Pacific Contextual Paper

Regional Dialogue on Sustainable Development and
the Post-2015 Development Agenda
Convened by Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) &
Asia Pacific Gender and Macroeconomic Network (APGEM) in collaboration with
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Introduction

This regional dialogue, organized by DAWN and APGEN to deliberate on the Post 2015 Development Agenda with reference to *The Future Asia Pacific Women Want*, is a timely one. The earlier we input into regional and global Post-2015 processes, the better our chances will be of influencing the framing of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We must capitalize on the significant agreement secured at the Rio +20 Conference that the post-2015 development agenda be decided collectively, through a widely-consultative process, and be based on *sustainable* development goals (SDGs) with targets that both developing and developed states must meet. SGDs need to be informed by human rights norms, and should include targets for ratifying human rights treaties, meeting HR obligations and complying with environmental and labour standards.

This paper provides a Pacific Context for conceptualizing the Post-2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals from the vantage point of Pacific women. It looks critically at the MDGs and the current policy agendas of Pacific Island states, discusses economic and social realities in the region, and incorporates some of the concerns expressed by Pacific NGOs working for economic and gender justice. It addresses most of the nine themes around which global conversations on the new development framework are being organized by UN Women and UNICEF, namely, inequalities, population, health, education, growth and employment, conflict and fragility, governance, environmental sustainability, and food security and nutrition.

Pacific leaders at the 43rd Pacific Islands Forum, held in late August 2012 in the Cook Islands, directed the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) to work closely with governments, UN agencies and regional organizations to develop a Pacific Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda/Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Significantly, the leaders also adopted the Pacific Gender Equality Declaration, committing themselves to implementing

specific national policy actions to progress gender equality, including through gender responsive budgeting, CEDAW-compliant legislative and policy reforms, temporary special measures to increase women's participation in government and the private sector, increased employment under better conditions, and expanded entrepreneurship opportunities. Australia's strategic announcement at the same meeting of a new 10 year grant of AUD320m for the Pacific Gender Equality Initiative, in the presence of US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, and UN Women's head, Michelle Bachelet, comes at a time of heightened concern within the region over both the development path being taken by Pacific Island states, under the guiding hand of Australia and other donors, and the geo-political implications for Pacific states of the current China/US struggle for dominance in the Asia Pacific region.

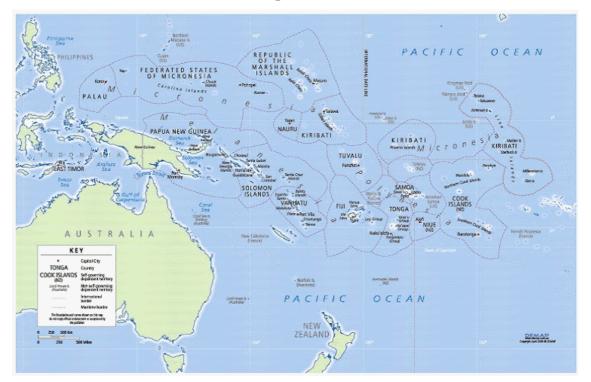*MDG Performance in Pacific Island States*

The Pacific's progress in meeting the MDGs is admitted to be 'slow and uneven'[1] with distinct variations in performance across the 3 sub-regions: *Micronesia* is not on track for any of the goals and off track for the goal of reducing poverty; *Melanesia* is off track on all of the goals, but on track in meeting MDG 4 – reducing child mortality - *if PNG is excluded. Polynesia* is performing best, on track to achieve four of the goals (achieving universal primary education, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, and ensuring environmental sustainability). The Pacific's overall MDG rating is said to be negatively affected by Papua New Guinea's 'off-track' performance on all goals.[2]

Yet, even for goals on which some PICs appear to be on track, positive indicators are questionable due to the absence (or paucity) of data, and disagreements over the existence, nature and extent of poverty, the quality of primary education, and the significance of gender parity in education given women's continuing under-representation in national decision-making and the prevailing culture of gender-based violence. The region's inclusion of a target on Non-Communicable Diseases, which have reached epidemic levels in some states, posing a major public health and development crisis, underscores the failure of the MDGs to address country or region-specific development challenges. With twice as many women than men recorded as diabetic in Fiji, prevalence of diabetes should have been included as a gender-significant MDG indicator for Fiji under Goal 6, as suggested by ADB (2006:xiii).

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[1] Sato Kiliman (2012) Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development Goals and Post 2015, High Level Meeting, PIF Leaders and UN Secretary General, September 2012, NY.
[2] *2012 Pacific Regional MDGs Tracking Report*, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva

Map of the Pacific

Other limitations of the MDG project in the Pacific region were recently highlighted at a regional UNDP meeting, including the framework of inappropriate economic policies under which they are being pursued, social and environmental policy deficiencies, inadequate governance and weak public service capacity, political instability and conflict, and the form of aid and aid administration[3]. Economic and public sector reforms promoted by international and regional financial institutions and donors over the last two decade were said to have reduced state revenue by as much as 40% for some PICs and weakened state capacity for both social provisioning and infrastructure development. The emphasis on export production or trade-led growth had both encouraged socially and environmentally destructive extractive industries (mining, logging and fishing) and caused agriculture to be neglected, particularly subsistence agriculture which supports 75% of the region's population (ibid), and is primarily undertaken by women.

There is no doubt that the social costs of following the growth model of development are disproportionately borne by women and girls. Extractive industries have not only been environmentally destructive, they have also widened gender disparities in income, encouraged

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[3] Naidu, V (2012) "Thoughts on Pacific Post-2015 Development Framework: what future do Oceanians want?"9pp.

transactional sex with all its associated health risks, bred corruption and social conflict and encouraged the enactment of laws designed to protect foreign investors at the expense of local landowners and their communities.[4] The irony of mineral-rich Papua New Guinea performing worst in achieving what are minimalist development goals underscores the fallacy of an automatic link between resource-based economic growth and improved development outcomes.

The remainder of this paper highlights issues of particular relevance and concern to the Post 2015 Development Agenda, under the 4 broad themes of environmental sustainability, peace and security, inclusive social development, and inclusive economic development.

A.   *Environmental Sustainability*

Environmental sustainability will be key to realizing sustainable development goals in this region. Nowhere are the impacts of unsustainable production and consumption more evident than in small island states, which face inundation from climate-induced sea level rise to the point of completely 'disappearing'. The fact that small island states in the Pacific are custodians of one third of the largest Ocean in the world and, through their 200 mile exclusive economic zones, 'own' untapped seabed resources within their maritime boundaries, is fraught with challenges for Pacific states and peoples. Long disadvantaged by smallness, remoteness, limited natural resources and vulnerability to natural disasters, PICs are now positioning themselves to capitalize on the rich marine resources they have long had, but have not fully controlled before now, and to secure for themselves fair shares of the expected wealth that will come from exploiting seabed minerals.

