i> (forthcoming 2023).</p> <p>Lead by Kristina and Sina and supported by Sangeeta and titled: <i>Institutional barriers to climate finance for civil society organisation in Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands.</i></p>
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Objective 4: To synthesise project lessons to provide a conceptual understanding of the overall climate finance system and identify key leverage points for inclusion of soft adaptation and gender transformative approaches including collaborative, participatory and feminist methods.

no.	activity	outputs/ milestones	completion date	comments
4.1	Systematic synthesis of findings from objectives 1-3 to consolidate conceptual understandings of the overall system across the three lines of project enquiry	Presentation slides. Synthesis Report	November 2022	Presentation of key project findings at ACIAR COP27 Event on 12 November 2022.
4.2	Core-team collaborative sense-making of research findings and plan and prepare for stakeholder workshops	Pre-Workshop Reading which distilled key findings across three Objectives into one page each	September 2022	Pre-workshop reading distributed to SRA project team and CSO partners prior to in-person workshop.

4.3	Workshop in Fiji with ACIAR staff, Australian-based researchers and Pacific based researchers to validate project findings with Pacific audiences	PPT templates provided to leads of Objectives 1, 2, 3 to support consistent reflections of findings Workshop Presentation: objective 1, 2 and 3.	10-14 October 2022	In-person workshop in Suva with project team and CSO partners. Broader audience invited to Talanoa event to share workshop findings
4.4	Incorporating the lessons and findings from the synthesis and workshops, identify key leverage points that support the transformation of the system. Identify current options and future interventions for finance to better deliver gender, community and adaptive systems benefits	Leverage Point Summary Document. Synthesis Report	10-14 October 2022 December 2022	Synthesis materials consist of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage point summary document • Synthesis Report (which includes suggested areas for future research)
4.5	Completion of ACIAR SRA Reporting requirements	SRA Final Report to ACIAR	Due 31 January 2023.	

7 Key results and discussion

As described in Section 3, the synthesis process drew on the ‘leverage points for transformation’ (Meadows, 1999 and O’Brien, 2018) framework, which includes assessment of points of potential transformational change across three domains: Personal, Political and Practical. Synthesis across the three ‘P’s – Personal, Political and Practical – is presented on the following page in Figure 2. This figure summarises the leverage points to strengthen inclusive climate finance, drawing on the categories of personal, political and practical leverage points introduced in Objective 4.

On the left-hand side of the figure in green, values and perceptions are described which underpin and inform inclusive access to finance. Recognition of women’s role and value in agriculture and equality in gender relations are also described as well as value of traditional and local knowledges and language that centres local realities. Views on what ‘the solutions’ are as well as recognition that climate change affects people differently are described as key to strengthen inclusive climate finance.

In the middle of the figure in blue, aspects associated with the role of CSOs and the ‘climate finance processes’ are described. Strengthening CSOs as agents of change and linking CSOs together and also to national and regional organisations is noted. A key dimension of CSO strengthening is recognition of the strengths already present and building on these, strengthening movement building across the Pacific. The need to simplify and transform the proposal process to increase accessibility for CSOs is also described.

At the top of the figure in grey, reform required within the donor community as well as regional organisations and national government is described. Championing of gender equality as well as mainstreaming of gender considerations across all sectors is also described. Dissolving silos is also necessary to strengthen inclusion and participation in climate change finance.

On the far right of the figure, transformative change outcomes are described, with a focus on equitable power relations and also strong collaboration and partnerships for access and use of climate finance. Increased transparency and accountability of climate finance at global and regional levels is also described as key for CSOs to access.

The detailed findings for the three P’s that underpin Figure 1 are also provided in Table 2.

