



'We do in the spirit of togetherness': stories of collective resilience, wellbeing and climate (im)mobility in the Pacific

Tracie Mafile'o, Pelenise Alofa, Torote Kauongo, Lorna Saguba, Hennah Steven, Aburi Filoa, Fa'ari Sanga, Tulano Toloa, Loha Isaako-Toloa, Sione Nailasikau Halatuituia & Tomu Paneta Hauma

To cite this article: Tracie Mafile'o, Pelenise Alofa, Torote Kauongo, Lorna Saguba, Hennah Steven, Aburi Filoa, Fa'ari Sanga, Tulano Toloa, Loha Isaako-Toloa, Sione Nailasikau Halatuituia & Tomu Paneta Hauma (01 Aug 2025): 'We do in the spirit of togetherness': stories of collective resilience, wellbeing and climate (im)mobility in the Pacific, *Climate and Development*, DOI: 10.1080/17565529.2025.2524421

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2025.2524421>



© 2025 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 01 Aug 2025.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 41



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

RESEARCH ARTICLE



'We do in the spirit of togetherness': stories of collective resilience, wellbeing and climate (im)mobility in the Pacific

Tracie Mafile'o ^a, Pelenise Alofa ^b, Torote Kauongo ^c, Lorna Saguba ^d, Hennah Steven ^e, Aburi Filoa ^f, Fa'ari Sanga ^g, Tulano Toloa ^h, Loha Isaako-Tolosa ⁱ, Sione Nailasikau Halatuitua ^j and Tomu Paneta Hauma ^k

^aAvondale University/Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd, Cooranbong, Australia; ^bMana Pacific Consultants Ltd /Kuana Smart Consultants, Tarawa, Republic of Kiribati; ^cMana Pacific Consultants Ltd, Tarawa, Kiribati; ^dMana Pacific Consultants Ltd, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; ^eMana Pacific Consultants Ltd/University of Waikato, The University of Waikato Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand; ^fMana Pacific Consultants Ltd, Feilding, New Zealand; ^gMana Pacific Consultants Ltd, East Brisbane, Australia; ^hMana Pacific Consultants Ltd, Afa'u, Tokelau; ⁱMana Pacific Consultants Ltd /Whitireia and Weltec, Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand; ^jMana Pacific Consultants Ltd/Independent Scholar, Palmerston North, New Zealand; ^kMana Pacific Consultants Ltd/Independent Scholar, Funafuti, Tuvalu

ABSTRACT

Collectivity is at the heart of resilience and wellbeing in the lived experience of those navigating climate (im)mobility in Oceania. The implications of collective resilience and wellbeing for development policy and practice, however, are still little understood given the under-representation of research drawing on the perspective and experience of those from places most disproportionately impacted by climate change. This article presents findings from a qualitative multigenerational family stories study amongst Pacific peoples – Moana or Indigenous peoples of Oceania – on their experiences of climate (im)mobility, resilience and wellbeing. This Pacific-led research involved researchers engaging with their own places, family or kin groups across six Pacific countries (Kiribati, PNG, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu). The findings illustrate collective resilience and wellbeing through connection to past generations, cultural ways of working together, practical adaptation, spirituality/faith and dealing with cultural erosion. Based on this study, it is recommended that, in addition to environmental sustainability, development policy and practice focus on cultural sustainability as well as 'commoning' through a relational ethics of care, in order to address future climate (im)mobility and to strengthen collective resilience and wellbeing across the Pacific.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 4 September 2024
Accepted 19 June 2025

KEYWORDS

Climate mobility; Pacific; collective resilience; wellbeing; development; cultural sustainability

Introduction

Pacific families and kin groups demonstrate collective resilience and wellbeing in their everyday lived experience. Yet, climate (im)mobility has also been shown to disrupt community 'cohesion, livelihoods and people-land relationships' (Yates et al., 2021, p. 263). This article shares research findings which show how resilience and wellbeing are conceptualised and enacted by Pacific peoples navigating climate (im)mobility. Further, the implications of collective resilience and wellbeing for impactful development policy and practice are discussed. The article draws from a qualitative family stories study amongst Pacific peoples – Indigenous peoples of Moana Oceania – on experiences of climate (im)mobility, illustrating collective resilience and wellbeing. The research findings suggest that Pacific conceptualisations of resilience and wellbeing need to be better understood, upheld and taken as a prototype to devise national and international climate (im)mobility policy and development practice approaches resembling an ethics of care (Sheller, 2023). It is argued that a collective approach – such as reflected in the quote 'we do in the spirit of togetherness' – challenges

development paradigms and systems to centre Indigenous values in their purpose and ways of working. Concerns of Pacific peoples at the forefront of climate change and those directly navigating climate (im)mobility include not only environmental changes, but the social and cultural changes swept in with 'development'. The findings illustrate that urbanisation and 'development' challenge collective resilience and wellbeing. The study recommends that development efforts to address climate change and climate (im)mobility, need to focus not only on physical and material aspects of environmental sustainability and adaptation – but on cultural sustainability.

Climate (im)mobility is 'a broad concept encompassing various types of movement including voluntary migration as adaptation, forced displacement, and planned relocation of communities' (Stojanov et al., 2021, p. 211) induced by climate change. The term 'climate mobility' was recently utilised in the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility (PIF, 2023) to refer to 'any type of movement- forced or voluntary, temporary or permanent, within or across borders- potentially arising in the context of climate change' (p. 9). Of note, climate

CONTACT Tracie Mafile'o  tracie.mafileo@avondale.edu.au  Avondale University/Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd, 582 Freemans Drive, Cooranbong, NSW 2265, Australia

© 2025 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

(im)mobility is inclusive of voluntary immobility, 'an informed, freely indicated preference to remain in sites where there is high vulnerability to environmental risk' (Farbotko & McMichael, 2019, p. 150), including because of the cultural significance and meaning of place (Farbotko, 2022, p. 3394). (Im)mobility is closely related to adaptation, including *in situ* adaptation, planned relocation, and migration as a form of adaptation (Bernasconi, 2025). In summary, climate (im)mobility refers to both voluntary and involuntary immobility and mobility.

This research had three key objectives: (i) explore how Pacific family/kin groups understand and demonstrate climate (im)mobility resilience over time and space; (ii) examine the impacts of climate (im)mobility on Pacific families'/kin groups' wellbeing; and (iii) Identify priority policies, processes and practices for Pacific families' climate (im)mobility resilience and wellbeing. 'We do in the spirit of togetherness', a quote from one participant in this study, summarises the communal and collective conceptualisations of resilience and wellbeing reflected across all the stories.

Scholars acknowledge that the family has been the base unit of interaction in the Pacific (Finau, 1992). Relating to diasporas, Gershon (2007) explains 'families are the culturally specific, integral units that constitute diasporas' (p. 474). Families and diasporas are intertwined, connected to such a degree that diasporas cannot exist across generations without families sustaining them (Gershon, 2007). This study, therefore, engaged with families and kin groups across different geographical spaces.

Context

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges in the Pacific and climate (im)mobility is growing as a focus of discussion (Tabe, 2020). The geographically expansive Pacific covers a substantive share of the globe, most of which is ocean. As Hau'ofa (2008) posits about this sea of islands, the ocean is integral to identity and culture. Of the more than 1779 islands in the Pacific, the most common types are reef islands (36%) (Nunn et al., 2016) which are at risk given the interaction of exacerbating global climate change and anthropogenic local pressures (such as growing populations and lifestyle changes associated with modernisation and urbanisation) (Dutra et al., 2021).

Cultures of the region are key to understanding and addressing Pacific climate (im)mobility. Cultural and linguistic hyper-diversity aptly describes the region of 23 Pacific nations and territories, including Australia and New Zealand. Approximately one third of the world's languages are indigenous to the Pacific (Ethnologue, 2025). Yet, relationality and transnationalism are also defining characteristics, with families as first responders and the primary support mechanisms for climate (im)mobility (Burson et al., 2024). Intersecting traditional knowledge and systems of resource governance with global and Western science efforts is central to climate adaptation solutions, including climate (im)mobility (Dutra et al., 2021; Nunn et al., 2024).