Sustainable Use of Oceans

Pacific leaders recognize that the Ocean underpins their economy and sustains millions of their people, and that they therefore have a leading role to play in 'management of the Pacific Ocean'. But they also have aspirations to 'maximize sustainable economic returns from [their] ocean resources, including fisheries and seabed minerals'. The theme for the 2012 Pacific Islands leaders Forum - "Large Oceans Island States – the Pacific Challenge" – captured well the challenge of 'striking a balance between sustaining the development of our marine resources with the interests of preservation and conservation'.

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[4] For instance, PNG government's amendment of the Environment Act in 2010, protected investors in resource projects from all litigation, whether over the destruction of the environment, labour abuse or landowner exploitation. See Rowan Callick (2010) 'PNG law to shield resource giants from litigation' in *The Australian,* June 02, 2010.

The Pacific Islands Ocean Policy (PIROP) and related Framework for Integrated Strategic Action (PIROP-ISA), approved by leaders in 2002 and 2005 to 'ensure the sustainable use of Pacific oceans and its resources by Pacific peoples and external partners', the more recently adopted Pacific Oceanscape Framework[5] 'to foster stewardship [at all levels] to ensure in perpetuity the health and wellbeing of our oceans and ourselves', and Pacific leaders' enunciations of a "blue economy" approach to development in regional preparatory documents for Rio +20,[6] all reflect an avowed commitment to protecting the ocean. A 2009 study by UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre suggested that in comparison to other regions of the world the Pacific is "relatively healthy" and that "opportunities still exist to be pro-active and take actions that will ensure that the Pacific Islands Ocean Region continues to support the lives of its peoples as well as the wider global community". The optimistic prognosis by UNEP was that "the well-being [of the Pacific Ocean] and the sustainable use of its resources will guarantee that Pacific peoples can "live (the) free and worthwhile lives" that their Leaders [en]visioned in their Pacific Plan1 of 2005, while making sure that their deeds and actions result in greater global good with lasting effect".[7]

The prospects for both guaranteeing free and worthwhile lives for present generations of Pacific Islanders and safe-guarding the wellbeing of the Pacific Ocean for the global good and for posterity are, however, being placed at considerable risk by overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution, climate change, and most worryingly, the planned commencement of seabed mining.

Sustainable Fisheries

Pacific people primarily depend on the ocean to supply their protein needs. Small-scale commercial fishermen supply domestic markets with fish, while more regular subsistence

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[5] See Christelle Pratt and Hugh Govan (2010) *Our Sea of Islands, Our Livelihoods, Our Oceania - Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape: a catalyst for implementation of ocean policy.* www.sprep.org/att/publication/000937_684.pdf
See also See also *Overview of an Ocean Policy for the Pacific Islands*, June 2001 and *Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy*, 25 February 2004, 8pp
[6] *The "Blue Economy": A Pacific Small Island Developing States Perspective*, Rio+20 Pacific Preparatory Meeting Apia, Samoa, 21-22 July 2011. See also ESCAP (2012) *Green Economy in a Blue World – Pacific Perspectives* 2012, UNESCAP Pacific Office, Suva, Fiji.
[7] The study, by Corrigan (2009) is cited in Christelle Pratt and Hugh Govan (2010) *Our Sea of Islands, Our Livelihoods, Our Oceania - Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape: a catalyst for implementation of ocean policy.* www.sprep.org/att/publication/000937_684.pdf

fishing[8] in inshore areas puts protein foods on the tables of rural families, as well as supplying roadside markets in urban areas. Much of the subsistence fishing and shell-fishing is undertaken by women, usually without modern gear, and mostly without either recognition or governmental support. In Fiji, the sustainability of women's fisheries, and therefore of household food security, is threatened by the impacts on inshore marine resources of destructive fishing methods, including the use of nets (ADB 2006:xiii).

The Pacific Ocean's rich tuna resources mostly supply global food markets, meeting food needs or preferences in other regions of the world. For decades PICs have licensed Distant Water Fishing Nations (DWFNs) to fish tuna in their territorial waters, earning merely 4 to 6 per cent of the USD 3 billion-tuna fishery in license fees.[9] The principle beneficiaries of this generous arrangement have been fisheries industries in Asia and the US, and more recently the EU, principally Spain. A number of canneries in the region (PNG, Solomon Islands, Fiji and American Samoa) supply local and regional markets. More than 14,000 Pacific Islanders are employed in fish processing plants in the region, including American Samoa and French Polynesia.[10] The predominantly female workforce in canneries typically earns poor wages and work in unregulated conditions.

Since January 2010, PNA states,[11] in whose territorial waters the tuna are primarily found, struck out on their own to free themselves from 'the stranglehold that donors had over regional fisheries management agencies'.[12] both better protect their tuna resource and maximize their earnings from the resource by setting new rules and limits (e.g. via the Vessel Day Scheme), introducing measures like closing fish aggregation devices (FADs) and revising other contract terms with DWFNs. No longer content to just rent their EEZ and receive license fees, they are seeking equity arrangements. Several PNA states have also closed off their waters to DWFN vessels to reduce fishing effort in their territorial waters. PNA states are also calling on states whose fishing companies have been most involved in plundering big eye tuna (i.e. US and Japan)

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[8] It is estimated that 10 to 20 times more people engage in subsistence fishing than commercial fishing in the Pacific. See Henrike Seidel and Padma Lal (2010) *Economic Value of the Pacific Ocean to the Pacific Island Countries and Territories,* Gland, Switzerland, IUCN, 74pp (Seidel and Lal 2010).

[9] Slatter, Claire (1994) 'For food or foreign exchange? Regional interests versus global imperatives in Pacific fisheries development', in 'Atu Emberson-Bain (ed) *Sustainable development or Malignant Growth? Perspectives of Pacific Island Women,* Marama Publications, Suva.

[10] Gillett (2008) cited in Seidel and Lal (2010)131-148

[11] The PNA (Parties to the Nauru Agreement) states are Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau, Tuvalu, Nauru.

