



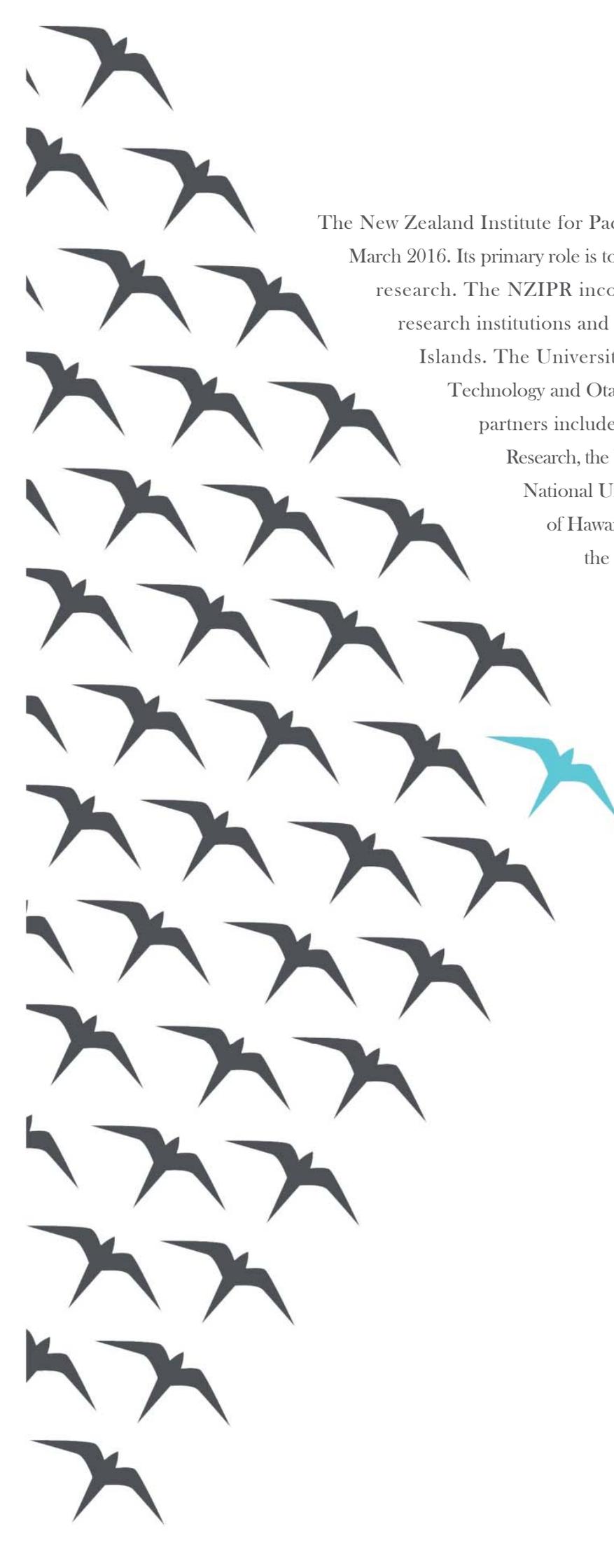
**NEW ZEALAND
INSTITUTE FOR
PACIFIC RESEARCH**

Are There Only Winners?

Labour Mobility for Sustainable Development in the Pacific

Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Evelyn Marsters,
Richard Bedford, Vijay Naidu and Ward Friesen





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The New Zealand Institute for Pacific Research (NZIPR) was launched in March 2016. Its primary role is to promote and support excellence in Pacific research. The NZIPR incorporates a wide network of researchers, research institutions and other sources of expertise in the Pacific Islands. The University of Auckland, Auckland University of Technology and Otago University lead the NZIPR. Its support partners include the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, the University of the South Pacific, the Australian National University, Peking University, the University of Hawaii, the Secretariat for the Pacific Community, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Pacific Cooperation Foundation.

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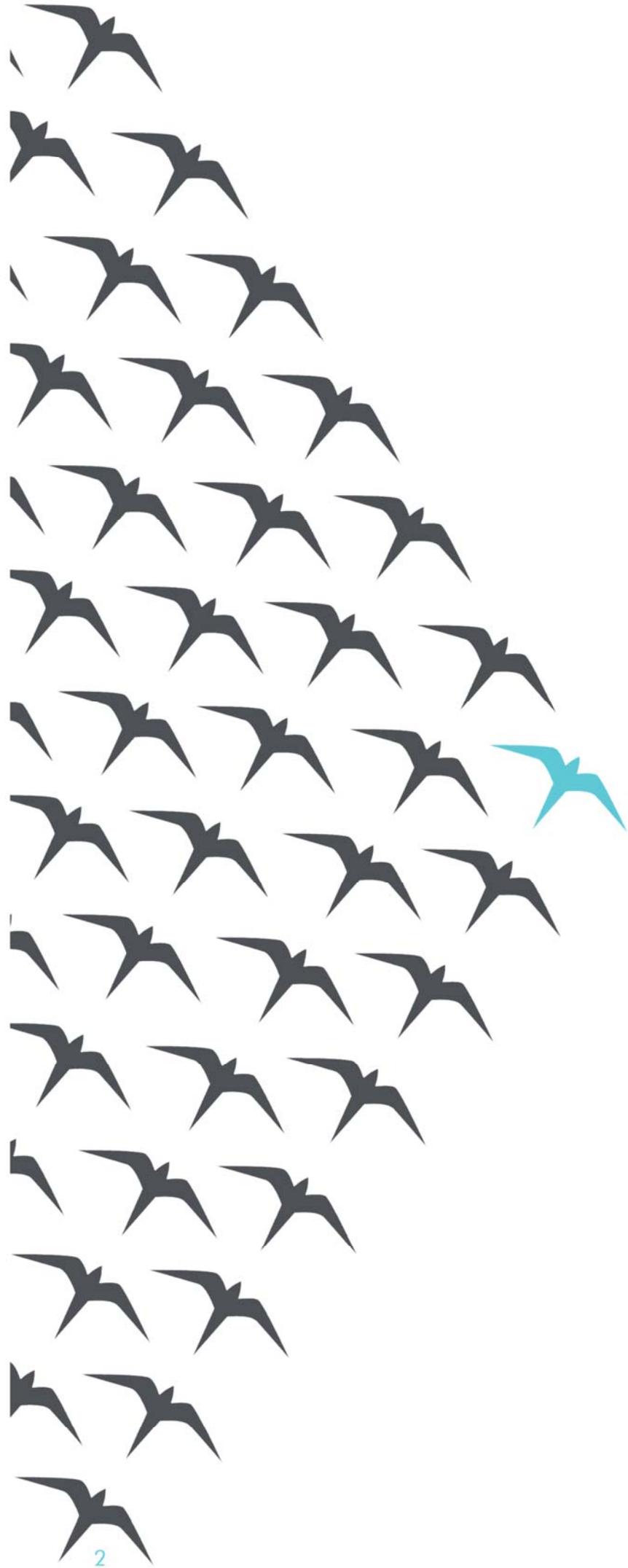


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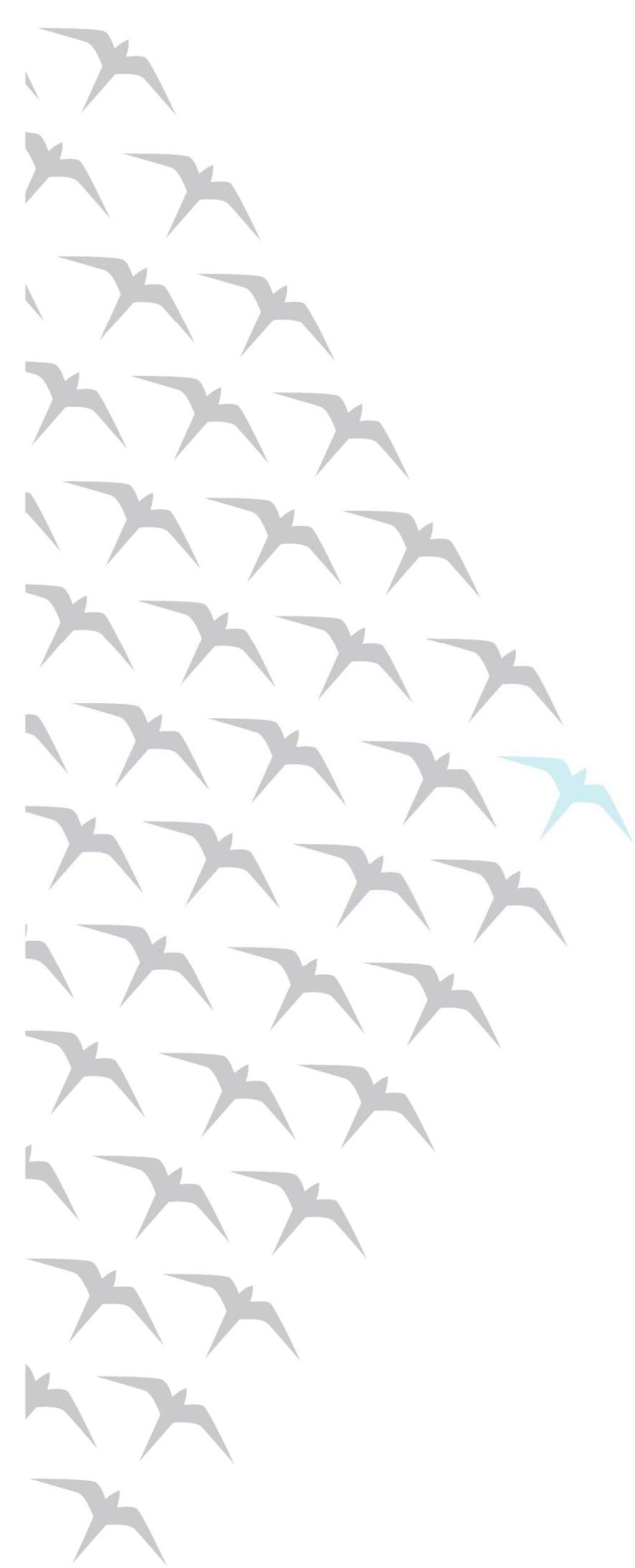
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1. Purpose and Scope of the NZIPR Labour Mobility for Sustainable Development Project