Climate (im)mobility in the Pacific is complex, requiring nuanced understanding and action (Burson et al., 2024). Yee

et al. (2025) urge a 'critical localism' approach to planned relocation which is responsive to vernacular understandings of the local and agency and power dynamics between different actors, and the prioritisation of 'local actors in designing, implementing, monitoring, evaluation and learning from interventions' (p. 10). Such locally-led adaptation requires consultation and consent by relocating and receiving communities, material and psychological preparation, consideration of differences in environments and livelihoods, and minimisation of circumstances which could cause conflicts over access to resources (Tabe, 2020). The current study involved a nuanced and granular exploration of local Pacific understandings and experiences of climate (im)mobility, resilience and wellbeing to inform policy and action. These include experiences those who remain in place, as well as those who move internally or internationally.

Methods

This qualitative study prioritised Pacific values, knowledge, and culture to generate rich Indigenous narratives (Newport, 2019) on climate (im)mobility in the Pacific. Pacific-Indigenous methodologies (karaki, maroro, tok stori, talanoa, and faitalaga) were complemented by participatory arts-based methods (digital stories and found poetry). Research ethics review and approval were provided by the New Zealand Ethics Committee [AREC23_07] and then necessary research permits were secured in each of the countries. Participants consented to participate either in writing or verbally as is culturally and contextually appropriate (Fitzpatrick et al., 2016; Meo-Sewabu, 2014).

Participants

This study engaged ten extended family/kin groups (84 individuals) from six countries (Table 1): Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga and Tuvalu. Pacific-Indigenous researchers led and implemented the study mainly within our own islands and villages; this approach centred Indigenous voices and adopted a decolonial lens (Mbah & Bailey, 2022), disrupting the traditional 'them/us' of development research and practice (Taylor & Middleby, 2023). This approach also aligns with Indigenous data sovereignty principles prioritising collective benefit in climate change research (GIDA, 2022; Williamson et al., 2022).

An intentional feature of the research approach was to engage family/kin group members who live in different locations – including rural, urban and overseas – in order to allow a multi-site family perspective to emerge. In six of the 10 case studies, participants included those who had moved away from their ancestral places to other parts of their countries or were residents in New Zealand or Australia. Where possible, those in rural communities where, since urban residents are frequently engaged in studies given ease of access. Our observation is that the voices of those in rural locations – who likely have different experiences with climate (im)mobility – are not as well represented in the research literature. All ancestral places where fieldwork took place, except for Nagamito in the highlands region of PNG, were coastal,

Table 1. Participant family/Kin groups with climate change and (im)mobility types.

Country	Family/kin Groups = n	Individuals = n	Home island or village	Climate change impacts	(Im)mobility types
Kiribati	2	11	Maiana Island	Coastal erosion, sea water intrusion impacting crops, water access and quality, overcrowding in urban areas	Moving to urban area, staying in place, international labour mobility
			Nonouti Island	Overcrowding, coastal erosion impacting crops, agriculture, water access and quality	Moving inland, moving to urban area
Papua New Guinea	2	8	Yaga village, Umboi Island, Morobe Province	Relocated community, reduced fishing	Historic relocation, marriage into the host community
			Nagamito village, Unggai Bena District, Eastern Highlands Province	extended droughts, water access and food security	staying in place
Solomon Islands	2	35	Kwai island, East Kwaio, Malaita Province	Coastal erosion, sea water intrusion, overcrowding, health, reduced fishing,	Staying in place, planning relocation
			Ngongosila island, East Kwaio, Malaita Province	Sea water intrusion, planning relocation, overcrowding, reduced fishing	Staying in place, moving to urban areas
Tokelau	1	6	Atafu Island	Soil erosion, food security, health, reduced fishing	Staying in place, temporary migration for medical treatment, permanent migration
Tonga	2	19	Mango Island	Sudden onset, reduced fishing	Forced relocation
			Nukunukumotu island	Sea water intrusion, cultural sites destroyed	Staying in place, labour mobility, other mobility
Tuvalu	1	5	Nanumaga Island	Storms, drought	Moving inland, mobility for economic and education reasons
Total	10	84			

low-lying island villages. Accessibility was only via boat in just over half of the fieldwork locations (Maiana and Nonouti in Kiribati, Kwai and Ngongosila in Solomon Islands, Yaga in PNG, Nukunukumotu in Tonga, Nanumaga in Tuvalu).

Across the 10 case study locations, there were varied experiences with climate change, and families/kin groups were identified purposively (Etikan et al., 2016) to include varied experiences of climate (im)mobility (Table 1). For example, the Tokelau case study included family members who had moved to New Zealand for medical treatment for non-communicable diseases which relates to food security issues exacerbated by climate change. For other family/kin groups, such as Kiribati participants, family members had moved to different households and locations within Kiribati, including because of water access issues exacerbated by climate change. Yet other case studies included stories of those who opted to stay in place, even when the opportunity existed to move (Nukunukumotu and Nagamito). Each family/kin group case study included people from more than one household, and at least two generations.

Data collection

Data collection utilised Pacific-Indigenous (ethnic specific) storytelling approaches: talanoa (Tonga, Tokelau), tok stori (Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands), maroro and karaki (Kiribati), and faitalaga (Tuvalu). **Talanoa** (Tecun et al., 2018; Vaioloti, 2006) is a Pacific (Polynesian) research approach described as relationally mindful critical oratory (Tecun et al., 2018). Talanoa captures the personal stories, issues, realities, and aspirations of Pacific people through genuine, informal, empathetic, and culturally grounded conversation. **Tok stori** (Sanga & Reynolds, 2021; Sanga et al., 2020) is a Melanesian research method. Tok stori occurs in a trust-based relational space where people listen well, connect deeply and contribute to the conversation. Quality tok stori depends on positive, reciprocal relationships. According to Fasavalu and

Reynolds (2019, p.14), tok stori space values ‘vulnerability, emotionality, relational encounters and narrative intersections’ (p.14). **Faitalaga** was the method used in Tuvalu. Recent research seeking to employ Tuvalu-Indigenous research methodologies has utilised *sautalaga* (Yates et al., 2023); however, the word *faitalaga* is correct for the dialect of the two northern islands in Tuvalu, of which Nanumaga is one (where this study was based in Tuvalu). **Te Karaki** and **Maroro** (Baiteke, 2023; Schutz, 2022; Yates et al., 2023) were the methods utilised in Kiribati. **Te Karaki** is storytelling and **Maroro** is a word for discussion. Maroro comes from two root words in Kiribati language: the Ma and the Roro. The Ma is a fish trap made of rocks in the lagoon. The fishermen will collect the fish using the fishing technique called the roro. Roro also means generations. It is customary that they will select the good-sized fish and leave the rest to escape when the next tide comes up. When applied as research methods, maroro and te karaki enable the selection of important information collected from our storytellers.

Participatory arts-based methods of poetic inquiry (including found poetry) and digital stories were used to complement the Pacific methods described above. Arts-based methods have been gaining traction with action-oriented Indigenous research and in the Pacific (Heard, 2022; Mafle’o et al., 2022; Redman-MacLaren, 2020). Specifically, poetic inquiry, an arts-based research technique, was used as an analytic device in data collection, data analysis and as a way of representing findings (McCulliss, 2013; Prendergast, 2009). Poetic inquiry seeks to ‘reveal and communicate truths via intuitive contemplation and creative expression’ (Elliot, 2012, p. iv). Found poetry is the poetic reordering and representing of existing words and phrases generated during research that is presented as poems.

Research was undertaken directly in the languages of the participants, without the use of external translators. In total, six language translations of the study information were prepared: PNG Tok Pisin, Solomon Islands pijin, i-Kiribati,

Tokelauan, Tongan, and Tuvaluan. Research snapshots were subsequently translated, and provided in written and audio form, in the same languages and two additional Indigenous vernacular: Benavena Holupa Ngo (language of the Nagamito people, PNG) and Saveeng (language of the Tuam people of Yaga Village, PNG).