[12] Aqorau, Transform (n.d.) Impact of PNA Measures on the Global Tuna Industry: Shape up or ship out!, http://www.pacifical.com/transform_aqorau.pdf

to assume a large share of the costs of conserving this resource. These radical strategies are in line with a recently voiced recommendation to developing countries by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier de Schutter, to tighten rules for access to their waters by rapidly growing industrial fishing fleets from China, Russia, the European Union, the United States and Japan, out of concern that aggressive and heavily subsidized industrial fishing by foreign fleets is jeopardizing food security in developing nations.[13]

Meanwhile, controversial plans to establish a dozen or so canneries in Madang and Lae in Papua New Guinea to process most of the tuna captured in Pacific waters for export, to maximize returns to the region from the tuna resource are being fiercely resisted by landowners and NGOs, rightly concerned about environmental and social costs and the sovereignty implications of a controversial USD200 million loan from China's Exim Bank to underwrite a proposed Pacific Marine Industrial Zone in Madang. Despite the supposed benefits of new (low paid) factory jobs, the impacts on women and their families/communities of the development of multiple canneries in PNG will likely be disastrous. In October 2012, in a case brought by landowners, the Madang Court ordered all progress on the PMIZ project to cease until the court had determined the legality of the proposed development. [14]

Reducing the capacity of industrial fishing fleets and fishing effort are vital to sustaining the Pacific's tuna fishery and protecting food security in the region. Sustainable fisheries goals and targets should be set for both developed and developing states to meet in the Post 2015 Development Agenda. Goals and targets for developing and supporting local small-scale fisheries and women's subsistence fisheries should be given high priority in the Post 2015 Development Agenda. Targets and indicators for meeting environmental and labour standards within industrial fisheries should also be included.

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[13] Olivier de Schutter, the U.N. special rapporteur on the right to food and the report's author, told Reuters that 'ocean-grabbing was taking place', explaining it's like land-grabbing, just less discussed and less visible. "UN Report: Most Powerful Nations Are "Ocean Grabbing" - Emerging Nations Should Tighten Access Rules On Tuna November 1, 2012, http://pna.atuna.com/ViewArticle.asp?ID=12015 See also Olivier de Schutter (2012) "Fisheries and the Right to Food", Executive Summary, October 2012, http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/executivesummary_october2012_ii_en_1.pdf

[14] Lawyers for the landowners will argue that the contract undermines PNG's sovereignty by requiring that in the event of any dispute, the laws of China will apply and the dispute will be resolved in the courts in China. See Andrew Pascoe, Courts put PMIZ on hold indefinitely October 22nd 2012 http://actnowpng.org/content/courts-put-pmiz-hold-indefinitely

Climate Change

Climate change poses the most serious threat to the livelihoods, ways of life and very existence of Pacific Island states and peoples. The effects of climate change, particularly rising sea levels which are eroding and inundating land, and ocean acidification, which threatens marine eco-systems and the survival of marine life, are of major concern to all PICs. Climate change also poses health risks for maritime and Pacific Islands states including through a rise in mosquito-borne diseases like malaria and dengue fever.[15]

For low lying states which are in the frontline in facing the devastating impacts of global climate change, adaptation strategies are necessary short-term measures but the writing is on the wall. They must plan for the physical relocation of their people in the not too distant future.[16]Climate-induced migration of whole populations raises questions about sovereignty over the territorial waters of these states. Meanwhile, PICs face difficulties of accessing climate change adaption funds, and are wary of climate change adaptation initiatives that could unjustly burden them with climate debt.

Given the global threat posed by climate change, and the failure of the Kyoto Protocol to effectively reduce carbon emissions, the Post 2015 Development Agenda should incorporate a goal and targets for both reducing greenhouse gases and meeting the costs of climate change. Sustainable Development Goals must move beyond carbon credit trading schemes like REDD and REDD +, which enable polluters to buy their way out of reducing their carbon emissions and transfer environmental responsibility from industrialized states and wealthy corporations to developing states and poor villagers.

Seabed Mining

In July 2011, Nauru and Tonga obtained approval from the International Seabed Authority (ISA) to commence seabed mineral exploration, and the PNG government this year granted a controversial 20-year license to Canadian mining company Nautilus Minerals Inc., to commence the world's first commercial sea-bed mining operation beneath the Bismarck Sea.[17] Nautilus

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[15] Potter, Sarah (2008) *The Sting of Climate Change Malaria and Dengue Fever in Maritime Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands*, Lowy Institute Policy Brief http://www.lowyinstitute.org/PublicationPop.asp?pid=926

[16] Kiribati President Anote Tong, this year negotiated with the Fiji Government to buy up to 5,000 acres of freehold land in Fiji, for the resettlement of IKiribati. people. The Tuvalu Government is also considering relocation plans, exploring possibilities Australia and New Zealand.

[17] Nautilus recently put its plans to commence mining in the Bismarck Sea on hold following a dispute with the PNG government over the contract and mounting public concern over the *Solwara 1* mining plans. http://www.miningweekly.com/article/nautilus-terminates-equipment-build-for-png-project-shares-plunge-2012-11-13

reportedly has some 524,000 sq. kms under license or pending licenses in PNG, Tonga, New Zealand and Fiji.[18] According to Greenpeace International, seabed mining can 'destroy vital, delicate eco-systems' and is 'an emerging threat to the world's oceans' (Steve Smith, GI). Far from being a boon, seabed mining may prove to be the ultimate 'resource curse' for PICs.

The Nautilus license, which was being challenged by a constitutional reference in the PNG courts, exposes the moral hazard of weak governance in PICs. But it is not simply a case of individual PIC governments being lured by the prospects of newfound mineral wealth into licensing corporations to mine the ocean floors within their EEZs, without regard to long term environmental and social damage within and beyond national maritime boundaries. All 15 Pacific-ACP States, working as a group with the EU under the SPC-EU EDF10 Deep Sea Minerals Project, and led by the Applied Geoscience and Technology Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), have developed a Regional Legislative and Regulatory Framework (RLRF) for Deep Sea Minerals Exploration and Exploitation in keen 'anticipation of the potential economic opportunity' presented by the 'global increase in interest in deep sea minerals.'[19] Seabed mining is thus seen as an exciting new frontier in mineral prospecting, which if properly regulated/managed, promises a bounty of hitherto untapped wealth for PICs. Despite claims that the Pacific RLRF, like existing regulatory arrangements in place at the ISA, are underpinned by the precautionary principle inscribed in Agenda 21, SOPAC[20]'s Director (who also chairs the Legal and Technical Commission of ISA) perverted the meaning of the precautionary principle at Rio+20 to suggest permissive intent in the absence of conclusive scientific agreement on the likelihood of resulting harm.