Over the last decade, international labour mobility schemes involving Pacific island workers in New Zealand and Australia have continued to attract considerable attention from researchers and policy makers (Bedford 2016; Bedford et al. 2017; Bishop 2018; Cangiano & Torre 2016; Dornan 2017; Howes 2018; Kautoke-Holani 2018). Since the publication of *Labour Mobility in the Pacific: A Systematic Literature Review of Development Impacts* (Underhill-Sem & Marsters 2017), there has been a deepening of understanding of the complexity of economic, social, cultural and political impacts of seasonal labour mobility programmes in the Pacific. These development impacts require on-going, systematic and robust analysis at all scales (from individuals to countries), over various time periods (from immediate, to medium- and long-term time frames) and in all countries of the Pacific. Critical to this analysis is the need to understand the dynamics of domestic labour markets in the Pacific and the intersecting impacts especially in relation to gender and climate change. These are shifting in many and various ways as a result of demographic, economic, political, development and environmental imperatives. This means, to deliver sustainable economic development and social wellbeing, policy frameworks for labour mobility need to take into account both the frequently mentioned wins as well as less-often recognised and acknowledged losses.

This research report focuses on seasonal labour mobility in three countries – Kiribati, Fiji and Tonga – in the context of a policy assessment framework that addresses both

wins and losses when considering a sustainable future for labour mobility in the Pacific. It contains broad country-specific recommendations for policy makers both in the Pacific as well as in New Zealand. The report also draws attention to the need for a closer analysis of labour markets given that workers from Pacific island countries also travel for other types of work, including to countries other than New Zealand or Australia. Moreover, Bedford and Ingram (2018) indicate that there is a high likelihood of an increasing demand for seasonal workers in New Zealand and Australia. Further, Bedford and Ingram show that if the same demographic cohorts (males aged 20–39) continue to dominate the seasonal work flows, there will be a notable impact on domestic labour markets, with direct and indirect implications for social and economic development in home countries.

After more than 10 years, the seasonal work schemes are well-established in Australia and New Zealand, so it is timely to review the often-cited “triple-win” framework that underpinned the first generation of policies. In this report we argue that a “quadruple win-loss” framework provides a more nuanced analytical lens to understand the multi-dimensional nature of contemporary labour mobility in the Pacific. We consider that this will be of particular use for policy makers in Pacific countries as they advance their labour mobility plans in the context of national sustainable development planning. It also encourages New Zealand policy makers to review their thinking about the triple-win argument that underpins much of the policy commentary

on outcomes from well-managed seasonal labour migration schemes.

It is worth noting that the subject of seasonal labour mobility and Pacific labour migration is a rapidly developing space in both policy and research arenas. Significant shifts in the development of policy within Pacific island countries in regard to labour mobility are strongly correlated to the changes in Australian and New Zealand immigration policy. For example, on 1 July 2018 the Australian government launched the Pacific

Labour Scheme, a new phase to “help meet business demand in rural and regional Australia, where it is clear no Australians are available. It allows for citizens of select Pacific island countries to apply for low and semi-skilled temporary employment in Australia” (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2018). This development occurred in the writing phase of this research project but the policy recommendations in this report focus on the schemes that were in place when the interviews were undertaken in 2017 and early 2018.

1.1 The NZIPR Labour Mobility for Sustainable Development Project Research Report Objectives

- To provide a critical analysis of research and policy tools used for managing Pacific seasonal labour mobility.
- To assess the effects of specific policy initiatives within specific economic sectors, and countries, that are affected by labour mobility schemes.

1.2 Framing the Analysis: From “Elusive Triple Wins” to “Identifiable Quadruple Wins and Losses”

The field research in Kiribati, Fiji and Tonga¹ built on an analytical framework that is familiar and well-used in labour mobility analysis globally and in the Pacific – the triple-win framework (Ramasamy et al. 2008). This refers to the way in which seasonal labour programmes are seen as potentially delivering benefits to the workers who move from countries where there are more workers than jobs, as well as to countries where there is a shortage of workers to fill the available jobs. One dimension that was left out of the initial formulation was the benefits that flowed to the ancillary services that developed around

labour mobility schemes both in the Pacific and in New Zealand. These include transport and accommodation providers as well as providers of financial and other training or logistical services. This sector needs to be considered in future policy developments.

Research has continued to examine the nature of both the triple-win and increasingly quadruple-win logic by also including the ancillary services such as, for instance, transport operators and pastoral care workers (see Bedford et al. 2017; Kautoke-Holani 2018), while also taking into account some losses that also emerge. These losses need to

¹ These countries were chosen by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

be more explicitly considered because they, as well as the “wins,” have development impacts for Pacific island countries.

To understand the importance of a quadruple win-loss framework for labour mobility in Pacific countries and in New Zealand, we examine four key imperatives: economic, demographic, political and development. We suggest that these imperatives drive both gains and losses for the countries sending and receiving workers, for employers and employees, as well as for the ancillary service providers in all countries involved (including those that some workers must transit through). This conceptual framing of Pacific seasonal mobility flows emerged in the process of the research project and has been used to assist with interpreting findings.

The triple-win framework, as reviewed in the systematic literature review, is provided in Table 1 as a point of reference. While the researchers worked largely within this analytical framing, our conversations with policy makers, analysts and service providers were not limited to this framework. Policy makers in Pacific countries are clearly thinking beyond the triple-win framing as they address the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and development imperatives driving the new era of seasonal labour mobility. In the course of the project we began to develop an enhanced policy assessment framework to better understand the diverse and sometime contradictory development impacts of labour mobility policies in the Pacific (see Table 2).

We suggest that this revised framework will assist Pacific policy makers and international

donors to take into account a wider range of factors which impact on, and are impacted by, labour markets in general and labour mobility policies in particular. The suggested benefits and losses in the version introduced here emerged from research findings in the systematic literature review, from discussions among the research team, based on their knowledge of unpublished research, and from interviews with policy makers. They should be seen as suggestive and challenging rather than definitive and comprehensive. Our intention in articulating the framework here is to make more visible some underacknowledged and underresearched tensions so they can be addressed.

Table 1 summarises the underlying logic behind the initial policy arguments that initiated the labour mobility programmes in the mid-2000s. The logic of this migration-development nexus rested on the durability of remittances from Pacific migrants and the estimated shortfall in human resources in particular sectors in developed countries. Over time, this mobility framework has been refined, as it has in other key development policy areas (for climate-smart agriculture, see Karlsson et al. 2018). While keeping with the same logical framework, we have added three other components: the imperatives for policy change (economic, demographic, political and development), the ancillary services which often operate across countries, and the consideration of losses alongside wins.

In our view, this wins-losses framework provides a more nuanced analytical approach to tracking the “complex systems of relationships between multiple

stakeholders that require on-going management to ensure that they do not become traps for low-skilled, low-paid ‘permanent’ temporary workers” (Bedford et al. 2017, 37). The examples used in the

framework below are based on the empirical knowledge of some families and communities. To ascertain the full extent and wider implications requires more in-depth research.

Table 1 Imperatives Driving Seasonal Labour Mobility Policy in the Triple-Win Framework

Who Wins/Benefits?	What are the Wins/Benefits?			
	Economic Imperative	Demographic Imperative	Political Imperative	Development Imperative
Country of Origin	Increased remittances, which improves national income and reduces household poverty.	Eases strain of “youth bulge” on wage employment. Opportunity for off-shore training of citizens.	Provision of a key leverage point in PACER Plus discussions with Australia and New Zealand.	Investment generated by remittances.
Country of Destination	Improved viability of horticulture/viticulture sector by expanding production.	Reducing shortage of domestic, low-skilled labour in rural areas.	Consolidation of historical relationships with Pacific neighbours. Responsiveness to internal- employer demands.	Improved rural development in New Zealand.
Seasonal Worker, Household & Sending Community	Increased income, though only seasonal. Opportunity for training.	Reduction of tension with underemployed young people in home village.	Chance to become a good employee to ensure continued seasonal work for self or community.	Provision of personal empowerment, work experience, community leadership and local business development.