Analysis

Several layers and methods of analysis took place in this study. First, researchers undertook initial reflexive thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2023), directly from the audio files or video recordings (Greenwood et al., 2017). Importantly, this initial analysis was conducted in the language of participants used in data collection since meaning is couched in language (Redman-MacLaren et al., 2019). This involved listening to the recordings several times, noting repeating and significant ideas and categorising these into themes. The next layer of analysis occurred in the process of researchers writing case studies using selected translated quotes from participants to illustrate themes and discuss the broader context and implications for climate (im)mobility policy and action. In addition to case study writing, researchers composed found poetry using direct quotes from participants or their own analytical lens which were integrated into the case study analysis and presentation.

Analysis was also undertaken collectively (Mafile'o, Alofa, et al., 2024) by the research team. Two in-person workshops took place involving the researchers and two arts advisors (one for poetic inquiry and the other for digital storytelling). The first workshop focused on preparing for data collection and involved the team situating themselves in the topic by weaving together their own storytelling of climate (im)mobility. The second workshop took place post data collection and provided the opportunity for collective and collaborative data analysis (Mafile'o, Alofa, et al., 2024), and extending both the arts-based the Pacific-Indigenous methods into the analysis. Activities involved the team workshoping the similarities and differences across the 10 case studies and further analysis on the interpretive lens researchers brought to their sense-making from their lived experience. Based on the workshop discussions, the lead author led the writing of a report synthesising the findings from the 10 case studies, generating themes of circular, connected, communal and concrete climate (im)mobility (Mafile'o, Vaka, et al., 2024). The overall synthesis included the analytical device of found poetry generated from translations of direct quotes from across the 10 case studies.

Methodological reflections

The use of Pacific-Indigenous methods and arts-based methods in combination has generated policy-relevant knowledge to better respond to climate (im)mobility, based on Indigenous conceptions of resilience and wellbeing in the region (Mafileo, 2024; Mafileo, Alofa, et al., 2024). The full suite of case studies, poetry, digital stories, reports and policy briefs arising from this project can be found at www.manapacific.co.nz; these research outputs were also deposited

in with national libraries of the six Pacific nations to improve accessibility by participating communities and nations.

The approach of researchers engaging our own family/kin groups facilitated greater access to rural, remote communities not usually reached by researchers. A qualitatively rich level of openness and engagement emerged, benefiting from the relational and cultural capital of researchers. It is appreciated, however, that when we as researchers involve our own family/kin groups in commissioned research such as this, the weight of responsibility is felt by researchers long after project completion. There can be a deep level of trust imparted to family/kin researchers – and as insider researchers we have heightened sensitivity to protect the interests of family/kin in research processes and outcomes. A tension experienced by some team members was that there were heightened expectations from participating family/kin that there will be action which directly benefits participating communities in the form of support with climate adaptation initiatives and livelihoods. While this is the ultimate intention of such research, it is beyond the scope of a project to have any direct control over the extent to which decision-makers and policy makers take up research recommendations, especially as geopolitical political dynamics shape regional and national policy options. Nonetheless, this research provides a creative, and widely accessible record of Pacific family/kin group voices and experiences of resilience and wellbeing in the context of climate (im)mobility and, in some cases, has spurred other locally-led climate (im)mobility initiatives.

Results: collective resilience and wellbeing

Several themes are presented here, illustrated with poetry and direct quotes, which deepen understanding of collective resilience and wellbeing of Pacific family/kin groups who are navigating climate (im)mobility. These are: connection to past generations; working together; practical adaptation; spirituality and faith; and erosion of culture and 'togetherness'.

Connection to past generations

Staying, Moving, Returning – excerpt (Mafile'o, Alofa, et al., 2024)

Beloved home
Where raised
Where ancestors lived
Our ancestors buried here
If we migrate to new land
Who will look after our ancestors buried here?

Connection to past generations characterises collective resilience, wellbeing and climate (im)mobility across the Pacific. The above found poem excerpt, created from translations of direct quotes from the family stories, illustrates the influence of ancestors on (im)mobility decision-making. As highlighted in this poem, caring for the resting place of relatives who have passed on can be a factor which influences decisions to stay in place. The act of 'looking after' family members who have passed on directly contributes to collective wellbeing of family/kin groups across the Pacific.

Stories of past generations' resilience, strength and survival underpin present-day collective resilience. This connection to past generations as a source of strength and collective resilience is illustrated in the following Nagamito Village (PNG) case study quote:

Ol papa mama save tokim mipla olsem, bifo tumbuna blo ol stap ya, ol save wok lo stick. Ol mekim bikpla, bikpla garden. Displa taim spade ino kam yet. Bifo taim, wokmak blo wanpla man em kain olsem wokmakblo tupla man lo taim blo mipla nau. Lo ol lain bifo, gaden wok ya em bikpla samting. Man igatim bikpla gaden em lida lo hauslain ya. Man igatim bikpla gaden na planti gaden ya, em lida. Ol save wok olsem bikos em ol lukim disla em wanpla profession blo ol (Tok Pisin). [Our parents tell us that their ancestors used to work with digging sticks. They made huge gardens. During those days, they never had spades. The amount of work (in the garden) that was done by one person in those days is equal to the amount of work that two people do today. Gardening was an important part of our ancestors. A person (man) who had a huge garden is a leader in the village. A person (man) who has a huge garden and plenty gardens is a leader. Our ancestors dug bigger and had plenty of gardens because they regarded gardening as their profession.] (Safaty Auso, Nagamito, PNG)

This quote shows how stories of ancestors' dedication to work the land to grow gardens provide knowledge, motivation and inspiration to inform local adaptation strategies (discussed later). This sense of connectedness and purpose defines identity and resilience in the present.

Teaching younger generations about their genealogy and stories of historical mobilities was a further way collective resilience and wellbeing were enacted. For example, Rorite and Ruta's family originally from Maiana Island (Kiribati), but living in the capital, Tarawa, make concerted effort to teach about genealogy at family reunions:

Some families ... [teach] ... children their family genealogy during their family reunions. They play a quiz game to make sure that the children and youth learn the genealogies by heart. Quiz questions such as: "Who is the father of so and so or who is the son of so and so?" Prizes and penalties are provided in this quiz game. This is very important to keep families together, strengthen their bonds and ties and also to learn to value family skills. Taoaba expressed his hopes that these family reunions and storytelling will continue for the sake of the young generation. Stories are not for entertainment only, but for empowering youth to learn values and skills passed down from our forefathers. (Alofa & Kauongo, 2024)

Connections to past generations as an aspect of collective resilience and wellbeing was expressed in several different ways in this study, including: care for and visiting the graves of ancestors who have passed on; stories of the strength and survival of past generations providing inspiration and motivation for local climate adaptation; and teaching family genealogy to young generations as a form of youth empowerment. These examples illustrate resilience in everyday living while staying in place. The next section explains the theme of working together as a resilience and wellbeing factor for those navigating climate (im)mobility.

Working together

Strong families in a changing climate (Alofa & Kauongo, 2024)

Moving, moving, moving

Buota, Maiana Island
To the end of the village
To Tarawa, Kiritimati, Nauru
To New Zealand

Searching for water
Searching for food
Searching for education, employment
Healthcare, sustenance
Searching, searching, searching ...

Father and Mother are gone
I am left, with aunties and uncles
Sisters and brothers
Daughters and sons
In-laws, adoptions
Pact relationships, and
You are all family
Your love and care
Give me strength
To face the impacts.

As illustrated in this found poem, collective and communal extended family (*kainga*) living, and working together, enables resilience in the face of climate (im)mobility. Cultural conceptualisations of such resilience were reflected in several different Indigenous languages from across the region. For example, *rao kwaima la*, or *rao ofu/ogu la*, in the Indigenous vernacular of Kwai, East Malaita, Solomon Islands means doing things together or working together. This concept is fundamental to building resilience and overcoming situations collectively, not only as families but as a whole community on the island of Kwai. As explained in the Kwai case study:

Growing up on the island, one could remember that everybody lived and did things together. Women would paddle out together in groups to go to the mainland to gather food, firewood, and fetch freshwater. Men went out in groups for fishing and on their return would share the catch with everybody on the island ... Everybody looked out for each other, and during special occasions, the whole island would be involved. This is an example of *rao kwai ma la*, when the whole community is involved in preparing for a week of celebration. (Filoa, 2024)

The *inati* system practiced in Tokelau, means that food (such as a fishing catch) is shared equally amongst villagers. In Tokelau, the term *tauhi kaiga* was used, meaning someone who provides for the extended family. Explaining a Tokelau concept of wellbeing, a participant shared that it includes:

E taua lahi te aganuku na ola mai ai mai na tuua, he tofi tena, ko te maopopo ma fai mea fakatahi, alofa ki te tama manu [the importance of culture, our heritage, reciprocal living, caring for the tama manu (term referring to people who do not have parents or children or foreigners)]. (Tolola & Tolola, 2024)

Collective resilience is a strength used to respond to climate change and to navigate (im)mobilities. For example, the Maiana case study highlighted that the 'community fosters mutual support and cooperation during challenging times' and that 'families share responsibilities and decision-making which contribute to the resilience of communities' (Alofa & Kauongo, 2024, p. 9).