Given the importance of the Pacific Ocean to present and future generations of Pacific peoples and humanity at large, the Post-2015 Development Agenda should support implementation of the worthy objectives of the Pacific Oceanscape Framework, which aims to create 'the largest marine protected area on earth', by laying down sustainable development goals and targets for its realization by all states and non-state parties involved, including Pacific Island states which are themselves, contradictorily undermining the framework. The conflicting policy orientations of

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[18] Kenneth, Gorethy (2912) Controversial Nautilus Deepsea Mining Project Approved in PNG, http://pidy.eastwestcentre.org/pireport/2012/August/08-09-01.htm

[19]   South Pacific Community (2012) Pacific-ACP States Regional Legislative and Regulatory Framework for Deep Sea Minerals Exploration and Exploitation, Prepared under the SPC-EU EDF10 Deep Sea Minerals Project, July 2012. See also Chair's Summary, "High Level Briefing on the Status of Deep Sea Minerals in the Pacific Islands Region and Planning for a Regionally Integrated Way Forward", SPC-EU EDF 10 Deep Sea Minerals Project Inaugural Meeting, 6-8 June 2011, Nadi, Fiji.

[20] SOPAC is the Applied Geoscience and Technology Division of the South Pacific Community.

Pacific Island states, acting alone and/or through different regional governing or technical bodies, highlights a worrying dissonance between economic and environmental sustainability agendas. Linking nationally established Marine Protected Areas for more extensive coverage and better management will provide little protection from the destructive impacts of seabed mining or from other dangerous pollutants that find their way into the Pacific Ocean, As a participant from Rapa Nui said at DAWN's Pacific GEEJ meeting in Fiji in October 2012, 'there is no firewall in the Pacific Ocean''- Ocean systems involve ocean currents, making it impossible to contain the environmental impacts of high risk industrial mining of seabeds to particular areas, and keep other areas intact.

B.   Peace and Security

Living in peace and security anywhere can only be guaranteed by the proper and constitutional functioning of democratic government. This includes regular free and fair elections, fair and equitable representation, strong accountability mechanisms, effective law enforcement, an independent judiciary and freedom to litigate, a free media, strong citizens' organisations and most important of all, respect for and protection of human rights including, crucially, economic rights. Growing economic inequality is a major social justice concern, as well as a threat to political security as it breeds discontent and encourages political extremism.

PICs have experienced political instability, military coups, open inter-ethnic conflict, a resource war in Bougainville, and intermittent tribal fighting in the highlands of PNG. The security forces do not have a monopoly on arms in PNG, where self-defense is lawful, large numbers of licensed handguns are in private hands (60,000 in 2004), and 'a flourishing trade in illicit weapons' (most from poorly managed police and military armories) is reported to exist (Capie 2011:44).[21] Women and girls are reportedly increasingly targeted in tribal fighting In Eastern Highlands in payback killings, abductions and rape (ibid:48).

Democracy has had a chequered history in PICs, with frequent changes of government between elections through votes of no confidence in Melanesian states, four military coups in Fiji (and a discourse on democracy as a 'foreign flower'); periodic allegations of electoral fraud, and virtual one-party rule in the last 30 years in Samoa. Several Pacific states have special institutional arrangements for the representation of non-elected customary leaders or chiefs in national

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[21] Capie, D. (2011)' Small arms, violence and gender in Papua New Guinea: Towards a research agenda', *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 52: 42–55.

government. Fiji remains governed by a regime that came to power in a military coup in 2006, although a constitutional review is currently being concluded and national elections under a new constitution are scheduled for 2014. The new Constitution is expected to include provisions to minimize the risks of future military interventions but a major challenge is reducing the size of the Fiji military, whose growth, ironically, is largely a result of Fiji's 35-year involvement in UN peacekeeping missions abroad.

The effects of political instability and conflict are long-lasting. The economic disruption it causes affects livelihoods, health and education, and seriously sets back national development, diverting scarce resources to resolving disputes and conflicts (Naidu 2012). The cycle of military coups in Fiji has lost the country experienced manpower over the last 25 years, including professionals (doctors, engineers, scientists, lawyers, teachers, nurses), technical workers and tradesmen, and experienced administrators. Weak governance capacity is a problem in most PICs.

Much work is needed to strengthen public understanding of democratic government, constitutionalism and due process, and of citizenship, rights and responsibilities. What work is currently being done is undertaken by NGOs. Civil society capacity in conflict prevention and conflict resolution and peace-building exists but remains limited, and beyond the work focused on UNSCR 1325, is insufficiently funded.

With stepped up investments in extractive industries, landowner and community struggles against states in defense of land rights will likely increase. Thus far these have taken the form of public demonstrations and class action or public interest lawsuits in PNG. Strengthening legal capacity to defend public interests is a priority.

Beyond political conflict, violence at the community level and within families, and especially sexual violence including rape and incest, is prevalent. Family abuse of sexual minorities, of people with disabilities, and of the elderly is common but insufficiently reported. An AusAID study of violence against women in Melanesia and East Timor recorded violence against women as 'severe' and 'pervasive' and as 'constraining development'.[22] In all countries studied except Fiji, 'bride price' (and the idea of 'owning' wives) was reported as the main factor behind spousal abuse. Women's subjection to violence and cruelty at the hands of their male kin and husbands is

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[22] AusAID (2008) *Violence against Women in Melanesia and East Timor: building on global and regional promising approaches* http://www.ode.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pdf/vaw_cs_full_report.pdf

a fundamental violation of the right to security. Most PICs have ratified both CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and have strong organisations actively working to support women victims of gender-based violence and to change laws and community attitudes through human rights education and training programmes for law enforcement agents, but the problem remains pervasive and has its roots in entrenched gender systems in which women are ruled by men.

The Pacific region has the dubious distinction of having the lowest levels of women in Parliament – 2.5% in 2008.[23] A study commissioned by the PIFS in 2006[24] proposed the introduction of Temporary Special Measures (TSM) – or quotas – for women. A joint PIFS/ UNDP Pacific Centre initiative, advocated the use of TSMs to promote gender equality,[25] produced a campaigning guide for women,[26] and explored the implementation of TSMs with a few Pacific states, There is strong cultural resistance in some PICs to women assuming national leadership positions. The PNG parliament's vote earlier this year against the introduction of TSMs for women was a significant set-back. Recommendations for the introduction of TSMs have been made to Fiji's Constitution Commission.

The post-2015 Development agenda must include targets and indicators for strengthening democracy, minimizing/reducing conflict and enhancing security. It should also include a sustainable development goal on gender equality with targets of increasing women's representation in national parliaments and provincial governments, eliminating policies and practices that impede women's enjoyment of full citizenship, increasing opportunities for women, and strengthening protection against violation of their basic rights. Targets and indicators for reducing social exclusion and discrimination against minorities including sexual minorities and people living with disabilities also need to be included in the Post 2015-Development Agenda.