This exploratory “wins/losses” framework emerged as we progressed through our planned study of three countries involved in labour mobility – Kiribati, Fiji and Tonga. We have adopted it in this report because it provides a more comprehensive account of the findings that are emerging from recent studies of seasonal work schemes in New

Zealand and Australia as well as being consistent with comments made by policy makers we interviewed in the Pacific. It is offered as a contribution to the development of a refined policy assessment framework for ensuring labour mobility is supporting rather than undermining sustainable development in the Pacific.

Table 2 Imperatives Driving Seasonal Labour Mobility Policy in the Wins/Losses Framework

Who Wins/Loses?	What are Wins/Losses?			
	Economic Imperative	Demographic Imperative	Political Imperative	Development Imperative
Country of Origin (including community)	<p>Increases remittances which improves national income.</p> <p>Family and community in home villages require cash to purchase food because of absent family member who usually provides garden or ocean resources.</p>	<p>Eases strain of “youth bulge” on wage employment.</p> <p>Opportunity for off-shore training of citizens.</p> <p>Loss of able-bodied people for gardening, building, fishing, cultural and social obligations when adequate plans are not made prior to workers leaving.</p>	<p>Provision of a key leverage point in PACER Plus discussions with Australia and New Zealand.</p> <p>Continued reliance on New Zealand and Australian as development partners.</p>	<p>Spreads effect of remittances and eases pressure on government services.</p> <p>Increased consumption of costly imported goods.</p>
Country of Destination	<p>Improved viability of horticulture / viticulture sector.</p> <p>Reliance on imported labour alongside continued high unemployment among low skilled (mentioned in PLMAM).</p>	<p>Responsiveness to shortage of readily available unskilled labour in rural areas.</p> <p>Reduces incentives to improve rural appeal and rural work for New Zealanders.</p>	<p>Consolidation of historical relationships with Pacific neighbours.</p> <p>Responsiveness to inter-nal employer demands.</p> <p>Various forms of backlash against increasing reliance on temporary migrants in New Zealand economy.</p>	<p>Improved rural development in New Zealand.</p> <p>The risk of impeding development of rural New Zealand for all New Zealanders.</p>
Seasonal Worker (including family)	<p>Increased income, though only seasonal.</p> <p>Opportunity for training.</p> <p>Opportunity cost of work not done at home.</p>	<p>Reduction of tension with underemployed young people in home village.</p> <p>Delayed/interrupted parenthood in worker’s household.</p>	<p>Offers chance of being a good employee to ensure continued seasonal work for self or community.</p> <p>Shift in leadership structures.</p>	<p>Provides personal empowerment, work experience, community leadership and local business development.</p> <p>Reduction in community engagement in home community.</p>
Ancillary Services	<p>Increased revenue from services such as transport, accommodation, food suppliers.</p> <p>Increased pressure on health services in both origin and destination countries.</p>	<p>Increase in employment opportunities for rural New Zealanders (skilled and low skilled). This also applies under the first row - country of origin.</p>	<p>“Reciprocal” international trade and employment agreements for the mutual benefit of both New Zealand and Pacific countries.</p> <p>Increased pressure on Labour Sending Units especially linked with increasing complexity and diversity of temporary employment opportunities overseas.</p>	<p>Development of services in rural New Zealand to support RSE.</p>

1.4 Questions arising from research

Each country case study identified specific interests in the seasonal labour mobility schemes in New Zealand and Australia (as they existed at the time of the interview) as well as in how they might develop in the future. Many policy-related questions also arose. Clearly, these questions require discussion with various stakeholders in each country but collectively they point to a willingness to engage further in refining policy development. Some of the questions were:

- What are the wins and the losses of labour mobility schemes?
- What further research is available to support labour market policy development and planning?
- What is the sustainability of schemes such as the RSE within new regional trade environments?
- How can concerns over workers' vulnerabilities and workers' rights, while they are employed overseas, be addressed?
- How is seasonal labour mobility connected to other temporary employment opportunities within the wider national and global development agendas?
- How can better use be made of opportunities for matching skills and education training with new opportunities for seasonal labour mobility?
- How can entrepreneurial opportunities for seasonal workers, upon returning to their home islands, be strengthened?
- How can greater coherence be assured between objectives of sending-country governments and Pacific policy imperatives relating to labour mobility and sustainable development?

An important learning from the case study research is that the Pacific island countries are keenly interested in policy that consolidates the benefits of seasonal labour mobility, mitigates the problems, and enhances opportunities for future overseas employment.

This report is organised as follows: Section 1 introduces the research project and provides the relevant conceptual framing. Section 2 describes the research methodology. Section 3 summarises economic and demographic profiles of Kiribati, Fiji and Tonga with a particular focus on migration. Section 4 comprises the bulk of the report and presents the findings from Kiribati, Fiji and Tonga, some of which address the questions raised above. Section 5 outlines some policy opportunities and recommendations.

2. Research Methodology

The main research method used in this project was face-to-face interviews with key policy makers, analysts and service providers in the three case study countries, Kiribati, Fiji and Tonga. The interviews were

undertaken by pairs of researchers but this report was the work of all the researchers whose combined experience in the broad area of Pacific migration and development is extensive.

2.1 Preparatory Analysis

Before undertaking interviews in-country, we analysed demographic data available from the Pacific Community (SPC). The focus was on economic growth, unemployment, remittances, population growth and migration. Some of this is included in this report (below). Economic profiles of each country were reviewed. These came from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), The Commonwealth Secretariat, Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) as well as from official government sources.

We used information from all these sources as context in preparation for visiting each country. We only included, in this report, data from the government reports most recently released prior to our visiting the country. For Kiribati this was the *Government of Kiribati Economic Outlook, February 2016*; for Fiji, this was the *Reserve Bank of Fiji Economic Review for the Month Ended July 2017*; for Tonga this was the *National Reserve Bank of Tonga Annual Report for the Year Ending 30 June 2017* (with a *2018 Update* on remittance figures). The complete reports are available online but selected data are used in this report.

2.2 Research in Kiribati, Fiji, and Tonga

The research team and the dates of the research were as follows:

Table 3 Countries Visited, Date and Research Team

Country	Date Visited	Research Team
Kiribati	June 24–29, 2017	Associate Professor Yvonne Underhill-Sem and Professor Richard Bedford
Fiji	October 25–31, 2017	Associate Professor Yvonne Underhill-Sem and Professor Vijay Naidu
Tonga	February 1–7, 2018	Associate Professor Yvonne Underhill-Sem and Dr Evelyn Marsters

During each visit, we gave interviewees hard copies of *Labour Mobility in the Pacific: A Systematic Literature Review of Development Impacts* as a resource. We drew special attention to the existing research on the economic and social value of labour mobility schemes in the country we were visiting. We also discussed the overall development impact in the Pacific that research on labour mobility was identifying. Discussions focused on the current flows of seasonal labour mobility to New Zealand, Australia and elsewhere as well as some

2.3 Research Participants

The research team worked with New Zealand government missions in Kiribati, Fiji and Tonga as well as drawing upon pre-existing relationships to ensure a range of individuals in official positions participated in the research. The political landscape in the region is dynamic. Just before research teams visited there was a new President in Kiribati and a new government in Tonga. In-country policy was therefore in flux with signals of new directions in some cases (the development of a new 20-year vision for Kiribati, for example - KV20 - which was

operational details, like the content of pre-departure training. Discussions also canvassed future ambitions of Pacific policy makers for labour mobility and human resource development. The maintenance, growth and sustainability of these flows in the future were key features of all discussions.

A summary report was written and sent to everyone interviewed shortly after completing the field trip (these reports are available on request).

not available at the time of our field visit). However, the research teams were able to meet with key informants involved in developing policy related to labour mobility. This primarily included senior policy makers but also politicians. Although time was limited to 7 days per country, the research team met with a range of individuals to bring together findings which span the “whole of government” and private sector individuals involved in the sector (see Appendix 2 for details of who was interviewed).

3. Understanding the Context for Labour Mobility: Economic and Demographic Profiles of Kiribati, Fiji and Tonga

To begin to understand the imperatives or drivers that have led to policies that support international seasonal labour mobility in the Pacific, the following summaries of economic and demographic features of the three case studies are useful. As noted earlier, the data comes mainly from government sources and as such are the data that primarily inform domestic government policy development. Future discussions about seasonal labour mobility and the potential for sustainable economic development in these countries need to be aware of the local context for labour supply and demand. There are well-rehearsed challenges to domestic economies in the Pacific related to limited formal domestic markets and employment opportunities, mixed opportunities for local resource development, and distances from more profitable international commercial markets. Some commonalities exist between the three case studies; however, the considerable differences between the countries, both in terms of their demographic and migration rates, underline the need for close case studies, rather than comparative analysis.

The following summaries of economic and demographic features of the three case studies covered in this report draw mainly on government sources of data. They are the data that are used to inform domestic policy development relating to mobility in the three countries.

3.1 Key Economic Features

Measuring employment in the Pacific is highly problematic because the concept of

“employment” has many different meanings outside mainstream development economics. However, we use employment measures below because these figures are reported in national statistical data used by policy makers in the Pacific. The rate per se is not what is critical for this report though – of more importance is that opportunities for wage employment in the face of expanding populations is limited. This is critically important to address if Kiribati has a chance of achieving sustainable development. As noted in the text, we are using data published by the governments of Kiribati, Tonga and Fiji. More recent World Bank data would have been derived from the same government sources. We are comfortable that this data captures the situation as seen from the perspective of Pacific governments.