Collective resilience is evident with stories about sharing of crops, fish and housing amongst family members, which is experienced as a strength and is important to wellbeing. One person from Nukunukumotu (Tonga) stated:

Kei fai pe me'a he taimi koe fekau'aki mo e ngaahi naunau 'o tahi ... kãinga he motu ni; ikai fai ha fesiosiofaki kei fevahevahe'aki pe, koloa pe ke tataua pe tama ko e emo e tama ko ee [We still do what our people did in the olden days regarding the ocean, as a kãinga (extended family) there is no selfishness, we share equally] (Kãinga Nukunukumotu, Nukunukumotu, Tonga)

Such collective and communal living is a necessary part of surviving and thriving in places which are remote from urban centres where livelihood is more likely to be from wage earning. In some of the locations where our research was undertaken, there is a marked absence of government or international assistance for livelihood, climate change adaptation or mitigation or, where relevant, for relocation efforts. In these cases, communal living and collective effort are necessary and define experiences of resilience. Policy addressing climate (im)mobility ought to ensure communal and collective strengths are not inadvertently undermined.

Some family/kin group members, even though they move away, still contribute to collective resilience with circular flows of resources back to families and communities. For example, a Kiribati family shared how two sisters working in New Zealand in labour mobility schemes provide essential support for the family living in the main island, even though they do not have access to land in the urban centre to grow food:

Ngai ao tariau ao mwaneu tabera bon te toba nakon tinara aika uoman. Eaki kanganga tararuwakia ara kara aikai bwa maiua e bon roroko ni katoa namakaina. Kainanora nte mwane e bane ni karaoaki ni barongaki irovia manera aike a makuri i New Zealand. [Me and my adopted brother and my pact sister care for our elderly mothers by cooking their food and providing all their needs. It is not hard caring for them because our sisters in New Zealand continue to provide funds for their upkeep on a daily basis. All our financial needs are being met and provided for by our sisters in New Zealand.] (Baretoa, Maiana, Kiribati)

In this example, resource flows circled back to family in Tarawa. Similarly, the Kwakwaru tribe (Kwai) case study included a quote from a tribesman about people moving to the capital (Honiara) because it is increasingly harder to fish for sustenance around Kwai Island:

Distaem mifala lukm si hem raes fising hem lelebet had nao ... mifala go lo Honiara fo mifala waka fo helpem oketa families wea stae lo hom [We realise with the high sea rise, it is harder to fish, so we have migrated to Honiara so that we can work to support families.] (middle-aged male, Kwai, Solomon Islands)

As these quotes illustrate, circular resource flows from family members in urban centres, or overseas in New Zealand or Australia, were part of the family/kin group climate (im)mobility resilience and wellbeing.

Negotiating collectively for relocation was a priority for Kwakwaru tribe in Solomon Islands. In alignment with the cultural value of *rao kwaima la*, or *rao ofu/ogu la*, working together, there was disinterest in any initiative which would engage at the individual households or family level, or even at a clan or island level. Rather, any such relocation planning needed to be undertaken 'together' as a whole community, with both islands and all tribes in Kwai and Ngongosila.

In the case of relocated communities, intermarriage between the relocated and host communities is another aspect

of collective resilience. For the Patnav families of Tuam Island who relocated to Yaga village, intermarriage was seen as strengthening their land tenure security in Yaga, as has been employed overtime in the Pacific (Bennett, 1987) and elsewhere in relation to climate adaptation (Albert et al., 2018).

In summary, collective resilience is realised as people work together, sharing resources and providing mutual support within community, kin and family groups. Such working together takes place not only within a single geographical space, but also across borders, as family in urban centres and overseas support livelihoods of those who remain in place. Working together supports practical adaptation, the focus of the next theme.

Practical adaptation

A Sacred Connection Between Hege Land and Our Hearts (Steven, 2024)

The Hege land is our mother, a source so profound
In dry season, a jewel we have found
It offers water for our gardens
It conceals food for our survival

Through sun-scorched days, when the earth is parched
Our mother's embrace, where our hopes are arched
Cassava's starchy gift, in the soil it's concealed
A treasure revealed when all food crops are gone with the dry

In the roots of the Hege bamboo, our hope for tomorrow renews
When the dry spell threatens to take away our water
The stringy roots trap and strain
The well, that from Hege bamboo roots spring up
Bring life-giving waters, on which we depend

We care for this land, as a mother so dear
Nurture its essence, protect without fear
It repays us in kind, with its bountiful grace
In dry season, we'll find our rightful place

A sacred connection between Hege land and our hearts
In nature's embrace, our harmony starts
We are here to stay
For generations to come
Hege land is our mother
With her care and abundance
We thrive even in dry season

Written from drought-impacted Nagamito village in the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea, this poem alludes to practical adaptation in times of drought, whereby people eat the cassava that is not otherwise usually consumed. Such concrete, practical adaptation strategies when staying in place are a demonstration of resilience.

In the Nanumaga (Tuvalu) case study, the family had built a temporary shelter more inland for when natural disasters strike the island, requiring evacuation from their homes. Building the shelter further inland, safe from sea surges, also meant they could be close to their gardens and to the livestock. In addition, a daughter talked about her father's instructions to harvest the pulaka (crop) before a storm in order to save them:

E manatua ne aku i te aho e tahi i te taimi o matagi malohi, kae koi agiagi malie ai a te matagi, koa fai o poko malohi kae ne taumafai a toku tamana o fano o taa mai a pulaka kola koa lelei i te taa mo pulaka kola koa tai lelei ake loa i te kakai mai i te omotou vaipulaka

sameni me i te mea mana poko mai a te matagi kae fakamahei katoa ne ia a omotou pulaka. Kae Fakafetai ake loa ki te mafaufau o toku tamana me ne fati mai a te galu kae e lei me koa oti ne taa ne ia a omotou pulaka kola koa lelei i te kai. [I remember when one time a storm was approaching Nanumaga, and my father told me to go to our cement pulaka plantation to uproot our pulaka that are good to be eaten and some that are almost good to be eaten, so that when the storm strikes the good pulaka are safe from the natural disaster. Fortunately for us, and thanks to my dad's good judgement, when the storms struck and waves came over our pulaka plantation, the good ones were already safe from the natural disaster.] (Haufile, Nanumaga, Tuvalu)

Another apt example is Rorite and Rute's family (Kiribati) who live right by the sea and built a *bwibwi* (a traditional seawall made of piled rubbish and sticks for coastal protection), a soft solution seawall which is environmentally friendly. According to a family member:

Ti katea ara bono ae te timanti ao e uruaki ao karekea ara kanganga, ngaia tia kata te bwibwi ao e kamimi bwa e teimatoa n toto-koa kanakinakon abara. [We built proper sea walls made of cement, but it broke and washed away then we tried the bwibwi and it worked.] (Baretoka, Maiana, Kiribati)

Practical adaptation to meet basic needs for food and shelter, and to lessen the impacts of climate change, gave people more choice, enabling people to stay in place. It is also important to note that for many of the family/kin groups engaged in this study, external support (from national governments or from international organisations) was minimal, especially those who lived in remote locations. In such situations, communal practical adaptation was necessary to meet basic water, food and shelter needs. Practical adaptation is understood within a broader frame of reference of spirituality and faith, an aspect of collective resilience which is explored next.

Spirituality and faith

Mipla Traim Stap (We are Trying) (Saguba, 2024)

One-time, in olden times,
Island was filled with manmeri (people),
And bush could not feed,
Even sea could not give,
The Kulaus (young coconuts) not enough,
Only bush brown water stap (was there)
But none of us were sick,
Men sailed, women gathered,
We watched, we hoped, we shared
We overcame.