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[23] http://www.undppc.org.fj/pages.cfm/our-work/democratic-governance/strenthening-parliaments-democratic-institution/promoting-women-parliament/

[24] *A woman's place is in the house --the house of parliament: research to advance women's political representation in Forum island countries: a regional study presented in five reports.* Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva, Fiji, 2006.

[25] UNDP Pacific Centre & PIFS (2009) *Utilizing Temporary Special Measures to Promote Gender Balance in Pacific Legislatures: A Guide to Options* and UNDP Pacific Centre & PIFS *(2008) A Guide to Campaigning for Pacific Women.*

C.   Inclusive Social Development

Addressing inequalities in the post-2015 development agenda means looking at both equality of opportunities (or lack thereof), and entrenched structural factors, including discrimination, all of which effect equality of outcomes. Most of Pacific Island's poor women occupy disadvantaged social positions, which impede the development of their capabilities (as defined by Amartya Sen and others) as well as their ability to capitalize on opportunities.

This section will focus on three main issues including women's rights to food security, universal access to quality education, and social protection systems as vital for inclusive social development. Adequate investments in these areas will be needed to facilitate sustainable economic growth and close the gaps in human capabilities.

Food Security

Hunger is not acknowledged to be a major issue in the Pacific, mainly as a result of high subsistence production and traditional social protection systems. With the exception of PNG, the region is reportedly on track to halve the proportion of people suffering from hunger and most countries are reported to have a generally low level of food poverty. Yet poverty and malnutrition are growing concerns in many parts of the region. Statistics provided by Abbott and Pollard (2004) indicated that basic needs poverty ranged from 12% in Cook Islands, above 50% in Kiribati, over 40% in Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and PNG and 35% in Fiji.[27] UNICEF reports very worrying data on stunting amongst Pacific children - 24% for Nauru, 43% for PNG, and 33%, 10% and 20% for the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu respectively.[28] Girl children and women in poor households are included in the hunger vulnerable group in the region.

Food security is a major challenge. Traditionally, PICs achieved food security through sustainable agricultural and fishing practices and a reliance on local food staples but imported foods are now filling the growing demand for more and greater variety of foods. Environmental degradation due to mining and unsustainable logging practices is having a negative impact on food security.

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[27] Abbott, David and Steve Pollard (2004) *Hardship and Poverty in the Pacific*
http://www.paddle.usp.ac.fj/collect/pad- dle/index/assoc/adb004.dir/doc.pdf
[28] *Food and Nutrition Security in Pacific Island Nations and Territories – a position paper with emphasis on food and nutrition security of mothers and children*, UNICEF Pacific Multi-Country Office, Suva, Fiji Islands, 2010, 24pp
http://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/Position_Paper_for_web.pdf

As primary food producers and family caregivers, Pacific women are likely to be those most affected by challenges of food security, particularly by the effects of floods and droughts on crop production, changes in the availability of coastal fish and shellfish from increasingly degraded coral reefs, and the greater risks of damage to their houses from more intense tropical cyclones and rising sea levels, changing rainfall patterns and ensuing water shortages.[29] Rural women across the Pacific region play a critical role in supporting the three pillars of food security - food production, economic access to available food and nutritional security - for the members of their households, in normal times as well as during periods of stress.

However, their roles generally are constrained and undervalued usually in the face of enormous social, cultural and economic constraints.[30] The majority of households and communities in the Pacific region manage their rural production systems based on socially accepted gender divisions of labour that affect food security achievements. Given the semi-subsistence and communal nature of local PIC economies, women and girls have always played an integral role in family production and resource management systems.

A lack of awareness and lack of appreciation of rural women's productive roles in many PICs have historically undervalued their contribution. The result is enduring discrimination in women's access to resources and opportunities. Given the role of women in achieving food security for their families, meeting the world's food needs post 2015 will depend even more than it does now on the capabilities and resources of women. Sustainable food security can only be achieved with the full participation of women as equal partners and, as such, it is essential to fully understand women's roles and responsibilities in the household, community and local economy, as well as the range of constraints and inequalities they face on a daily basis.

However, the lack of current sex-disaggregated data that reflect urban-rural and gender-differentiated considerations is a critical impediment in this regard. It is essential that the post 2015 development framework examines the situation of rural women in the Pacific region and identifies and pursues opportunities to analyze and integrate gender dimensions and strategies to empower rural women in all aspects of agricultural and rural development. Women's concerns and knowledge on food security could be better signposted in other programmes concerned with

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[29] UNFPA(2009) *State of world population 2009: Facing a changing world: Women, population and climate*. http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2009/en/pdf/EN_SOWP09.pdf
[30] SPC (2010) *Beijing + 15: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island Countries and Territories,* Human Development Programme (SPC), Noumea.

climate change mitigation, adaptation, awareness raising and sustainable resource management, all of which impact on women's lives.

Access to Education

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights endorsed free education as a fundamental human right. The positive correlation between women's education and poverty reduction is well documented in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) and Revised Pacific Platform for Action (RPPA).[31] Gender equality in access to education has been achieved or is close to being achieved in primary and secondary schooling in most Polynesian and Micronesian countries of the Pacific, while some disparities still exist in the Melanesian sub-region as well as in Cook Islands (primary), Niue (secondary) and Tuvalu (primary).[32] More girls than boys are in secondary schooling in the Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Tokelau and Tuvalu. Tertiary enrolment varies by country and territory: in some cases women are under-represented; among the notable exceptions are USP, where recent statistics show female students are enrolling in equal if not higher numbers than males and particularly in study by extension mode, and the University of Guam which has 60% female enrolment.[33]

However, girls are still disproportionately losing out on positive advances in universal primary education and completion of secondary school. In Vanuatu the gender parity index at primary school is almost equal but at post-secondary level, young women have far less access to educational opportunities.[34] In many PICs, the lack of priority given by parents to investing in their daughter's education, girls' heavy domestic workloads, early marriage and teenage pregnancy, the prevalence of gender-based violence and mistreatment of non-conforming girls by families, and poor infrastructure and transport variously work to deny girls the right to education.

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[31] The main educational mandates observed by PICTs are the Forum Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP 2009) as agreed to by the Forum Leaders, and UNESCO's Education for All (EFA). PICs have also endorsed the MDGs and other UN agreements such as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, the UN Literacy Decade and the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action on Disability (Asia-Pacific) (ESCAP 2002). The United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW) has also referenced the needs of older and aging women in education and training. National governments have begun reporting back on these issues and commitments as a matter of policy.

[32] PIFs (2012) *2012 Pacific Regional MDGs Tracking Report*, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva.