3.1.1 Kiribati

(Source: Government of Kiribati Economic Outlook 2016 and Kiribati National Statistics Office, 2016).

- Economic growth in Kiribati is estimated to be slowing with an annual GDP growth rate in 2014 of 2.4% in comparison with 5.8% in 2013 and 5.2% in 2012. In 2014, GDP per capita was A\$1,837.
- “Unemployment,” as was defined in Kiribati’s 2010 census, was 31% of the labour force (Kiribati National Statistics Office, 2012, p. 55).² Youth unemployment is a severe problem, with the youth

² Ways of measuring unemployment vary across Pacific island countries. In the case of Kiribati, in 2010, a clear and comprehensive framework for examining the population’s economic activity in the

week before the census is presented on p. 55 of the report containing analysis of the 2010 enumeration (Kiribati National Statistics Office, 2012).

unemployment rate at 54% in 2010. Young people account for more than half of all unemployed people.

- The economically active labour force (including the unemployed) was recorded as 39,034 people over the age of 15 – the equivalent of 59% of the total population in this age group (65,874). Of these, 27,096 people were employed in either paid or unpaid work. The private sector is small in relation to the size of government. Only 22% of employed paid workers in 2010 were in the private sector, while 34% were employed in the public sector. Another 31% were producing goods for sale while 7% were self-employed (Kiribati National Statistics Office, 2012, p. 55).
- Exports since the cessation of phosphate mining on Banaba (Ocean Island) in 1979 have been mainly coconut products and fish. Kiribati is highly reliant on imports of foodstuffs. Exports in 2013 rose slightly by 0.9% to A\$6.8m and imports fell by 1.6% to A\$103.3m leaving a balance of trade of -A\$96.5m. The decline in imports was mainly due to reduced imports of manufactured goods (down 42.6%). Imports of foodstuffs rose by 5.6%.
- Remittances from seafarers in the past have been a large source of income from abroad. However, since the global financial crisis in 2009 there has been a steady decline in the number of seamen employed overseas. In addition to changing economic conditions, changes in vessel technology, with larger ships, and increased competition from seamen from Asian nations, have contributed to a decline in demand for I-Kiribati

seafarers. Seafarer's remittances were A\$7.6m at the end of 2016 compared with A\$5.6m in 2014 and A\$12.5m at their peak in 2002. At the end of 2015, 855 seamen were employed. There are on-going concerns that the growth experienced in 2015 will not translate to future years because of lower forecasts for international shipping.³

In July 2018, Kiribati presented its first Kiribati Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Voluntary National Review Report (VNR) and Kiribati Development Plan Mid-Term Review to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. It confirms the patterns above but also notably includes data on returns from fishing licences revenue which in 2016 was recorded as US\$147m, which exceeds the trade deficit.

3.1.2 Fiji

(Source: Reserve Bank of Fiji August 2016-July 2017 Report)

- The Fijian economy is anticipated to achieve its eighth consecutive year of growth (4.2%) in 2017, following a lower growth of 0.4% in 2016. GDP per capita in 2107 was estimated to be F\$9,487.
- Labour market conditions have remained favourable as partially indicated by the Reserve Bank's Job Advertisements Survey. Notably, demand for labour rose significantly as the number of jobs advertised grew annually by 17.2% in the first 7 months of 2017. Based on 2017 Census data, the Fiji Statistics Office reports an unemployment rate of 4.5%, the lowest recorded in 20 years – and lower than

³ The data on seafarers were provided by South Pacific Marine Services, Betio, Tarawa in June 2017.

the 5.5% unemployment rate estimated from the 2015–2016 Employment and Unemployment Survey.

- A higher trade deficit reflected higher imports following Tropical Cyclone Winston and a rebound in fuel prices that partly offset the higher growth in exports.
- Inward remittances cumulative to June 2017 rose by 3.1% to FJ\$253.7m compared to a 5.9% rise to \$246.2m from 2015 to 2016. As a percentage of nominal gross domestic product (NGDP), the Reserve Bank of Fiji estimates inwards personal remittances averaged around 4.8% of NGDP from 2013–2015. This is second largest foreign exchange earner next to tourism.

In 2019, Fiji will present its first VNR report to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

3.1.3 Tonga

(Source: National Reserve Bank of Tonga Annual Report Year Ending June 2017 and Updates, and Tongan Department of Statistics)

- The Tongan economy continued to grow following an expansion of 4.2% in 2015/16. The growth was mainly driven by strong growth in the construction, trade, transport, communication and agricultural sectors. GDP per capita in 2015/16 was T\$7,947.
- The RSE scheme, together with the Seasonal Worker Program (SWP), and the increase in banks' personal loans to private individuals, contributed to higher consumer spending power which fuelled the expansion in trade. In the year ended

June 2017, the total number of container registrations rose by 987 (10.0%). This was driven by the 905 (21.3%) increase in private containers indicating growth in the informal distribution sector. The large number of events and celebrations held during the year, and the increase in private construction, supported this annual growth.

- Over the year total remittances continued to rise by T\$37.2 m (12.2%) to a new high record of T\$342.5 m, supported by the events and occasions that took place during the year as well as continuous higher receipts for family support from seasonal workers abroad (Updates: Year Ending May 2018).
- The Reserve Bank continues to closely monitor remittance receipts given remittances are the largest source of foreign exchange inflow for the economy.

In 2019, Tonga will present its first VNR report to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

3.2 Population change

Countries in the Western Pacific, excluding Fiji, have high population growth rates due to relatively high rates of natural increase and few options for international migration. The tendency for population decline is greater in smaller countries in the North and Eastern Pacific, especially those which have privileged migration access to metropolitan countries like the USA or New Zealand (see Figure 1).

Kiribati: **moderate to high** rate of population growth (1.2% per year) as a result of relatively high rate of fertility and (estimated) low rate of net migration loss.

Fiji: **moderate** population growth rate (0.8% per year) as a result of moderate rate of fertility and moderate rate of net migration loss.

Tonga: **slight** population growth rate (0.3% per year) despite a relatively high rate of fertility, as a result of high rate of net migration loss.

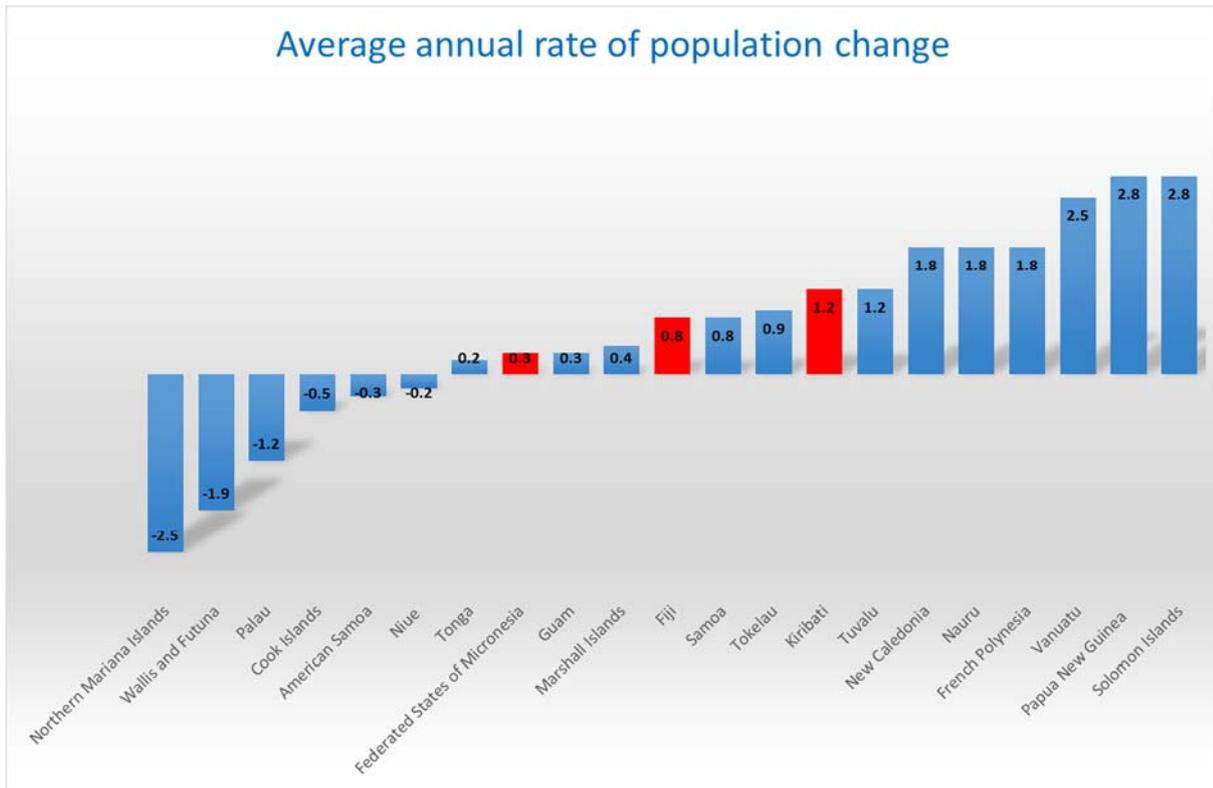


Figure 1 Average annual rate of population change, Pacific, 2016

Data source: SPC 2016

3.3 Natural Increase and Fertility Rates

Throughout the region, and globally, there are historical declines in fertility rates, but these rates vary across the Pacific region. The rate of decline has been more rapid where health services meet contraceptive needs, and where cultural and religious practices allow a woman to make choices for herself. Currently, the three case studies fall in the middle range of Pacific total fertility rates (TFR) rates, which will affect population and labour force projections.