We searched, we grated too young bananas
Men sailed, canoes sometimes sank,
We traded, they traded -
Things brought out, things brought in,
One coconut tree had two, even three,
We collected, we gathered,
We watched, we hoped, we shared
We overcame.

Then we moved, we settled,
Not many - one family - only us,
In thick forests,
Banana leaves for plates,
Coconut shells for cups,
We worked hard; we cleared bush,
We beat kundus (drums)

We planted, we built
We overcame.

Today?
The Sea breaks,
Corals have gone; histories have gone
Land boundaries fail, Government systems fail,
Yet ...
Our barter systems, our marriages,
Our people hear - the bell rings,
We Strive, God knows.

Spirituality and/or faith undergird a sense of purpose and hope, and influences perceptions of climate (im)mobility amongst the family and kin groups in this study. The above poem, written from the perspective of Tuam Islanders resettled in Yaga Village, PNG, speaks of working together to overcome, but also the Christian faith worldview which is pressed into in difficult times.

In the case of the people of Kwai and Ngongosila, spirituality was historically significant in the story of the settlement in those islands, which was sparked by their conversion to Christianity, and resettlement close to the mission. However, even before that, in pre-Christian Indigenous theocratic Malaita, their islands were known as *labu*, or a place of 'refuge'. Furthermore, their ancestors from Gaita were known to have brought *mana* with them to shoulder chiefly and spiritual leadership. From an Indigenous perspective, historical mobilities and current climate mobilities are connected to traditional spiritualities and new faiths. Selected quotes from the tribespeople illustrate this centrality of spirituality and faith.

Ples God givim iumi na ya [This is the place God has given us, not anywhere else]. (adult female, Ngongosila, Solomon Islands)

Iumi must prayer gud and no forgetem Masta [We must pray good and not forget the Master] (Gwailao tribe, Ngongosila, Solomon Islands)

Voices from other places across Oceania, also indicate the way people make sense of climate (im)mobility from a spirituality and faith lens. For example, in Tonga, one person saw their land as being God-given, even though challenges are seen to arise leadership:

Ko e kekelele eni ia 'a e 'Otua na 'e foaki, he 'ikai honge ... ka 'oku tupu e maumau mei he taki hala e tangata [This soil was God-given, and it will not be bare, the adversity happens from erroneous leadership] (Kāinga Nukunukumotu, Nukunukumotu, Tonga)

In Nagamito Village (PNG), the following quote shows how provision from the environment – water and food – is perceived as a blessing from God:

Ngamimoya oifa ngamimo noto minone. Gaman nimagi melhe-me'a a. Anama minotamo minoto oto oto ma lhohima nolha. Zano higo sipinahute geke i nolugi. To, Miyavo nohiveluto monoka liplikota saka i ya, Miyavo makunamo lmigo, monoka lito gmpati mloto, lito noto yama nohuni. Miyavomova go i ya nolmi, nosena nolmi, makunamo nolmigoya ai Miyavomo foke i hova hova huto nohune, yama hepato vonamo. (Bena language). [We are still drinking well water. The government has not helped us for as long as we have been here. And now we are growing old and grey. That's why I am emotional (sad). But because we have faith in God and worship Him, He is always blessing us, and we

have food to eat. God gives us rain, food, and more blessings. That's why we are always praising His kindness.] (Kogarugafa Kefuno, Nagamito, PNG)

Similarly, in another part of PNG, reflecting back on Tuam Island pre-resettlement, an elder in Yaga Village noted:

Ni ngun mon. Ni ngan mon pa sa Aunutu i blessim ya tawe. Ya poia mako. [We ate and drank without worrying about the condition of the water because God blessed the water. Even though it was not the best at the time.] (M.A. elder female, Yaga Village, PNG)

For the family and kin groups in this study, resilience and well-being are understood both from a traditional religion and a Christian faith perspective. The implication is that engaging with communities about climate (im)mobility requires effort to understand how spirituality and faith influences interpretations of lived experience, the challenges and strengths presented by this lens (for example, it is part of resilience), and how it influences decision-making.

Erosion of culture and 'togetherness'

Hope Deferred (Sanga, 2024)

Tides swell and fears arise
Sharks of change appear
Without counsel hope fades
As do retracted political promises.

We live a life which calls us to hardship
Yet smile as a spring in bloom.
Our forefathers sleep
Yet are awakened by oceans around their tombs.
I am young, naïve
Yet with so much promise.

When will spoken words not just line the pockets
Of those outside with commas?
Our voice is sparse
Can anyone hear?

We hold fast to the book of certainties
This much is true
At least we have His ear
Coral rainforests plundered by our own people
To save what we have left
But drives our knees to the quicksand called feeble.

We look to our Elders for guidance
Though being at the mercy of changes
What was once impenetrable wisdom and strength
Is now a contemporary of our uncertainty.

Cultural change, leading to increased uncertainty, is pinpointed in the above poem, written from Ngongosila, Solomon Islands. A Kwakwaru elder living in Australia noted that amongst Solomon Islands seasonal employees in Australia, there is fragmentation of the sense of togetherness which they experienced in communal living in the Solomon Islands. He stated:

Development hem gud bat hem tekem kam laef stael blo oat-saed, hem osem climate chaenj wea hem spoim aelan blo iumi. [While development is good it has also brought with it things that have affected our values, in the same way that climate change has affected our island.] (elder male, Kwakwaru, Solomon Islands)

Loss of important cultural practices in the context of climate (im)mobility was raised in several other case studies. In Naga-mito Village, for example, Steven (2024) summarises:

The loss of indigenous building materials due to prolonged drought has resulted in the diminishing of traditional architectural building designs. As natural resources become scarce or unavailable due to environmental changes, modern alternatives are replacing traditional construction methods and materials. This not only diminishes the aesthetic appeal of traditional architecture but also erodes cultural knowledge associated with Indigenous building practices and contributes to a sense of loss.

Furthermore, the loss of traditional salt production and saltwater sources/lakes has significant implications for cultural practices. Traditional salt production and seaweed growth were integral to the livelihoods and cultural heritage of our community in the past. Due to population growth and expansion of food gardens, compounded with annual climate change impacts, large saltwater lakes/wells that grow seaweed and produce salt are lost. The decline in these traditional practices not only disrupts the economic potential of our inland saltwater system but also threatens the preservation of traditional knowledge and skills associated with salt production, which to some extent, reduces our unique cultural wealth and resilience.

Another example of loss of cultural practices, this time when moving within a country, is evident in Rorite and Ruta family in Tarawa (Kiribati). The concern was expressed that the coming-of-age ceremony for girls, an important cultural practice marking when a girl becomes a strong and resilient woman, cannot be practiced in the same way, as expressed in the following quote:

Ngkai aiakea te takataka are ena kannu te teinaine. Ai akea te benu are ena taobinoka iai. Tia ibiti kanan te teinaine ao nimana ao ana makuri n ana tai ni katebo. I bukin tera? I bukin are tia maing nako Tarawa ao akea abara ikai. [Today we have no dried coconut for the young girl to eat and no coconut strands to weave and make strings. Why? Because we have left our home to live on South Tarawa where we do not own lands.] (Taoaba, Maiana, Kiribati)

A further example is seen amongst Tuam islanders relocated to Yaga village (PNG), where the traditional 'haus boi' (men's house) are not so present in their place of relocation, as explained below:

Ol kain ol pasin olsem especially ol youngpla long ruuim ol bikman em wanpla. Narapla samting em long hausboi we Tuam nau hauboi i still i stap. Em I exist ol i wokim haus man na ol yangpla i save go aut slip. Long hia em planti i nogat haus boi. I nogat haus man long ol yangpla long go sidaun ol yet. Olsem na planti taim insait long haus i save gat tok. Planti ol yangpla i no save silip long we long ol mamapapa. Planti ol I save stap yet wataim ol papa na mama blong ol. [Some things we practice like respecting elders and having haus boi for young people (boys) like in Tuam is still existing but this is not so much in Yaga anymore. There are no house for young men to go and sit inside. That's why we have a lot of issues within families. Many of these young people (men) are still living under their parents' roof.] (J. L. adult male, Yaga Village, PNG)

Cultural practices which strengthen collective resilience are being eroded directly or indirectly, exacerbated by climate change, and degrees of (im)mobility. These experiences suggest that policy seeking to respond to climate (im)mobility should include a focus on maintaining valued cultural practices which contribute to collective resilience and wellbeing when staying in place.