[33] SPC (2010) *Beijing + 15: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island countries and territories*, Human Development Programme (SPC), Noumea

[34] Freeland, N. & Robertson, K. (2010) *Social Protection in the Pacific-Focal Country Study: Vanuatu,* AusAID, Canberra, Australia

Another major constraint is that available educational data relate almost exclusively to access. Scarcer is the data on the quality of education, including the extent to which it may be perpetuating gender stereotypes. Primary and secondary school enrolment as an indicator obscures the fact that girls are more often likely than boys to have poor attendance at school once enrolled. Better gender-disaggregated data needs to be collected on quality of education taking into consideration the barriers to education and training faced by girls in this region.

Likewise, gender parity in primary and secondary school enrolments in PICs, does not translate into women's participation in paid employment. Men outnumber women in paid employment outside the agricultural sector, approximately twice as many men than women.[35] The public sector is usually the largest employer, with most women occupying lower level positions. In Samoa, preliminary findings from a UNDP study indicate that gender parity index for public sector is currently 97. Cook Islands and Niue are the only countries where women account for more than 50 percent of employment in the non-agricultural sector.[36] Women in Fiji dominated jobs in the collapsed garment industry and the declining manufacturing sector where already low wages have shrunk further in response to the loss of overseas markets.[37] For many women in the informal sector, the only alternative is sex work.[38] To achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, education and training need to be better tailored towards Pacific realities.

Given the importance of agriculture in Pacific economies and livelihoods, technical support and advancement in this area are key for post 2015 development and women's empowerment. Ensuring women have access to agricultural education and information should be a priority for any post-2015 dialogue on development and sustainable agriculture in the Pacific. There is a need for multi-level and community-wide strategies to change long-held discriminatory attitudes so as to increase women's choices and participation in education and address persistent gender disparities in primary, secondary and tertiary education in the Pacific.

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[35] SPC (2010) *Beijing + 15 (Op.cit.)*
[36] SPC (2010) Beijing + 15 (Op.cit.)
[37] Kidd, S., Samson, M., Ellism F., Freeland N. & Wyler, B. (2010) *Social Protection in the Pacific- A Review of its adequacy and role in addressing Poverty*, AusAID, Canberra
[38] Kidd, Samson et al (op.cit.)

Poverty and Social Protection

Poverty in the PICs is generally viewed as hardship or an inadequate level of sustainable human development evidenced by lack of access to basic services, opportunities and resources (including cash) to meet the basic needs of the household, including customary obligations to the extended family, village community, and/or the church.[39] It is estimated that 75 percent of the region's poor reside in PNG with the remaining PICs accounting for roughly 600,000 of the poor, half of whom live in Fiji. A recent study of wages in Fiji found that a primary cause of the increase in poverty was the failure of tripartite wage regulation machinery to raise workers' wages in unorganized industries over the last 35 years.[40] In 2005, 44% of women in the labour force in Fiji were earning wages below the poverty line of $60 a week, and a sizeable negative gender gap (-19%) existed in overall average incomes.[41] Rapid urbanization has also spurred the growth of informal settlements, which is a consequence and visible demonstration of poverty in the Pacific.[42] In Port Moresby and Suva, the two largest cities in the region, such settlements house more than half the urban population. [43]

However, certain sections of populations are more susceptible to poverty than others. Women, particularly in rural areas, are increasingly vulnerable to poverty and the effects of poverty, as they have a higher risk of poverty linked to labour force discrimination, lack of property rights, and heavy responsibilities with regard to subsistence farming, the household and the community.[44] Much of women's work is in the informal sector, such as markets and roadside selling, which yields low returns, is often unsafe and unprotected by labour laws. Accompanying hardship and poverty is a developing sex industry, with a particular prevalence of sexual exploitation in the mining, logging and fishing industries in countries such as PNG, Solomon Islands and Kiribati (Ibid). In the squatter settlements, women and families experience cash poverty/hardship as a result of unemployment and underemployment, while having little land for cultivation or access to fishing grounds (Ibid).

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[39] Abbott, David and Steve Pollard (2004) *Hardship and Poverty in the Pacific* http://www.paddle.usp.ac.fj/collect/pad- dle/index/assoc/adb004.dir/doc.pdf

[40] Narsey, Wadan (2006) *Just Wages in Fiji: lifting workers out of poverty*, Ecumenical Council for Research and Advocacy (ECREA), Suva.

[41] Narsey, Wadan (2007) *Gender Issues in Employment, Underemployment and Incomes in Fiji,* Vanuavou Publications, Suva.

[42] Connell, John (2011) 'Elephants in the Pacific? Pacific Urbanisation and its Discontents', *Asia Pacific Viewpoint,* Vol. 52, No. 2, August 2011 http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ j.1467-8373.2011.01445.x/pdf

[43] Connell (2011) op.cit.

[44] SPC (2010) Beijing + 15 (op.cit.)

Therefore, social protection policies in PICs need to take into account the unique circumstances and vulnerabilities faced by women. In the Pacific region, women's activities related to their household management and caring responsibilities, assigned on the basis of traditional gender roles, act as significant default contributions to social protection when formal systems are inadequate. During recent periods of economic crises in particular, the burden of family survival has often fallen largely upon women, who have had to increase their unremunerated family caring and domestic activities to compensate for loss of income and managing financial pressures.

Women are more likely to enter fragile and insecure forms of employment in the formal sector, to be overrepresented within informal sector employment, and more liable to lose their jobs during periods of economic hardship. The overrepresentation of women in activities outside of the formal economy means that, under contributory systems, women can be unprotected or poorly protected as secondary beneficiaries. This reinforces their dependence upon primary male beneficiaries, which in turn plays a key role in limiting their full participation in society and the economy.

The reduction of social inequalities in PICs is essential to a vision of inclusive sustainable development. A system of social protection should be based on rights and inclusiveness – on what each citizen is entitled to and how her or his rights are to be protected and made viable. It is equally important that avenues exist for the poor and civil society to make claim to social protection through a rights-based framework. A robust system of social protection not only fulfills people's basic rights, it also establishes a firm platform for both social and economic development. With a more secure foundation, and with greater security against the risk of failure, women and their families can invest in their own futures and have greater confidence to engage in economic activity beyond ensuring basic economic survival for themselves and their families.