- Kiribati TFR 3.9; considerable decline in rates but recent indications of stalling at a higher level
- Fiji TFR 2.6; rates have declined considerably over last 3 decades
- Tonga TFR 4.1; considerable decline in rates but recent indications of stalling at a higher level (Figure 2)

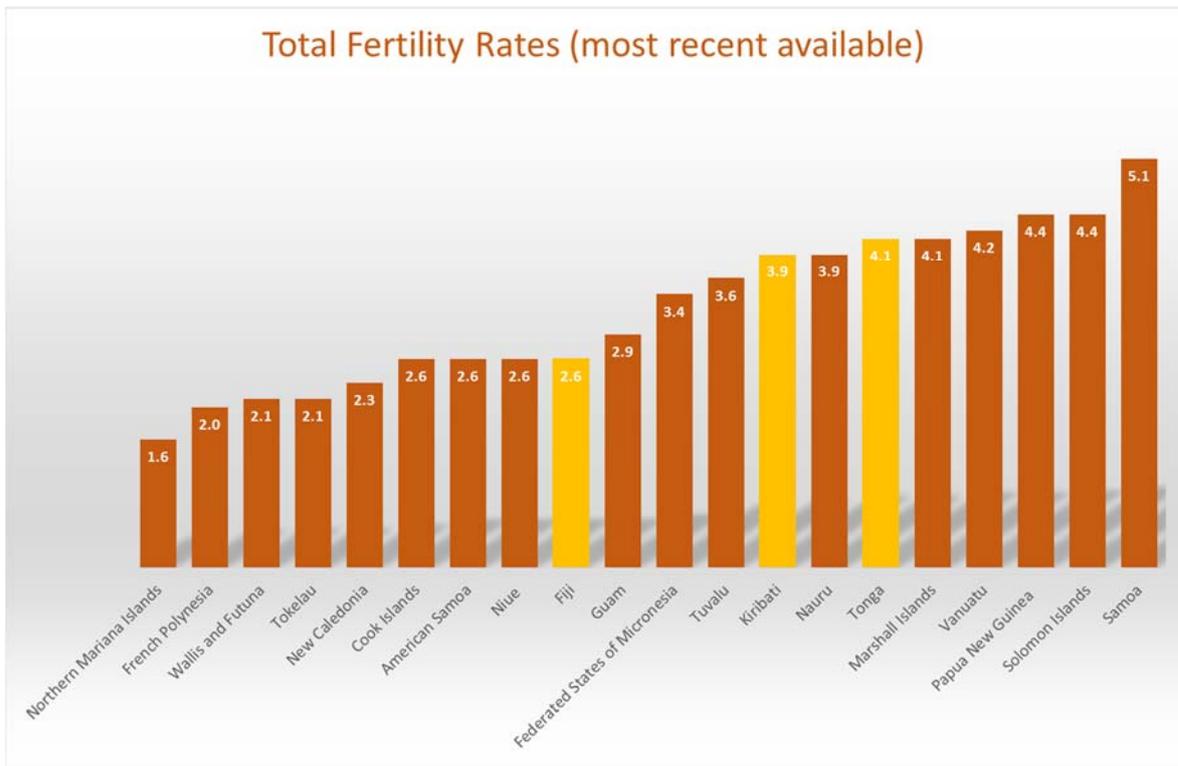


Figure 2 Total fertility rates, Pacific (most recent)

Data source: SPC 2016

3.4 Migration

Net migration rates in the region are largely derived from estimates of intercensal population change, which means some kinds of migration, such as short-term and circular migration, typical of temporary-work migration such as RSE workers, are not captured. However, since they track longer term movements, net migration rates are important for population and labour force projections.

3.4.1 Net Migration Movements Fiji

There is a net loss of about 5,300 Fijian citizens per year (SPC 2016). This seems to be mostly migrants gaining permanent residence in New Zealand, Australia and

Canada. Between 2008 and 2017 (June to July years), an annual average number of 2,600 Fijian citizens gained permanent residence in New Zealand (New Zealand Immigration Service 2017), accounting for about half of net migration loss. Over the same period, about 700 Fiji citizens per year have gained permanent residence in Australia (Australian Department of Home Affairs 2018). The resulting net migration loss of 6 per 1,000 population is relatively low within the Pacific region, partly because Fiji has a relatively large total population (880,000), and has a more diversified economy so there are more economic opportunities within the country.

3.4.2 Net Migration Movements Tonga

There is a net loss of about 1,900 Tongan citizens per year. Many of these are permanent and temporary migrants to New Zealand, but also to the USA, Australia and other countries. Between 2008 and 2017, an annual average number of about 800 Tongan citizens gained permanent residence in New Zealand and about 150 gained permanent residence in Australia (Australian Department of Home Affairs 2018; New Zealand Immigration Service 2017). An estimated net migration loss of 18.7 per 1,000 population is the highest rate of out-migration in the Pacific, although not atypical of some other countries in the North and Eastern Pacific. As a result, Tonga records one of the lowest population growth rates in the Pacific.

3.4.3 Net Migration Movement Kiribati

Comparable net migration figures to those of Fiji and Tonga, above, were not available because of issues with the 2015 Census. However, Bedford et al. (2016) analyse a range of hypothetical scenarios for net migration to assess the magnitudes of voluntary movement required to gradually stabilise and then begin to reduce populations in Kiribati (and Tuvalu). Their analysis shows that in the case of Kiribati the net losses have to be at levels never experienced in that country before if they are to play a significant role in stabilising population growth and eventually contributing to population decline. Kiribati has a population growth rate that matches that of the larger countries in the Western Pacific (see Figure 1).

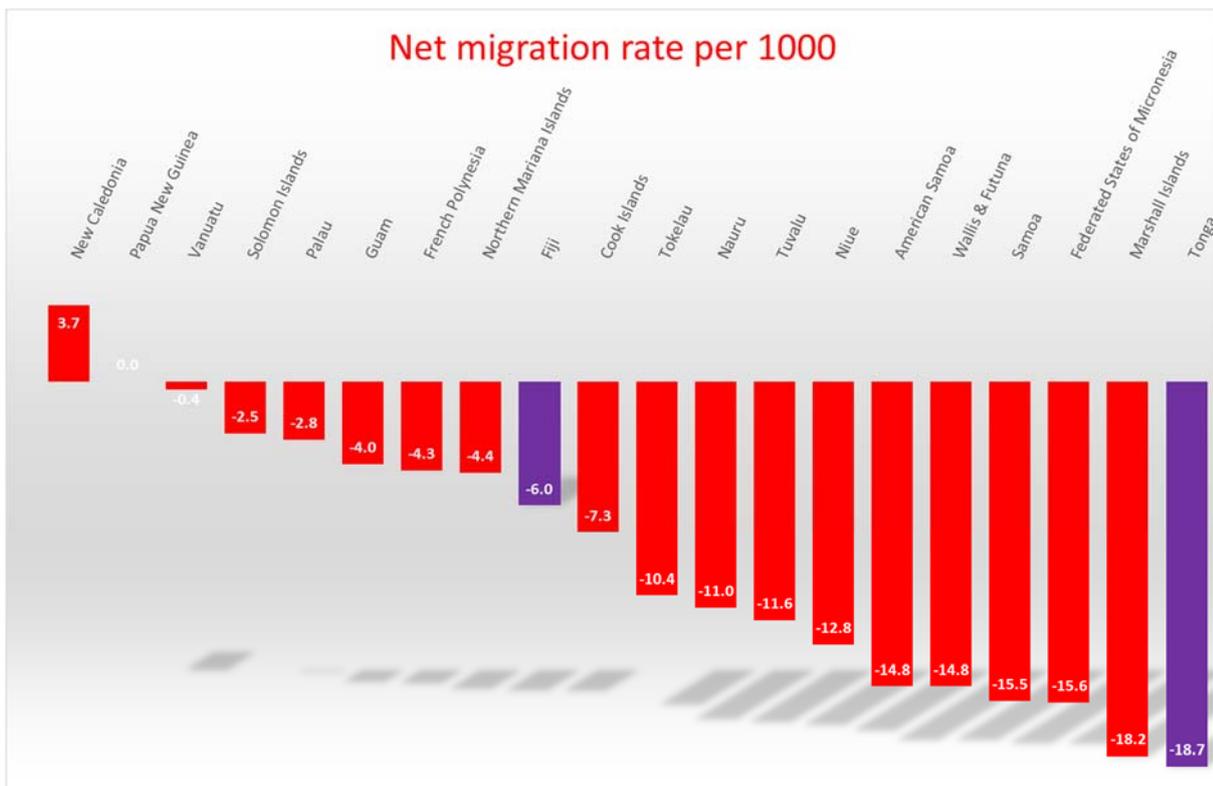


Figure 3 Net migration rates (per 1000), Pacific, 2016

Data source: SPC 2016



3.5 Age-Sex Structure: The Youth Bulge

Fertility levels and migration patterns both contribute to the age-sex structure of a population. Of particular interest in relation to the labour force is the structure of the youth population. When fertility rates have been high and are starting to trend downwards, a “youth bulge” may occur in which there is a relatively high proportion of the population in youth cohorts, sometimes defined as those aged 15 to 24. This can be seen as a “demographic dividend” if there is capacity in the education system, and labour force growth to accommodate new entrants. Conversely, the youth bulge can be seen as a problem when the opposite is true, resulting in undereducation and youth unemployment, or underemployment.