Discussion

This multigenerational family stories study explored climate (im)mobility in the Pacific and provides rich insight into the lived experience of those most disproportionately impacted by climate change. Despite severe climate change impacts, Pacific communities demonstrate collective resilience in several ways. Pacific-indigenous worldviews encompass connection and belonging not only to land, but to past generations. This resilience from relational connection to past generations includes: responsibility to love and ‘care for’ ancestors who have passed on; gaining strength and purpose from stories of past generations’ resilience; and passing on genealogical knowledge to younger people. These varied generational connections fuel and define collective resilience in the present. Connection to past generations influences decisions to stay in place or to return, either temporarily or permanently, to ancestral places. Pacific-Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being involve holistic conceptualisations of wellbeing and resilience which span over generations and geographies, with integral connections between the present, the past and the future. Connection to past generations points to circularity in Pacific climate (im)mobilities, over time and space. Development policy and practice, therefore, needs to start from a holistic premise, which includes a critical and relationally mindful inclusion of ancestral wisdom and knowing. Such intangible strengths, not necessarily amenable to the type of measurement many development donors require as evidence, nonetheless hold inherent value for Pacific communities navigating futures where climate (im)mobility is a certainty.

Cultural conceptualisations of ‘working together’ underpin collective resilience in climate (im)mobility, providing a ‘safety net’ capable of distributing benefits within collectives. Such kinship, reciprocity and traditional values are important contributors to adaptive capacity and should be reflected in the planning of adaptation initiatives (Mercer et al., 2007; Lazrus, 2012). Labour mobility schemes, which are a form of climate (im)mobility, ought to consider family and kin group needs and the potential of ‘working together’, to enhance the overall benefits to be realised by Pacific peoples.

Practical adaptation is a dimension of collective resilience and wellbeing highlighted in our research, addressing water scarcity, food insecurity, and housing needs in remote as well as urban settings. This study has provided vivid examples of what Nunn et al. (2024) call for – insight into the everyday survival strategies employed in Pacific communities – which in combination with western science will enable future sustainability in the Pacific.

Spirituality and faith is another theme of collective resilience. Spirituality and faith, more than an individual phenomenon, is collective and communal. Around the Pacific, many villages, communities and households pause at a given time every day, when the literal or metaphoric ‘bell rings’, to gather as a collective for prayer and spiritual reflection. These times provide opportunities for collective communication on village and family/kin matters, and can include elders imparting wisdom, guidance and encouragement to younger generations. Although Christianity has been a tool of colonisation in the region and has subjugated many facets of Indigeneity,

Christian beliefs are embedded within everyday living in a majority of Pacific family and community settings, and there is an emergence of Pacific-Indigenous theologies and expressions of faith (Vaai, 2021; Vaka’uta, 2023). Faith-based organisations have been substantive health, education and humanitarian service providers across the Pacific. In Yaga village, for example, the Lutheran church provides shipping access between Umboi island and the PNG mainland, an avenue for extending trade and barter, which has long been a part of the collective resilience and wellbeing of the Tuam peoples. As argued elsewhere, ‘a better understanding of the science-spirituality nexus in the Pacific’ is needed to ‘improve the effectiveness and sustainability of adaptation responses to climate-driven environmental change’ (Luetz & Nunn, 2020, p. 293).

While strength and resilience are evident in these family and kin group stories, there is also concern about cultural erosion and threats to doing ‘in the spirit of togetherness’ given urbanisation and ‘development’ which de-centres and displaces Indigenous knowledges. In many communities, disrupted community cohesion has had cascading effects for social support networks, cultural connectedness, spirituality, and ethnic identity (Yates et al., 2021). Western development paradigms adopt individualist assumptions and contribute to the erosion of Indigenous systems and processes of resilience (Amponsah, 2024). Neo-liberalism pervading donor country public services ripples into international development initiatives prioritising economic factors and individual responsibility (Loginovic, 2024). Such approaches set up relations of ‘charity’ rather than reciprocity and sharing, and under-recognise the value Pacific partners bring to a relationship. In so doing, development initiatives perpetuate the complex links between coloniality, capitalism, modernity and patriarchy (Mignolo, 2018). Caution is needed in using the term resilience, because of its neo-colonial usage (Amponsah, 2024). It is possible to develop analyses which separate sites of ‘development’ in the Pacific from the global and historical context but, as Jarawura et al. (2024) argue, attributing (im)mobility to climate change alone is simplistic and fails to conceptualise inequalities created by past and present development policies emanating from non-Indigenous contexts. The lived experiences surfaced in this study give insight into Indigenous resilience as defined by those who at the forefront of climate (im)mobility.

This study nuances Pacific regional-level policies and frameworks such as the 2050 Strategy of the Blue Pacific Continent (PIF, 2022) and the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility. While such regional frameworks foster regional cooperation and guide national governments, our study demonstrates that national government support has not always reached rural and remote islands and communities within their borders despite emerging national climate policies (Thornton et al., 2021). Further, as argued by Burson et al. (2024), it is at the family and community level that climate (im)mobility is most substantially navigated. This study underscores the importance of cultural sustainability as a measure and mechanism of resilience and wellbeing in climate (im)mobility in the Pacific, as determined by the family and community, grassroots level. International and regional climate policy is effective when benefits are

realised at the grassroots, by rural and remote, albeit transnational, family and kin groups.

We agree with the notion of 'commoming' asserted by Sheller (2023), who argues the need to support 'a human and more-than-human commoning through difficult practices of relational ethics' (p. 443). Such relational ethics must be multi-directional and multilevel amongst key players including family and kin groups, villages and islands, provincial and national governments, international powers and humanitarian and faith-based groups. There are complex relationships amongst all these levels. 'Commoning' and 'relational ethics' must be realised in local level micro-interactions through to regional and global negotiations. Recognising the evolving nature of lived culture, cultural sustainability in the Pacific and commoning through relational ethics is imperative for future development policy and practice addressing climate (im)mobility.

Acknowledgements

The *Rising stories: investigating climate (im)mobility in the Pacific through multigenerational family stories* research was commissioned by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, funded by New Zealand's climate finance. The views expressed here are the authors' alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the New Zealand government.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributors

Tracie Mafile'o (PhD) is a Research Professor and Associate Dean (Research and Research Training) at Avondale University, Australia. She is also a Director at Mana Pacific Consultants Limited, a Pacific-led consultancy based in Aotearoa New Zealand and serving the broader Pacific region. Of Tongan (Te'ekiu) and Pakeha (white New Zealand) heritage, her research elevates Pacific-Indigenous perspectives and contributions in social work, social services and development.

Pelenise Alofa, of Banaba and Tuvalu heritage, lives in Kiribati where she is a climate activist and consultant. She founded the Kiribati Climate Action Network (KiriCAN), is associated with Pacific CAN, previously managed Live and Learn in Kiribati and works with several other non-governmental and local and regional organisations. Pelenise has a background in project management, communication, accounting, education and monitoring and evaluation.

Torote Kauongo is I-Kiribati and has been a project manager in the Climate Resilient Islands Program (2019-2021) for KiriCAN and Live and Learn. He has a background as a secondary teacher and holds a post-graduate science qualification. He has had previous research experience in ecosystems research and the impact of covid-19 on fisheries in Kiribati.

Lorna Saguba has a maternal connection to the Yaga village people of Siassi, Morobe Province, PNG. She has a background in education, enjoys creative writing, and uses it as a tool to bring awareness and inspire action. She supports teaching and learning of language at Pacific Adventist University, where she currently resides.

Hennah Steven (PhD) is Taki Ako Pacific Teaching & Learning lecturer at Te Whare Wananga o Waikato – The University of Waikato. She hails from the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea. Her research expertise includes Pacific indigenous entrepreneurship research, gender and development and climate change.