For instance, since 1996, VANWODS Microfinance in Vanuatu has delivered microfinance services to poor and disadvantaged women to assist with income- earning activities and to encourage savings.[45]   In Fiji, the Foundation for Rural and Integrated Enterprises & Development

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[45] Suen, Vanessa and Patricia Fred (2010) *VANWODS Microfinance Impact Assessment* December 2010. http://www.microfinancegateway.org/gm/document-1.9.52065/VANWODS%20Impact%20Assessment%202010.pdf

(FRIEND), works with rural and marginalized communities to alleviate poverty through social and economic empowerment. [46] In Samoa, Women in Business Development Incorporated (WIBDI), which is committed to poverty alleviation and sustainable development, assists individual families use local products, traditional knowledge, technology and trade to generate income.[47]

Highest priority should be given to addressing both gender inequalities and women's disadvantage and inequalities and disadvantage faced by other marginalized social categories. Removing social, cultural, legal, administrative and financial barriers in access to services such as education, food security, economic resources and social protection mechanisms is a necessary first step. The Pacific development agenda should seek not only to address and monitor the elimination of specific gender gaps, but also to transform the structural factors that underpin women's rights to inclusive social development as centre-pieces of the post-2015 agenda.

D.   Inclusive Economic Development

Inclusiveness in post-2015 economic development will require a broad approach to macroeconomic policies: an approach that aligns the imperatives of macroeconomic stability and financial sustainability with broader structural development policies enabling adequate generation of productive employment, decent work with liveable wages and reduction of poverty and inequalities.[48] Coherence between macroeconomic and development policies with emphasis on job creation and decently paid jobs for women, with adequate financing for development, and a fair and stable global trading system should be key components of inclusive economic development in the Pacific.

Macroeconomic & Development Policies

Most Pacific Island Countries' (PICs') progress is constrained by several factors, including generally low or negative economic growth, lack of employment prospects and rising prices. In the last five years, the negative repercussions of the international food/fuel crises and the global financial crisis, contributed to the majority of PICs' poor economic growth outcomes.[49] The effects of the 'Triple F' (food, fuel and finance) crisis were felt in the Pacific by late 2008 and

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[46] Foundation for Rural and Integrated Enterprises and Development (2012). Who We Are. http://www.friendfiji.com/in-dex.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=110&Itemid=105
[47] Women in Business Development Incorporated (2012). About WIBDI http://www.womeninbusiness.ws/About/tabid/2871/language/en-US/Default.aspx
[48] UN (2012) *Realizing the Future We Want For All: Report to the Secretary General*, United Nations, New York.
[49] PIFs (2012) *2012 Pacific Regional MDGs Tracking Report*, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva.

throughout 2009 with declining economic growth rates across the PICs. The retention of customary land tenure systems under which rural populations enjoy semi-subsistence livelihoods, saved PICs from more serious impacts of the global financial crisis[50], a fact which should inform land-use, agriculture and investment policy-making in the region.

Narrow natural resource bases mean PICs can only specialize in a few commodities, which increases their vulnerability to natural disasters and adverse changes in their terms of trade. The overexploitation of natural resources, mainly forestry and fisheries, is threatening the sustainable management and growth of these sectors, particularly with logging in Solomon Islands. These economic constraints are compounded by land-lease problems and insufficient FDIs.

With subdued economic growth performance, job creation is increasingly difficult. Although data is not available for most countries, anecdotal evidence suggests that unemployment rates, particularly youth unemployment rates, are increasing.[51] Fiji's unemployment rate doubled between 1996 and 2007, from 3.7 percent to 8.6 percent[52], while the unemployment rate in the RMI is estimated to be as high as 30.9 percent.[53] In fact, PICs are generally off-rack to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, with the exception of Palau, Samoa and Tonga, which recorded mixed progress, and Cook Islands and Niue, the only countries on track to achieve this MDG Target 1.B.[54] However, it should be noted that Palau, the Cook Islands and Niue have high levels of both imported labor and outward migration.

Generally, women's labor force participation rates are lower, with significant disparity recorded in Solomon Islands, Fiji, PNG, RMI and Samoa where the men's participation rate is almost double that of women's in the formal labour market.[55] Similarly women in the private sector are often confined to areas considered to be 'women's work' and in the informal sector.

[50] Regenvanu, Ralph (2009) The traditional economy as source of resilience in Vanuatu, www.aidwatch.org.au/sites/aidwatch.org.../Ralph%20Regenvanu.pdf

[51] Noble, Cameron (2011) Urban Youth in the Pacific Increasing Resilience and Reducing Risk for Involvement in Crime and Violence. http://www.undppc.org.fj/_resources/article/files/UrbanYouth_in_the_Pacific.pdf

[52] Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics (2009). 2007 Census of Population and Housing, Labour Force, Employment and Unemployment. Statistical News No. 09/2009, 27 February 2009. Available from http://www.spc.int/prism/country/fj/stats/Census2007/Re-lease%202%20-%20Labour%20Force.pdf

[53] ADB (2011) Asian Development Outlook 2012. South-South Economic Links. Available from http://www.sacc.ch/upload/Out-look_2011_535.pdf

[54] PIFs (2012) *2012 Pacific Regional MDGs Tracking Report*, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva.

[55] PIFS (2012) op.cit.

This reflects women's lower skills levels in general as well as their lower access to assets and credit, and socio-cultural norms that contribute to labor market discrimination.

Women's contribution to the economy through subsistence production remains invisible in systems of national accounts. There is insufficient gender data in the Pacific, including on wage/income disparities and time use. The Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM), the major regional meeting that discusses economic strategies for Pacific Islands states, has done little to analyze gender and the economy or to support women's economic rights.[56] Ensuring the equal participation of women and the integration of women's economic participation and rights as priority areas in regional research, processes and forums on economic development and growth are needed. Prioritizing the collection of gender data, such as wage gap statistics and time use surveys would allow for proper gender analysis of the economy.

With respect to women and the economy, UN Women in the Pacific is working in Vanuatu, PNG, Solomon Islands and Fiji to strengthen Pacific women's economic security and rights with a focus on women in the informal economy, including human rights of women vendors in traditional and emerging markets, trade and micro-businesses (Ibid). Providing targeted opportunities for women in the informal sector offers an important consideration for an employment strategy in many Pacific countries with a gender-sensitive and rights-based dimension to growth and employment.

The macroeconomic policies for PICs in post 2015 should take into account the special circumstances and problems of women, including measures aimed at shifting women from invisible to visible work, from low income employment in agriculture, to higher income sectors, and from low wage and no social security to higher wage with social security. More specifically such policies should include provisions for access to credit for women entrepreneurs both in the formal and informal sectors (including home-based workers) and identify specific sectors that are women dominated for special measures to improve decent work.

The promotion of women's productive employment would need specific policy recommendations, which include creating an enabling environment for women's work, through family friendly policies and equal opportunity legislation and action. Also social provisioning,

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[56] SPC (2010) Beijing + 15, op.cit.

such as investments in education and health that enhances the capabilities of the poor and of women should be seen as an investment by economic policymakers, rather than a cost. Women should be seen as dynamic economic agents in their own right with access to decent and productive employment and entrepreneurship.