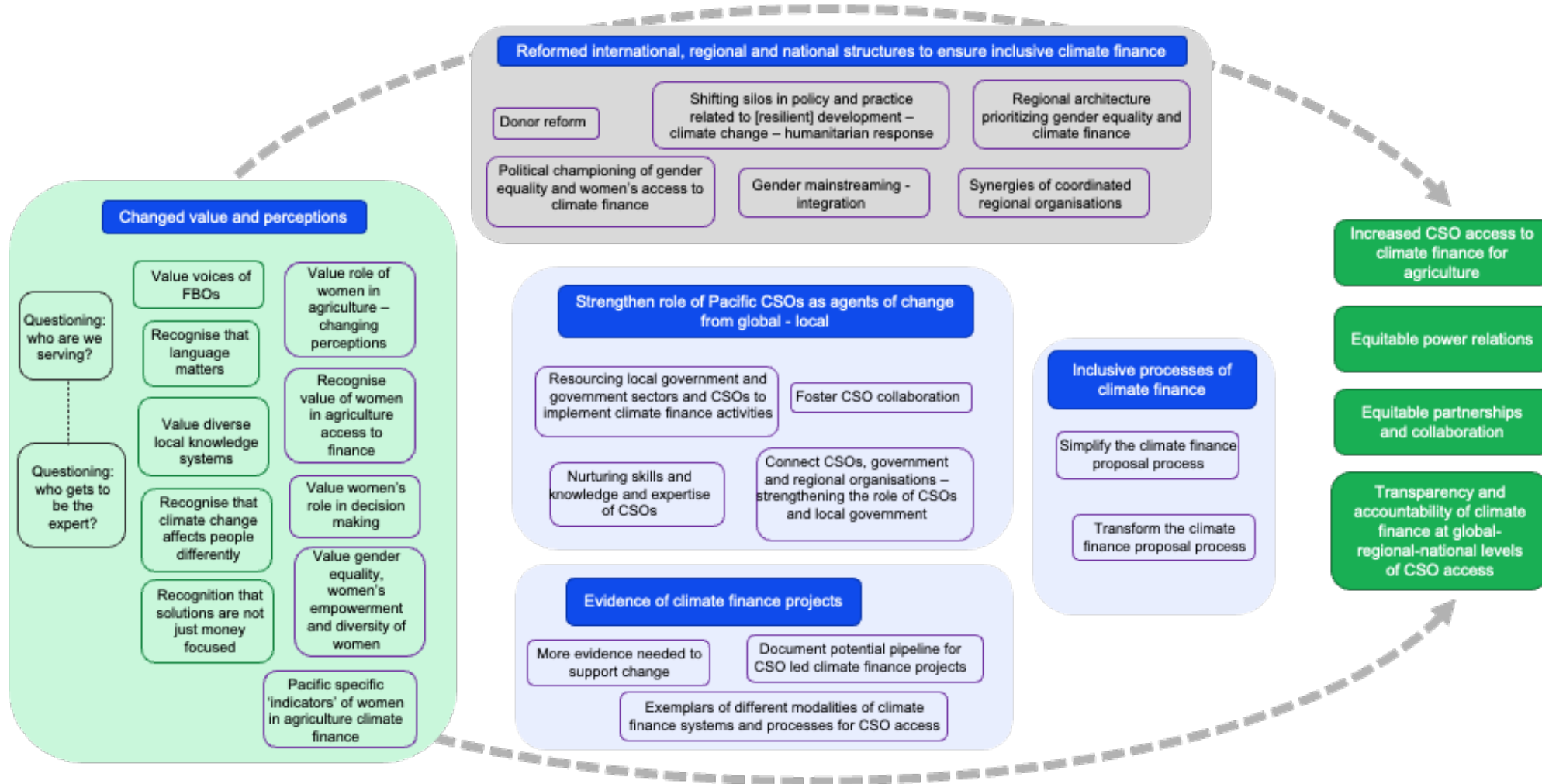


Figure 2. Synthesis of findings

Table 2. Detailed findings for Personal, Political and Practical leverage points

Personal	Political	Practical
<p>Build equitable partnerships and collaboration</p> <p>Address varying perceptions of women</p> <p>Value all types of women in agriculture</p> <p>Question - who are we (regional – national) serving?</p> <p>Value diverse knowledge</p> <p>Challenge - who gets to be the expert?</p> <p>Recognise that language matters</p> <p>Craft solutions that are not just money focussed</p> <p>Value women’s role in decision-making</p> <p>Acknowledge that climate change affects people differently</p>	<p>Political champions of gender equality and CSO access to climate finance</p> <p>Invest in CSO expertise</p> <p>Mainstreaming/integration of gender across sectors (climate, agriculture)</p> <p>Resource government sectors (sub-national) and CSOs through government finance</p> <p>Utilise the role of regional architecture to prioritise gender and climate finance</p> <p>Connect CSOs, government and regional organisations</p> <p>Focus on data, accountability and transparency of climate finance</p> <p>Challenge the systems that silo</p> <p>Prioritise donor reform</p>	<p>Increase transparency and accountability of climate finance at regional and national levels</p> <p>Transform the proposal process for climate finance</p> <p>Simplify the process – language of climate finance</p> <p>CSO-led - CSO strengthening</p> <p>Document pipeline of potential ‘climate projects’</p> <p>Prioritise access to finance for women, CSOs, communities</p> <p>Strengthen CSO collaboration for increased access to climate finance</p> <p>Value voices and leadership of FBOs</p> <p>Build more evidence to support change</p>