The proportion of the population aged 15 to 24 years for Pacific countries is shown in Figure 4. Overall these proportions are significantly higher than those in New Zealand, where about 15 percent of the population was aged 15 to 24 in 2013. They are also higher than they were in most Pacific countries in earlier decades. Population projections for Pacific countries to 2040, shown in Figure 5, still reveal a relatively large youth bulge, but when compared to the age composition in 2016, show that the youth bulge will have peaked, and started to decline slightly for most Pacific countries.

It should be noted that the youth proportions in Figure 4 might have been even higher if there had not been selective emigration from these countries. Similarly, the proportions shown in Figure 5 are based on projections which incorporate migration assumptions which are age-selective, so would also be higher than if there was no potential for emigration. This is especially the case for Fiji and Tonga, while the relatively fewer migration options available for I-Kiribati are one of the reasons for the relatively large youth bulge in both 2016 and 2040. In any case, both recent data and projected data emphasise that there will be an on-going demand for secondary and tertiary education and for meaningful engagement in the economy by youth, through opportunities for employment, either in home countries or overseas.

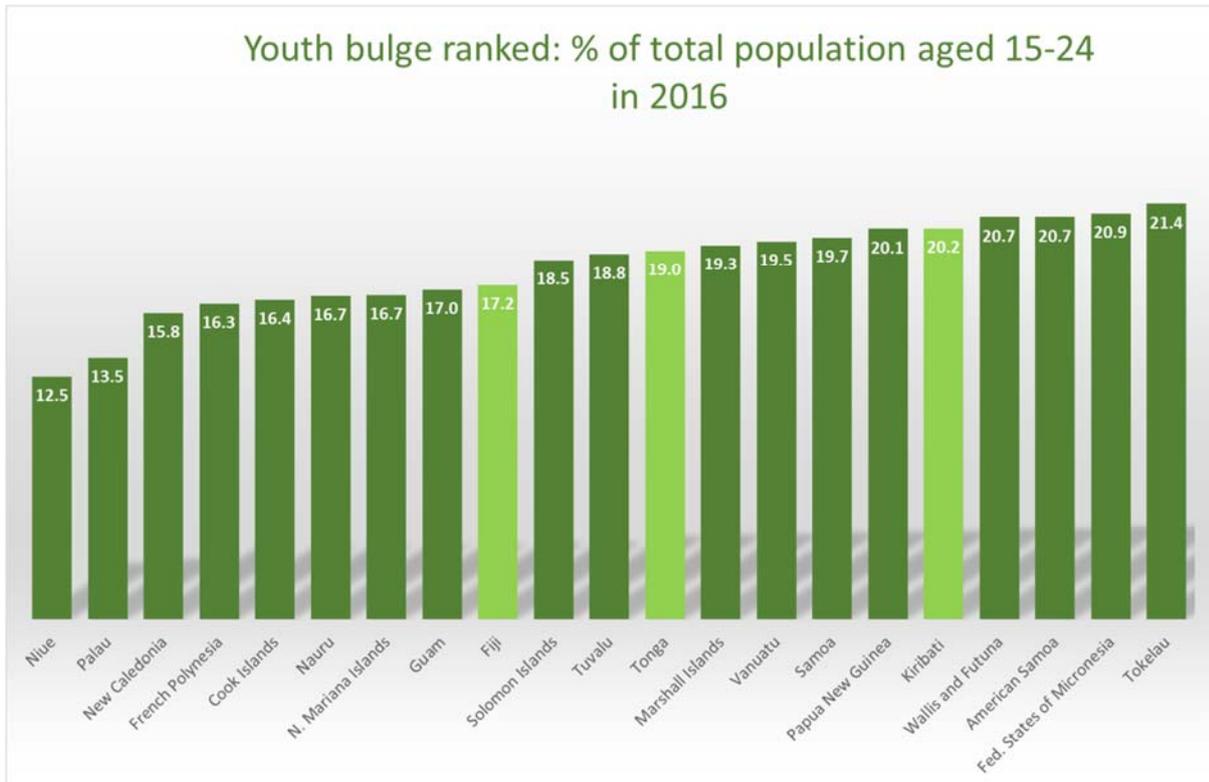


Figure 4 Pacific youth bulge ranked: Percentage of total population aged 15–24 in 2016

Data source: SPC 2016 (unpublished data)

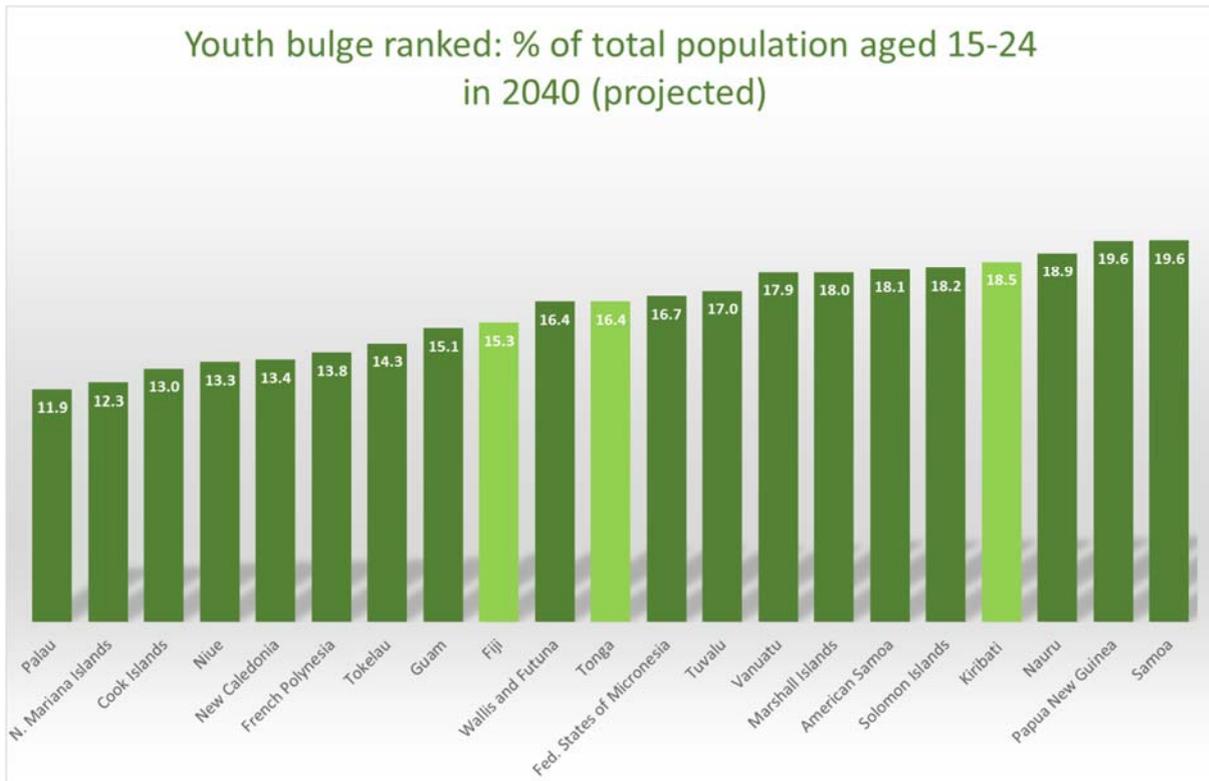


Figure 5 Pacific youth bulge ranked: Percentage of total population aged 15–24 in 2040 (projected)

Data source: SPC 2016 (unpublished data)

3.6 Summary

This brief analysis shows that only some Pacific island countries, including Kiribati, have reason to be concerned about the demographic impacts of a growing population. Fertility is still relatively high in all countries, but overall population growth is slowed by out-migration. This is especially notable in Tonga. However, a closer analysis of population dynamics in Tonga reveals significant age and gender selectivity in seasonal migration (mostly men aged 20–39). Variations in patterns of population growth and the impact of temporary as well as longer term international migration means Pacific countries will need to continue to address demographic impera-

tives like a growing youth population requiring education, employment and other social services.

From an economic perspective, governments tend to be positive about economic growth, even though indicators of unemployment, trade deficits and high reliance on remittances are on-going issues of concern. In particular, in Tonga the significance of remittances from seasonal workers is now impacting on record numbers of households.

It is in this context that the impacts of seasonal labour mobility need to be understood.