Aburi Filoa is an indigenous researcher from the Solomon Islands. She is a descendant of the Kwakwaru tribe from Gaita, Kwaio, Malaita Solomon Islands. Aburi's areas of expertise are in ethnographic research, indigenous theory, method and cultural interpretations. At present Aburi is a research and evaluation assistant consultant at Mana Pacific Consultants.

Fa'ari Sanga is the President of Haddon Institute, in Queensland, Australia. He has direct family links with Walade, Ngongosila and Kwai, Malaita communities, although he lives in Australia. Keith has been involved in youth development in sport development for change in the Solomon Islands – with interest in coach education, grassroots player development through partnerships with local business houses and youth players.

Tulano Toloa is from Atafu, Tokelau. He has experience in the Lapita Voyage research as a traditional navigator, and has undertaken translation work for Huri Translations for the Tokelau language. He previously worked in Tokelau government's planning and monitoring unit and volunteered at the UNESCO Pacific Office. Togia is a council member in Atafu.

Loha Isaako-Toloo is from Atafu, Tokelau, now resident in New Zealand and is a nurse educator at Whitireia New Zealand. She has held senior health leadership positions in Tokelau.

Sione Nailasikau Halatuituia (PhD), of Tonga (resident in New Zealand), is a consultant, leader and practitioner in Pacific development, with experience working across the region, including in renewable energy. He has particular expertise in climate and sustainability as well as Pacific land tenure systems and development.

Tomu Paneta Hauma, from Nanumaga, Tuvalu, is a Funafuti-based consultant specialising in climate and social development. A former Executive Director of the Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organisations, his work includes climate change, tourism policy, and water/energy projects.

ORCID

Tracie Mafile'o  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5969-9915>

Pelenise Alofa  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8225-2636>

Lorna Saguba  <http://orcid.org/0009-0000-6050-2457>

Hennah Steven  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6000-01152>

Tulano Toloa  <http://orcid.org/0009-0002-3048-9890>

Loha Isaako-Toloo  <http://orcid.org/0009-0001-1295-2725>

Tomu Paneta Hauma  <http://orcid.org/0009-0005-5933-785X>

References

- Albert, S., Grinham, A., Bronen, R., Tooler, N., Leon, J., Yee, D., Ash, J., & Boseto, D. (2018). Heading for the hills: Climate-driven community relocations in the Solomon Islands and Alaska provide insight for a 1.5 °C future. *Regional Environmental Change*, 18(8), 2261–2272. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10113-017-1256-8>
- Alofa, P., & Kauongo, T. U. (2024). Rotite and Ruta's family, Maiana Island, Republic of Kiribati. In T. Mafile'o (Ed.), *Rising stories: Investigating climate (im)mobility in the Pacific through multigenerational family stories (case studies)* (pp. 4–19). Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd.
- Amponsah, C. (2024). Neo-colonial subjectivities in resilience praxis and the urgency to think 'beyond inclusion'. <https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/105446>
- Baiteke, A. (2023). Exploring the sociocultural factors of obesity affecting Kiribati women living in Auckland New Zealand (Doctoral dissertation, University of Auckland).
- Bennett, J. A. (1987). *Wealth of the Solomons: A history of a Pacific archipelago, 1800-1978*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Bernasconi, C. (2025). Navigating the (Im)mobility-adaptation nexus in the context of climate and environmental change: A typological discussion. *Climate*, 13(1), 6. <https://doi.org/10.3390/cli13010006>
- Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., Davey, L., & Jenkinson, E. (2023). Doing reflexive thematic analysis. In S. Bager-Charleson & A.

- McBeath (Eds.), *Supporting research in counselling and psychotherapy: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research* (pp. 19–38). Springer International Publishing.
- Burson, B., Marsters, E., Bedford, R., & Morrison, S. (2024). Pacific peoples and climate-related (im) mobility: A synthesis report on scale, pattern and impact, now and in the future.
- Dutra, L. X., Haywood, M. D., Singh, S., Ferreira, M., Johnson, J. E., Veitayaki, J., Kininmonth, S., Morris, C. W., & Piovano, S. (2021). Synergies between local and climate-driven impacts on coral reefs in the Tropical Pacific: A review of issues and adaptation opportunities. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 164, 111922. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2020.111922>
- Elliott, C. (2012). *Poetic inquiry*. University of Pittsburgh.
- Ethnologue. (2025). What continents have the most languages? Languages of the World. Retrieved April 9, 2025, from <https://www.ethnologue.com/insights/continents-most-indigenous-languages/>
- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Farbotko, C. (2022). Anti-displacement mobilities and re-emplacements: Alternative climate mobilities in Funafala. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 48(14), 3380–3396. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2022.2066259>
- Farbotko, C., & McMichael, C. (2019). Voluntary immobility and existential security in a changing climate in the Pacific. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 60(2), 148–162. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apv.12231>
- Fasavalu, T. I., & Reynolds, M. (2019). Relational positionality and a learning disposition: Shifting the conversation. *International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, 18(2), 11–25.
- Filao, A. (2024). Kwakwaru tribe of East Malaita, Solomon Islands. In T. Mafile'o (Ed.), *Rising stories: Investigating climate (im)mobility in the Pacific through multigenerational family stories (case studies)* (pp. 72–87). Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd.
- Finau, S. A. (1992). Changing responsibilities in parenting the Pacific child. In *National Conference on the Marshallese Child*. <http://pimrisregional.library.usp.ac.fj/gsd/collect/direct/index/assoc/D770057.dir/doc.pdf>
- Fitzpatrick, E. F. M., Martiniuk, A. L. C., D'Antoine, H., Oscar, J., Carter, M., & Elliott, E. J. (2016). Seeking consent for research with indigenous communities: a systematic review. *BMC Medical Ethics*, 17(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12910-016-0139-8>
- Gershon, I. (2007). Viewing diasporas from the Pacific: What Pacific ethnographies offer Pacific diaspora studies. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 19(2), 474–502. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cp.2007.0050>
- GIDA (Global Indigenous Data Alliance). (2022). CARE principles for indigenous data governance. Global Indigenous Data Alliance. <https://www.gida-global.org/care>
- Greenwood, M., Kendrick, T., Davies, H., & Gill, F. J. (2017). Hearing voices: Comparing two methods for analysis of focus group data. *Applied Nursing Research*, 35, 90–93. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apnr.2017.02.024>
- Hau'ofa, E. (2008). *We are the ocean: Selected works*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Heard, E. (2022). Ethical challenges in participatory action research: Experiences and insights from an arts-based study in the Pacific. *Qualitative Research*, 23(4), 1112–1132. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687941211072797>
- Jarawura, F. X., Kofi Teye, J., Kleist, N., Salloum Lindegaard, L., & Quayle, D. (2024, March 13). 'These days, things have changed': Historicizing current dynamics of climate-related migration in the savannah zone of Ghana. *Climate and Development*, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2024.2321168>
- Lazrus, H. (2012). Sea change: Island communities and climate change. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 41(1), 285–301. <https://doi.org/10.1146/anthro.2012.41.issue-1>
- Loginovic, J. (2024). *Neoliberalism as subjectivity and individualisation discourse in global development: the case of the world bank* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Manchester]. https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/360317319/FULL_TEXT.PDF
- Luetz, J. M., & Nunn, P. D. (2020). Climate change adaptation in the Pacific islands: A review of faith-engaged approaches and opportunities. In W. Leal Filho (Ed.), *Managing climate change adaptation in the Pacific region* (pp. 293–311). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-40552-6_15
- Mafile'o, T. (2024). *Rising stories: Investigating climate (im)mobility in the Pacific through multigenerational family stories [case studies]*. Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd.
- Mafile'o, T., Alofa, P., Kauongo, T. U., Saguba, L., Steven, H., Filao, A., Sanga, F., Toloa, T., Halatuituia, S. N., & Hauma, T. P. (2024). *Rising stories: Investigating climate (im)mobility in the Pacific through multigenerational family stories (synthesis report)*. Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd.
- Mafile'o, T., Kokinai, C. W., & Redman-MacLaren, M. (2022). We story: Decoloniality in practice and theory. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 22(6), 547–561. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15327086221105666>
- Mafile'o, T., Vaka, S., Leau, K., Satele, P., & Alefaio-Tugia, S. (2024). Decolonising qualitative analysis: Collectively weaving understanding using talanoa and fa'aletui Pacific-indigenous research methods. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 23, 16094069241272241. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069241272241>
- Mbah, M. F., & Bailey, M. (2022). Decolonisation of research methodologies for sustainable development in indigenous settings. In M. F. Mbah, W. Leal Filho, & S. Ajaps (Eds.), *Indigenous methodologies, research and practices for sustainable development* (pp. 21–48). Springer International Publishing.
- McCulliss, D. (2013). Poetic inquiry and multidisciplinary qualitative research. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 26(2), 83–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08893675.2013.794536>
- Meo-Sewabu, L. (2014). Cultural discernment as an ethics framework: An indigenous Fijian approach. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 55(3), 345–354. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apv.12059>
- Mercer, J., Domineyhowes, D., Kelman, I., & Lloyd, K. (2007). The potential for combining indigenous and western knowledge in reducing vulnerability to environmental hazards in small island developing states. *Environmental Hazards*, 7(4), 245–256. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envhaz.2006.11.001>
- Mignolo, W. D. (2018). Decoloniality and phenomenology: The geopolitics of knowing and epistemic/ontological colonial differences. *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, 32(3), 360–387. <https://doi.org/10.5325/jspecphil.32.3.0360>
- Newport, C. (2019). *Vaka Moana as policy space: Navigating the Cook Islands case of climate change mobility* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Auckland]. The University of Auckland. <https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/handle/2292/45207>
- Nunn, P. D., Kumar, R., Barrowman, H. M., Chambers, L., Fifita, L., Gege, D., Gomes, C., McGree, S., Rarai, A., Cheer, K., Esau, D., Fa'anunu, 'O, Fong, T., Fong-Lomavatu, M., Geraghty, P., Heorake, T., Kekeubata, E., Korovulavula, I., Kubunavanua, E., ... Waiwai, M. (2024). Traditional knowledge for climate resilience in the Pacific islands. *WIREs Climate Change*, 15, e882. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.882>
- Nunn, P. D., Kumar, L., Eliot, I., & McLean, R. F. (2016). Classifying Pacific islands. *Geoscience Letters*, 3(1), 693. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40562-016-0041-8>
- PIF (Pacific Islands Forum). (2022). 2050 strategy for the blue Pacific continent. Pacific Islands Forum.
- PIF. (2023). Pacific regional framework on climate mobility. Retrieved April 15, 2025, from <https://forumsec.org/publications/pacific-regional-framework-climate-mobility>
- Prendergast, M. (2009). "Poem is What?" poetic inquiry in qualitative social science research. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 1(4), 541–568. <https://doi.org/10.1525/irqr.2009.1.4.541>
- Redman-MacLaren, M. (2020). Pacific women, HIV, and Me: A positioned critical poetic inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 27(6), 700–705. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800420934141>
- Redman-MacLaren, M., Mafile'o, T., Tommbe, R., & MacLaren, D. (2019). Meeting in the middle: Using lingua franca in cross-language qualitative health research in Papua New Guinea. *International*

- Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 18, 1609406919883459. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406919883459>
- Saguba, L. (2024). Resettlement of Patnav clan families in Yaga Village on Umboi Island, Siassi, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea. In T. Mafile'o (Ed.), *Rising stories: Investigating climate (im)mobility in the Pacific through multigenerational family stories (case studies)* (pp. 54–71). Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd.
- Sanga, K. (2020). Bringing research back home: exploring Indigenous Melanesian tok stori as ontology. *An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 17(4), 532–542.
- Sanga, F. (2024). Gwailao tribe of Ngongosila Island, East Malaita, Solomon Islands. In T. Mafile'o (Ed.), *Rising stories: Investigating climate (im)mobility in the Pacific through multigenerational family stories (case studies)* (pp. 88–97). Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd.
- Sanga, K., Maebuta, J., Johansson-Fua, S. U., & Reynolds, M. (2020). Re-thinking contextualisation in Solomon Islands school leadership professional learning and development. *Pacific Dynamics: Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 4(1), 17–29. <https://doi.org/10.18124/gyp6-bc39>
- Sanga, K., & Reynolds, M. (2021). Bringing research back home : exploring Indigenous Melanesian tok stori as ontology. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 17(4), 532–542. <https://doi.org/10.1177/11771801211058342>
- Schütz, T. (2022). Navigating health practices for I-Kiribati immigrants in New Zealand (Doctoral dissertation, Open Access Te Herenga Waka-Victoria University of Wellington).
- Sheller, M. (2023). Mobility justice after climate coloniality: Mobile commoning as a relational ethics of care. *Australian Geographer*, 54(4), 433–447. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00049182.2023.2178247>
- Steven, H. (2024). Nagamito people of Korofeigu, Unggai Bena District, Eastern Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea. In T. Mafile'o (Ed.), *Rising stories: Investigating climate (im)mobility in the Pacific through multigenerational family stories (case studies)* (pp. 32–53). Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd.
- Stojanov, R., Rosengaertner, S., de Sherbinin, A., & Nawrotzki, R. (2021). Climate mobility and development cooperation. *Population and Environment*, 43(2), 209–231. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11111-021-00387-5>
- Tabe, T. (2020). Colonial relocation and implications for future climate change induced migration and displacement. *Toda Peace Institute*, 79, 1–20.
- Taylor, D. M., & Middleby, S. (2023). Aid is not development: The true character of Pacific aid. *Development Policy Review*, 41(Suppl. 2), e12745. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12745>
- Tecun, A., Hafoka, I., 'Ulu'ave, L., & 'Ulu'ave-Hafoka, M. (2018). Talanoa: Tongan epistemology and Indigenous research method. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*, 14(2), 156–163. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180118767436>
- Thornton, F., James, S., Dun, O., Farbotko, C., McNamara, K., McMichael, C., Coelho, S., Kim, R. M., Ngo, L., Westbury, T., & Namoumou, F. (2021). *Policy developments and options to address human mobility in the context of climate risk in the Pacific Islands region*. Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security: Policy Brief Series. IOM UN Migration. PUB2021/085/R.
- Tolosa, T., & Tolosa, L. (2024). Kāiga Atafu, Tokelau. In T. Mafile'o (Ed.), *Rising stories: Investigating climate (im)mobility in the Pacific through multigenerational family stories (case studies)* (pp. 98–111). Mana Pacific Consultants Ltd.
- Vaai, U. L. (2021). From Atutasi to Atulasi: Relational theologizing and why pacific islanders think and theologize differently. In J. Havea (Ed.), *Theologies from the Pacific. Postcolonialism and religions*, (pp. 235–249). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-74365-9_17
- Vaiolenti, T. M. (2006). Talanoa research methodology: A developing position on pacific research. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 12(1), 21–34. <https://doi.org/10.15663/wje.v12i1>
- Vaka'uta, N. (2023). New directions for Moana Hermeneutics1. *Restoring Identities: The Contextualizing Story of Christianity in Oceania*, 6, 161.
- Williamson, B., Provost, S., & Price, C. (2022). Operationalising indigenous data sovereignty in environmental research and governance. *Environment and Planning F*, 2(1–2), 281–304. (Original work published 2023). <https://doi.org/10.1177/26349825221125496>
- Yates, O. E. T., Groot, S., Manuela, S., & Neef, A. (2023). 'There's so much more to that sinking island!'—Restorying migration from Kiribati and Tuvalu to Aotearoa New Zealand. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 51(3), 924–944. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.v51.3>
- Yates, O. E. T., Manuela, S., Neef, A., & Groot, S. (2021). Reshaping ties to land: A systematic review of the psychosocial and cultural impacts of Pacific climate-related mobility. *Climate and Development*, 14(3), 250–267. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2021.1911775>
- Yates, O. E. T., Manuela, S., Neef, A., & Groot, S. (2022). Attitudes towards climate migrants in Aotearoa New Zealand: The roles of climate change beliefs and immigration attitudes. *Regional Environmental Change*, 22(3), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10113-022-01942-y>
- Yee, M., Piggott-McKellar, A., McMichael, C., & McNamara, K. E. (2025). Framing locally led adaptation in a planned relocation in Fiji. *Geoforum*, 159, 104196. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2024.104196>