8 Impacts

Despite global rhetoric seeking to increase climate finance flows to vulnerable communities this project documented the significant gendered institutional barriers faced by grassroots CSOs in trying to access climate funds. This analysis provided evidence to demonstrate the inaccessible climate finance mechanisms. The project findings demonstrated that climate finance structures and processes must be simplified to ensure funding is channelled to CSOs and ultimately to climate-vulnerable communities that need it most. This message was conveyed by the research team at the COP27 UNFCCC negotiations and resulted in language in the Gender COP decision, paragraph 12 calling for simplified access to climate finance for local grassroots and women's organisations.

8.1 Scientific impacts – now and in 5 years

The analysis from this project showed that there are number of gendered institutional barriers to climate finance. One of the significant problems is that the method for “doing gender” is to include women in adaptation projects as distinct from implementing projects in a way that ensures that gender and social inclusion. The analysis also documents how CSOs in Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands play a vital role in locally-led adaptation as a result of their place attachment and relationships with communities demonstrating the need for CSO strengthening to ensure locally-led adaptation. The CSOs have been invited to submit a perspective piece summarising their findings to the international journal *Development Policy Review*. The perspective piece will be part of a special issue on “Pacific people's perspectives on foreign aid and development” (<https://devpolicy.org/pacific-authors-dpr-20221007/>). Given there is currently a dearth of scientific publications led by Pacific scholars, CSOs, or presenting CSOs perspectives on accessing climate finance, we anticipate this perspective piece to likely have value and impact into the future. The full manuscript is due 1 March 2023, and the publication will be out around mid to late 2023.

8.2 Capacity impacts – now and in 5 years

The project generated value by promoting two way learning amongst researchers by connecting across disciplines - governance, climate change, civil society and multiple scales (regional, national local). As such, this SRA provides an example of collaborative transdisciplinary and transnational research. The two way learning also extended between Australian-based university researchers and CSOs, with the CSOs contributing valuable insights from their lived experiences of accessing climate finance. The project also demonstrated how action research can be used to inform the development of international policy of the UNFCCC.

The project also led to valuable CSO locally-led research supported by Talanoa Consulting. The project provided the opportunity for three CSOs to co-design and implement research to reflect on their own and partner experiences accessing climate finance, and finance more broadly. Many of the barriers they identified were common to the three CSOs as well as partner CSOs who participated in in-country workshops. Through the SRA, the CSOs developed a much better understanding of what climate finance was (e.g. through UN agencies, regional organisations), and which ones were accessible to them, and which were not (e.g. Green Climate Funds, Adaptation Fund). Research experience was also gained by CSOs, who in some cases led research methods such as data collection (interviews, focus group discussions, workshops), analysis and writing of synthesis reports.

8.3 Community impacts – now and in 5 years

As an SRA scoping project there was limited opportunity for community impact.

8.3.1 Economic impacts

As an SRA scoping project, insights gained from the analysis could lead to future research to improve the accessibility of climate finance. The perspective piece from CSOs highlights more work is required to ensure the mechanisms and channels for climate finance are changed and/or diversified to ensure these organisations are not left out. There is a need to explore alternative models of climate finance that reflect the socio-cultural context of women groups in agriculture.

8.3.2 Social impacts

This SRA has created a pipeline project for ACIAR to show how future investments can be targeted to work around gendered institutional barriers to climate finance. The CSOs engaged in the project gained research skills and networks with further investments aiming to assist in moving finance to reach the ground and empower local voices. This work may also help them better articulate some of barriers and challenges they face to donors and their government partners.

8.3.3 Environmental impacts

None.