4. A New Era of Seasonal Labour Mobility

As noted in the introduction, labour mobility in the Pacific continues to attract considerable attention from policy makers, researchers and communities across the Pacific. Although frequently presented as a triple-win initiative, increasingly other benefits and shortcomings are coming to light both anecdotally and also via systematic research (see Underhill-Sem & Marsters 2016). To a large extent, the benefits seem to outweigh the shortcomings, but it is timely to examine the dynamics of seasonal labour mobility from the perspective of sustainable development. To do this we suggest a more refined analysis by extending the original triple-win policy framework to a four-dimensional win-loss policy assessment framework (see Table 2).

The proposed win-loss policy assessment framework is consistent with the aspirations of the SDGs which notably aspire to an inclusive and equitable social and economic future for all. Inequality is a key development issue and the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the “2030 Agenda”) are the globally agreed means to make these aspirations universal and applicable to all nations in the global south and north (Sustainable Development Solutions Network 2015). The movement of people is included in the 2030 Agenda through Goal 8 which recognises that “rights must move with people, through the prevention of trafficking and forced labour, the protection of labour and the facilitation of safe mobility” (Holliday et al. 2018, p. 3). Gender inequality is also part of Agenda 2030, with Goal 5 explicitly seeking to achieve gender equality and empower all

women and girls. Combined, Goals 5 and 8 address “the need to protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, in particular women migrants” (p. 3). Increasingly, development policy is moving beyond the face of the 2030 Agenda and recognising that instrumental approaches to meeting global development aspirations require the surfacing of tensions in order to address them. This is the purpose of the proposed quadruple win-loss framework presented in this paper.

During the period in which this research was undertaken there were many other political and economic events that sharpened our thinking about the critical importance of seasonal labour mobility. At the regional level these included the PACER Plus trade discussions, two Pacific Labour Mobility Annual Meetings (PLMAM), and a newly elected New Zealand government with a new approach to Pacific development. Kiribati was also embarking on a new national development planning process. Fiji was continuing to advance its labour market legislation of 2009 (Fiji National Employment Centre Decree no. 54 of 2009) as well as taking the lead on Pacific climate-change initiatives, and Tonga suffered from the devastating effects of Tropical Cyclone Gita as well as having a snap election. These events and processes make for very complex policy environments. The following comments are made with this highly dynamic policy context in mind and in full awareness that this continues to be a time of significant change.

4.1 How Many Workers?

In the 2016/17 season, just over 14,000 seasonal workers travelled from the Pacific to New Zealand and Australia under the two seasonal work programmes. Most were from Vanuatu (6,321) but many were from Tonga (4,512). Table 4 shows the numbers of arrivals under the two seasonal programmes by Pacific country alongside the estimated total population of the country. Clearly, some countries are providing substantively more workers per head of total population than other countries. This imbalance is a

source of active discussion among sending and receiving countries, with some supporting a more equitable spread while others believe that some countries have greater needs because of their more limited domestic market. This highlights the tension between donor countries who see seasonal work programmes as demand driven and Pacific countries who are seek recognition of such programmes as being part of Pacific country development programmes. This tension is clearly evident at the PLMAMs.

Table 4 SWP and RSE Seasonal Workers, Arrivals 2016/17, and Total Estimated Population of Country

Country	Est. Mid-Year Pop.	SWP	RSE	Total	% Total in Schemes
Western Pacific					
Fiji	880,400	190	355	545	3.3
Papua New Guinea	8,185,200	139	121	260	1.6
Solomon Islands	651,700	87	593	680	4.1
Vanuatu	289,700	2,150	4,171	6,321	38.1
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>8,474,900</i>	<i>2,566</i>	<i>5,240</i>	<i>7,806</i>	<i>47.0</i>
North Pacific					
Kiribati	115,300	124	189	313	1.9
Nauru	10,800	0	17	17	0.1
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>126,102</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>330</i>	<i>2.0</i>
Eastern Pacific					
Samoa	194,000	309	1,690	1,999	12.0
Tonga	100,600	2,690	1,822	4,512	27.2
Tuvalu	10,100	0	80	80	0.5
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>304,700</i>	<i>2,999</i>	<i>3,592</i>	<i>6,591</i>	<i>39.7</i>
Pacific total		5,689	9,038	14,727	88.7
Countries in Asia	Na	477	1,399	1,876	11.3
Total Pacific plus Asia	na	6,166	10,437	16,603	100.0

Source: Bedford, R., and R. Ingram (2018) From unpublished data, Australian Department of Home Affairs and Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. Population estimates, Secretarial of Pacific Community (SPC) 2016.

All Pacific island countries have workers overseas on a range of temporary as well as long-term visas. In Kiribati's case, the seafarers are the largest group of workers employed overseas. In Fiji, workers on essential skills visas in New Zealand and Australia, or in other forms of professional work elsewhere, greatly exceed numbers on seasonal work visas. In Tonga, the seasonal work schemes in Australia and New Zealand are the largest employers of temporary workers.

One way to begin to understand the impact of seasonal work programmes, is to recognise that the age and gender composition of

the seasonal workers is highly skewed towards men aged 20–39 years. When you compare the cohorts of seasonal workers with those in the total population of each Pacific country, some countries have extremely high percentages (see Table 5). This demographic impact is wide ranging, as many countries are beginning to recognise, and there are efforts to include more women. However, in Tonga, one quarter of all men ages 20–39 were employed as seasonal workers in New Zealand and Australia in 2016/17, and this is of concern, as expressed not just by government officials in Tonga but also those in other Pacific countries.

Table 5 Shares of Source Country Male Populations Aged 20-39 in the Seasonal Workforce, 2016/17

Country	SWP/RSE males 20-39	Source country males 20–39	% recruited 2016/17
Western Pacific			
Fiji	413	140,970	0.29
Papua New Guinea	132	1,327,960	0.01
Solomon Islands	371	103,390	0.36
Vanuatu	4,269	44,360	9.62
<i>Sub-total</i>	5,186	1,616,680	0.32
North Pacific			
Kiribati	207	17,930	1.15
Nauru	14	1,910	0.76
<i>Sub-total</i>	221	19,840	1.11
Eastern Pacific			
Samoa	1,587	27,800	5.71
Tonga	3,276	13,000	25.20
Tuvalu	47	1,510	3.14
<i>Sub-total</i>	4,910	42,310	11.61
Pacific total	10,290	3,315,350	0.31
Timor Leste	282	157,080	0.18
Total	10,576	3,472,430	0.30

Source: Bedford and Ingram (2018) SWP/RSE workforce, authors' estimates; country populations, unpublished data, the Pacific and the UN Population Division.

4.1.1 The Number of I-Kiribati Seasonal Workers

Kiribati has been participating in the RSE scheme since it was initiated in 2007. Numbers recruited each year did not exceed 100 until the year ended June 2011 when there was considerable assistance from MBIE's RSE Unit (now the Pacifica Labour and Skills team) in securing new employers, for women especially. Numbers of I-Kiribati seasonal workers arriving in New Zealand each financial year since 2010/11 have fluctuated between 127 (2013/14) and 231 (2017/18) due primarily to shifting patterns of employer demand.

A distinctive feature of Kiribati's RSE workforce is its gender composition. Since 2011, women have comprised almost half of the total seasonal workers arriving in New Zealand each year, and in some years more than half. This gender disparity is due in large measure to a mix of employer preferences and special support given by the RSE Unit to encourage greater recruiting from Kiribati.⁴ In the year ended June 2016, the great majority of men (92%) and women (85%) were aged between 20 and 39 years. These are higher shares of younger workers than tend to be found for the RSE workforces from other participating countries.

4.1.2 The Number of Fijian Seasonal Workers

Fiji has been participating in the RSE scheme since 2015 and numbers of workers have grown quickly from 30 in 2015 to 360 in 2017. Fiji has participated in temporary labour migration schemes in New Zealand

⁴ Encouraging employers to recruit from Kiribati and Tuvalu has been complicated by the much higher travel costs between Tarawa and Funafuti on the one hand and New Zealand on the other. This has resulted in a number of initiatives being taken by

in the past and there is an expectation that their participation in the two seasonal schemes will increase. Whether they have a marketable point of difference as seasonal workers remains debatable but their successful participation in past schemes could be stressed when promoting Fiji seasonal workers to prospective employers. In this context, it is important to keep in mind that there are some employers in New Zealand who only want Fijian women workers for their seasonal work. Leveraging this marketing opportunity would be an important step towards ensuring more women can participate in the RSE workforce.

4.1.3 The Number of Tongan Seasonal Workers

As mentioned above, Tonga has a very high per-capita rate of participation in the RSE and SWP – in 2016/17 almost a quarter of men aged 20–39 (Bedford & Ingram 2018). This has had noticeable impacts on increased levels of remittances and informal trade as noted by the growth in the number of containers sent by RSE workers arriving in Tonga. The social impacts of having so many men in the productive and reproductive years of their life working abroad was also noted by some government officials as well as by those in the private sector, especially in agriculture and fisheries. These were mostly centred on tensions in families around relationships (between wives and husbands, siblings and parents and between siblings), the use of remittances and involvement in significant social and cultural events.

Immigration New Zealand to increase the attractiveness of the two central Pacific atoll countries as sources of labour migrants (see Bedford 2013 for further details).