Temporary migrant labour schemes, as well as the more traditional skilled workers in seafaring, the security and healthcare sectors provide increasingly valuable employment options for women as well. PIC governments should strengthen domestic training and skills development programmes to ensure that Pacific Island women and men reach the required standards and are competitive in the international market for such employment opportunities in neighboring developed countries of the region.

Inclusive Trade Agreements

Trade negotiations theoretically offer potential benefits to PICs. The mainstream view is that in the medium to long-term trade liberalization helps promote economic growth at national and global levels. It is acknowledged that there may be significant human costs as economies of PICs adjust to new trading environments, but such costs are said to be outweighed by the benefits of free trade. Concluding WTO accession processes, and the series of trade agreements PICs are/will be negotiating on an Economic Partnership Agreement with EU, a Pacific Agreements for Closer Economic Relations (PACER-plus) with Australia and New Zealand, and an extended Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) with each other, would all present challenges in terms of adjustments in legislation, revenue streams and industrial/ commercial policies to maximize potential benefits and minimize transaction and transition costs for each PIC under the new agreements.

However, the supposed benefits of liberalized trading regimes for PICs, namely increased trade and investment, labour mobility, and ultimately economic growth and accompanying development are questionable. Substantial revenue losses from reduced tariffs, which are unlikely to be adequately recouped through consumption taxes, together with reduced policy space as a result of binding agreements/laws, will undermine the social provisioning responsibilities of the state, and deprive PICs of the right of economic self-determination. From a human rights perspective, the social impacts of free trade, particularly loss of livelihoods through job losses in uncompetitive industries, land loss, environmental degradation and accompanying social tensions/conflict with new investments in extractive industries, and the absence of democratic

accountability in trade treaty-making, especially where there is no parliamentary scrutiny or public debate, are matters of deep concern that need addressing in the post 2015 development agenda.

Financing For Development

In the Pacific the collective efforts of PICs and development partners to achieve the partnerships for development envisaged under MDG 8 are framed in the context of the Pacific Plan, the Cairns Compact, and the Pacific Principles of Aid Effectiveness and through a series of bilateral and multilateral agreements. Historically, PICs have received large flows of Official Development Assistance (ODA) when measured in per capita terms; estimated at about seven times the average for all developing countries.

ODA to Oceania has doubled since 2002 to US$1.6 billion in 2009, with donor countries accounting for 82 percent of the ODA.[57] The largest donor in the region is Australia, with net ODA disbursements of US$704 million in 2009. Other major donor countries are the US, EU, NZ and Japan, which together account for 98 percent of ODA by donor countries to Oceania (Ibid). Total multilateral aid to the region was US$295 million in 2009, of which ODA from UN agencies constituted 36 percent (ibid). The European Development Fund, GFATM and GEF comprised the major sources of multilateral aid to the region. However the Pacific region's share of global development assistance is declining overall.[58]

Melanesia receives the bulk of ODA, led by PNG and Solomon Islands, which together accounted for around 82 percent of the ODA to the sub-region in 2009. In Micronesia, almost half the aid flows are to FSM, with ODA to Polynesia comparatively lower than to the other two sub-regions. Aid flows to Melanesia and Polynesia almost doubled from 2002 to 2009, while a modest increase was recorded for Micronesia (Ibid). Approximately two-thirds of ODA to PICs is towards the social infrastructure and services sector, which includes education, health and water supply and sanitation. Overall, the significant increase in ODA was instrumental in the progress that PICs made against the MDGs.

However, much more work is needed in the area of gender equality. Less attention has been paid to infrastructure, agriculture and finance, although these are critical for women's economic

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[57] PIFs (2011) *2011 Pacific Regional MDG Tracking Report*, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva.
[58] Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (2010) *2010 MDG Tracking Report*.

advancement in the Pacific. Financing for gender equality should be a critical part of the discussion on financing for development in the PICs. For economic growth and human development to be sustainable women's full participation in the economy is required, making it necessary to tailor development finance to the needs of both women and men.

Aid flows are generally considered to be among the most volatile of macroeconomic variables. In PICs that are heavily dependent on ODA, this threatens the continuity of development interventions, particularly for long-term goals such as gender equality. Therefore, it is paramount that ODA flows to the region are sustained. Work under the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific is important to ensure aid and development effectiveness. Leaders seem to be committed to ensuring that gender analysis is factored into sustainable development discussions, country programming, and policy decisions.

With Australia's commitment of A$320m in new funding over ten years for the Pacific Gender Equality Initiative, mechanisms are required at the national level to ensure accountability for results. This will require gender analysis, strategies, gender disaggregated data and also gender-responsive budgets as a key part of economic governance approaches designed to foster accountability. Gender-specific outcome indicators can measure how domestic and international resource allocations are advancing gender equality, assisting countries to comply with CEDAW. With many countries experiencing serious budget constraints of their own, there is an urgent need for PICs to give greater attention to ensuring improved aid effectiveness and the realization of positive and measureable development outcomes.

Governments in the Pacific have the opportunity to address gender inequality and exclusion of women through an inclusive and rights-based approach to sustainable economic development. If inclusive economic development is universal and rights-based the benefits will not only stimulate short-term economic activity but also improve resilience in a manner that strengthens prospects for long-term economic growth and development for the region. Inclusive economic development will also depend on ensuring women's access to employment and decent work, fair-trading arrangements and financing of development towards gender equality and justice.

The timely adoption of the Pacific Commitment to Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights by representatives of civil society and social movements in October 2012, in the lead up to ICPD +20, reaffirms previous global and regional commitments relating to SRHR made by

Pacific governments and reminds us of the 'goals and targets our governments have set for us in these important and ambitious agreements'.[59] Explicit mention is made of the 1994 ICPD Plan of Action and its follow-up commitments, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the MDGs, the 2010 Global Strategy for Maternal and Child Health, the 2011 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, and the Rio +20 Outcome Document, *The Future We Want*. We would add Agenda 21 (the 1992 Plan of Action that emerged from UNCED), the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and the 1995 Programme of Action of the World Social Summit. The Post 2015 Development Agenda must incorporate into the Sustainable Development goals as much as possible of these broader and more far-reaching development agreements.

Conclusion

While MDGs have certainly galvanized action in the Pacific region to reach certain development targets, there is a strong view within the region that the goals have been very limited, and have failed to address the region's specific development challenges. This paper raises attention to some of the more pressing of these challenges, specifically those related to environmental sustainability and peace and security, which were excluded from the MDGs, but which are absolutely critical to realizing development goals in Pacific Island states; and equally importantly, to some of the peculiar challenges which continue to impede or thwart Pacific efforts towards realizing the goal of gender equality.

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[59] Pacific Commitment to Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, October 2012. 2pp.