8.4 Communication and dissemination activities

The main communication and dissemination activity of the project was a *Talanoa* session in Suva hosted in October 2022. A diversity of Suva-based organisations participated including Fiji Ministry of Economy, SPC, UNDP, Australia Pacific Climate Partnership, ACIAR and several other Fiji-based CSOs. The event provided an opportunity to discuss the wider Pacific landscape of climate finance, and some of the investments different partners were making. Following this event, the synthesis materials summarising the project findings were shared with participants and their extended networks.

Other communication and dissemination activities included:

- Training on gender and social inclusion research methods for ACIAR PASS (Pacific Scholarship) students;
- Three CSO Workshops with House of Sarah, SWAG and COYES and their members.
- Presentation at One CROP Gender Deep Dive COP 27 Preparation session: September 2022;
- Presentation of Findings at ACIAR COP 27 Event – 12 November 2022;
- Creation of CSO Knowledge Products such as factsheets; and
- The team has been invited to present at forthcoming Australian Centre for Pacific Islands Research seminar series to be scheduled in 2023.

9 Conclusions and recommendations

9.1 Conclusions

Climate finance involves multilevel governance. Adaptation projects are generally developed by global climate finance institutions, national ministries, multilateral development bodies and bilateral development bodies. Project proposals are then reviewed by international panels with funding distributed based on international methodologies (McGinn and Solofa, 2020). Most adaptation funding in the Pacific is channelled through national governments (Ministries responsible for climate change), multilateral development bodies (UNDP is responsible for distributing 60% of GCF funds in the Pacific) and regional bodies such as SPREP and SPC. While the funding flows to national and regional bodies, implementation of adaptation projects occurs at the sub-national or local level and involves sectoral ministries including gender and agricultural ministries with CSOs playing a crucial role to represent community interests. As a result of this top-down climate finance governance, the majority of climate finance does not actually reach nor benefit communities in the Pacific (van der Ploeg et al 2020). Only US\$1 in every US\$10 of climate finance committed is allocated to delivering local level climate action. This means that climate finance is failing to tackle the drivers of vulnerability in communities facing poverty, food insecurity, resource degradation and climate change (Soanes et al, 2019).

This project sought to explore the decision making processes underlying climate finance allocations and examine the types of agricultural adaptation projects that get funded. This project found that global climate finance bodies prioritised technical and scientific investments in agricultural adaptation with recipients of this funding largely being Ministries responsible for climate change. Gender has been mainstreamed within global finance proposal and assessment processes but it is largely assessed on the basis of gender balance, with a lack of a dedicated fund within the UNFCCC to support gender-responsive implementation. There is a significant mismatch between the proposal expectations of global climate finance bodies versus the capacity of community based organisations to complete technical proposals. This capacity gap has resulted in the creation of “middleman” institutions responsible for securing climate finance to distribute to smaller CSO organisations. These institutional arrangements create significant barriers to enabling locally led adaptation.

This project explored the barriers faced by women-led CSOs in accessing climate finance and documented their very practical recommendations on the changes needed to make climate finance more accessible for women-led CSO organisations in the Pacific. Such changes included: making the deadline for submission at midnight as opposed to 5pm (evening meal preparation), making the calls for proposals available in local language, providing longer periods for project implementation in recognition that CSO members often work full time in other roles, and simplifying the rhetoric and language of the funding requirements (not requiring CSOs to understand latest buzz words or theoretical concepts).

The project identified one clear pathway for leveraging change on global finance arrangements. The project team comprised of people working from the global to the grassroots levels. This enabled the team to draw upon findings gained from working at the grassroots level to inform the policy positions of those representing Pacific Island Countries at COP negotiations. This helps to amplify the experiences and voices of those at the frontline of climate change with the project enabling documentation of these experiences which Pacific regional and national institutions can draw upon to inform their policy position. The key message from the grassroots in this SRA is that climate finance must be simplified in order to enable locally-led adaptation. The solution to complexity is not checklists and toolkits and middleman accredited institutions, but instead simplifying access, so that funding is truly accessible for those vulnerable to climate change.

This project identified three levels of leverage points (personal, political and practical) for bringing about change to climate finance to better support gender equity outcomes as well as community-based adaptation approaches in agriculture. The project also explored novel future interventions to assist in navigating the climate finance institutional landscape. The key intervention identified was the building of networks and partnerships between CSOs, CSOs with governments, CSOs and regional bodies to ensure that project design was reflective of community adaptation needs and desires while ensuring capacity to meet existing ardours and unnecessary complex global climate finance proposal requirements.

9.2 Recommendations

Recommendations emerging from this research are based on our findings presented in Section 5.

It is critical to recognise that values and perceptions underpin and inform inclusive access to finance. Women's role and value in agriculture and equality in gender relations are contextual factors needing to be recognised. Valuing traditional and local knowledges and language that centres local realities is also critical.

The role of CSOs in 'climate finance processes' are undervalued. Given the crucial role CSOs play in implementing local adaptation programs, CSOs should be recognised as agents of change and be supported to link with other CSOs and to national and regional organisations.

Reform is required within the donor community, within regional organisations and national governments with regards to climate finance. Championing of gender equality as well as mainstreaming of gender considerations across all sectors is also described. Dissolving silos is also necessary to strengthen inclusion and participation in climate change finance.

Transformative change will be possible through a focus on equitable power relations and strong collaboration and partnerships for access and use of climate finance. Increased transparency and accountability of climate finance at global and regional levels is key for CSOs to access finance.

Based on the above recommendations, the following areas of future research are proposed.

- Feminisation of labour in agriculture – as men move overseas for work, women are stepping into more roles in agriculture, especially in light of Australian Government Pacific Step-Up Initiative, supporting circular migration.
- Profiling and documenting organisations like SWAG – what were the practical steps they took to move from \$5000 grants to \$400,000 grants. How have they shifted along the continuum?
- Pacific specific indicators – what do we mean by gender for Pacific communities? What is the indicator we want to achieve that is appropriate for CSOs? Drawing on lessons from Family Farm approach.
- Supporting CSO institutional strengthening – action research – and testing what CSOs want to see if it helps them. Supporting implementation. Partnerships between CSOs to get funding, partnerships between CSO and government to access climate finance?

- Roles of different actors, e.g. regional level organisations and CROP agencies working in climate change, agriculture and gender; the role of local government, the role of private sector?
- Connection between equitable jobs and opportunities and just transition in the agricultural sectors. Lots of CSOs – poverty reduction and jobs and socially framed mandates – don't have the ability to link in with technical agricultural expertise. Is there demand from CSOs in the region for agricultural technical support?
- Making the links between global climate finance processes and mechanisms and how grassroots experience of accessing climate finance. What structural changes are required, how can this be communicated, what can be done to better align global climate finance funds with local adaptation needs and capacity?
- Assisting Pacific COP negotiation teams through One Crop forum by preparing briefing papers on gender, agriculture and climate finance.
- What is 'best practice' or principles that can be used to prioritise adaptation agricultural projects? If you have a list of projects, what process can be used to prioritise projects to ensure fairness?

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10.2 List of publications produced by project

Published

Rowena Maguire, George Carter, Sangeeta Mangubhai , *Gender and the Glasgow COP: Please do more* <https://research.qut.edu.au/centre-for-justice/briefing-papers/>

Rowena Maguire, George Carter, Sangeeta Mangubhai, Bridget Lewis and Susan Harris-Rimmer, UNFCCC@30: Reposition Gender: Past, Present and Future, *Environmental Law and Policy* 2022.

In preparation

Kristina Fidali, Ofusina Toamua, Hemah Aquillah, Brigitta Fa'afiti, Sereima Lomaloma, Plasida Riah Mauriasi, Steve Nasiu, Aliti Vunisea and Sangeeta Mangubhai, *Institutional barriers to climate finance for civil society organisation in Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands*. Special Issue of Development Policy Review – *Pacific people's perspectives on foreign aid and development* (forthcoming 2023).

Whole team publication: Gender and Climate Finance in the Pacific, (Geographies of Climate Justice Special edition)

Conference Presentations:

Final report: Institutional Barriers to Climate Finance through a Gendered Lens in Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands

ACIAR COP27 Conference <https://www.aciar.gov.au/media-search/events/how-implement-food-systems-change>

Griffith University Climate Beacon – Climate Justice Writers Workshop

11 Appendixes

11.1 Appendix 1:

Synthesis report (see separate document).