4.2 New Directions and Policy Development

It was generally acknowledged by interviewees that labour mobility policies should be part of wider development discussions. Kiribati has taken this thinking into its SDG, VNR and Kiribati Development Plan Mid-Term Review. Tonga and Fiji have also started this wider framing as reported at the PLMAM in Honiara in 2018. Across each of the case study countries it was identified that new directions and policy development in seasonal labour mobility needed to occur in two areas. Firstly, it was identified that policy should be informed by substantive understanding of the most important aspects of seasonal labour mobility participation. This includes looking more deeply at the finer details of associated social impacts, domestic labour market shortages, remittance rates and uses, and sustainability of labour demand. The second area that each of the case study countries identified is the need for higher levels of internal and intra-regional debates on labour mobility.

4.2.1 Kiribati – Long-Term Strategic Planning

In Kiribati, there was an awareness by the government that the Republic was in a new era of labour mobility. There was a sense of anticipation and excitement about developing strategies to access new opportunities opening up in Australia. This included new thinking around improved collaboration between training agencies. In 2015, following extensive consultation with and assistance from the ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries, the Government of Kiribati (2015) adopted a comprehensive National

Labour Migration. This has been integrated into the Kiribati SDG, VNR and Kiribati Development Plan Mid-Term Review.

The policy landscape and structural arrangements for labour mobility have undergone significant development in recent years. Some of the more significant developments include:

- the formal adoption of the recently signed PACER Plus Agreement and its associated Labour Mobility Arrangement (LMA);
- the on-going investment by New Zealand and Australia through their aid programmes in the development of Kiribati's infrastructure, especially in South Tarawa and Kiritimati Island, but also in the outer islands of the Gilbert Group;
- the scoping of further phases of New Zealand's Strengthening Pacific Partnership (SPP) programme, Australia's Labour Mobility Assistance Programme (LMAP) capacity-building support for labour mobility in the Pacific (replaced on July 1 2018 by the Pacific Labour Scheme)
- the evolving KV20 initiative which is being led by the Office of Te Beretenti and the Cabinet.

The long-term strategic planning framework (KV20) for Kiribati is committed to securing improved livelihoods for people throughout the Republic (Government of Kiribati 2016). There is a strong focus on improving connectivity between islands (transport infrastructure and social and other communications media). Fishing and tourism are seen to be the industries which will underpin the cash economy of

increasing numbers of outer islanders, as well as urban residents, with a continued emphasis on sustainable productive self-employment, especially in the outer islands.

Temporary labour mobility overseas is a critical component of KV20, partly for income-generating reasons and partly for the opportunities it provides for acquisition of skills and knowledge that can contribute to development in the islands. Increasing the opportunities for I-Kiribati to find long-term or permanent livelihoods overseas is also considered to be important, but the main driver of the current policy is about future development in Kiribati.

The Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development (MLHRD) has made a significant investment in strengthening the team managing overseas labour mobility initiatives. This was especially noticeable to one of the research team who has visited Kiribati several times since the RSE scheme became operational in 2007. The Director of Labour outlined the new structure including two new groups: one overseeing the marketing of I-Kiribati labour to prospective employers, and the other overseeing management of the recruitment of labour.

Managing the development of Kiribati's responses to seasonal and temporary labour demands in Australia and New Zealand is in the hands of a larger and more diversified team of staff in place than was the case in earlier years, supported by strong leadership in MLHRD. In addition, other senior government officials indicated that there was commitment across government to maximising opportunities for I-Kiribati employment in New Zealand and Australia.

4.2.2 Fiji – On-going Labour Market Developments

The long-term strategic planning framework for labour markets in Fiji rests on the Government of the Republic of Fiji National Employment Centre Decree 2009 (Decree no. 54 of 2009). This legislation commits to securing improved livelihoods for people throughout the country via a six-step process. The first step is the establishment of the National Employment Centre. Subsequent steps are the establishment of the formal employment services, the self-employment service, the Fiji Volunteer Service and the foreign employment service. The latter includes skilled and unskilled workers for work contracts that range in time frame from short to longer periods and includes those embarking on seasonal labour contracts in New Zealand and Australia.

There was a clear understanding that promoting temporary mobility via the stages contained in the National Employment Centre Decree would increase opportunities for Fijians to engage in work off-shore while also contributing to improving livelihoods in Fiji. A particularly innovative way of doing this was the plan to link returning workers with initiatives aimed at developing small- and medium-sized enterprises. There is also a well-founded understanding of considerable opportunities globally in the care-giving sector with early plans to begin to mobilise a Fijian response to meet the labour demands of this opportunity. Inevitably, the reality is likely to differ to what is in the legislation.

Demographic concerns were not mentioned as a major driver of current discussions about future labour market development in Fiji. Yet key features were well known: a moderate population growth rate, an ageing population, steady emigration, increasing urbanisation and some rural decline. Internal migration and urbanisation have resulted in the emergence of ethnically mixed communities and an ever-increasing number of people on low wages and in precarious employment. In turn, these processes have contributed to shifting the nature of politics in the country from one based primarily on ethnicity towards one based on economic interests. Coups by the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (comprised predominantly of ethnic Fijians) have deposed democratically elected governments on four separate occasions, which has impeded the trajectory of political development and contributed to a significant change in Fiji's demographics. Concerns over political instability and a reduction over time in the relatively free movement of people, will continue to mean more skilled migration in the coming years. The 2018 democratic election returned the same administration, so radical shifts in policy are unlikely.

Besides the longer term migration to Pacific-rim countries, Fijian professionals have been moving to several Pacific island countries to work on contracts for between 6 months to several years. These are mostly teachers who have retired at the compulsory age of 55. These countries include the Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu. Some of these movements have been incorporated into the government's voluntary employment scheme. Fiji is also experiencing a shortage of workers in its agricultural and construction

sectors. Recently, immigrant labour from several Asian countries has been recruited. These workers are from Bangladesh and China as well as South Korea.

Fiji's Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations has made a significant investment in strengthening the team managing overseas labour mobility initiatives. This means they are preparing "pools" of workers which will allow seasonal workers to be sent at short notice. However, at the time of our visit, MEPIR did not have a close relationship with the Ministry of Trade which was responsible for PACER Plus, which Fiji has not yet signed. This apparent contradiction is one of the reasons for suggesting that more nuanced approaches to framing the analysis of labour mobility are needed. Nevertheless, there is a proactive approach to taking advantage of opportunities for improving or establishing new employment possibilities for Fiji within the labour markets of other Pacific countries (for example, assisting an Australian recruitment company in October 2017 to provide security guards in Papua New Guinea).

Donors and Fijian policy makers still need careful thought to design the kind of labour mobility programme that fits with Fiji's longer term, strategic, sustainable development ambitions. Population mobility has meant a declining number of rural inhabitants especially in the younger and more educated cohorts. As the demand for short-term labour increases abroad, there will be an inevitable shift back to recruiting such labour from urban and peri-urban areas. The on-going developments in temporary, overseas, employment opportunities for unskilled workers including, but not limited to, seasonal work

schemes to New Zealand, Australia and within the Pacific, are of real interest to Fiji.

4.2.3 Tonga – Cross-Government Collaboration on Labour Market Analysis

The political imperatives in Tonga over the last couple of years have seen its government seeking to sustain a coherent economic and social programme. The snap election in August 2017 signalled another moment where the incumbent government sought a renewed mandate for its vision. The newly elected government of November 2017 saw the return of the previous government with more electoral support; but, at the time of the research, it still faced challenges settling into business, given national, regional and global imperatives. This included finalising permanent heads of all government ministries, managing large debts to China and preparing for climate change. There were indications of renewed attention to labour mobility with the newly appointed Minister of Internal Affairs publicly discussing new policies on labour mobility. These policies were to address issues such as the recruitment and preparation of workers for labour mobility schemes, as well as the problem of absconding workers.

4.3 Education and Vocational Training – Future Pathways

Closely related to our discussions with officials about the sustainability of seasonal labour mobility was the idea of future pathways for participants of the labour mobility programmes to New Zealand or Australia. While the underlying logic of seasonal labour mobility programmes is that workers return to their home countries, the related notion is that they return with resources and skills which enable them to

In the last part of 2018, Tonga began the process of developing a broader policy which also pays attention to the Tongan domestic labour market.

Meanwhile the Labour Sending Unit in Tonga has been maintaining a steady flow of workers to recruit, train and dispatch to seasonal work in horticulture and viticulture in New Zealand and Australia. There are, however, other opportunities for semi-skilled and skilled Tongans to work in temporary employment abroad, earning higher salaries than they would in Tonga. This practice of international recruitment by visiting agents has real effects on the local domestic market and requires careful management across sectors, especially fisheries and agriculture.

One key observation from the research in Tonga was the acknowledgement of developing specific sending-country policy reforms to ensure that social impacts are minimised and economic and educational gains are maximised. Labour mobility policy is positioned in Tonga as central to poverty alleviation and sustainable development, and advancements were being made to approach the future of Tongan labour mobility as a “whole-of-government issue.”

develop better future employment options at home (see Cummings 2016). Ideally, this would be employment in their island home but for some their improved skill levels can make them more competitive in other visa categories should they wish to permanently leave their country. More policy work is needed to ensure there is alignment between education, vocational and trade training in island countries and skill

development and assessment during seasonal labour mobility programmes, especially for returning workers.

4.3.1 Kiribati – Kiribati Institute of Technology and the Marine Training Centre

In Kiribati, vocational training is well developed through the renovated Marine Training Institute (MTI), which continues to train seafarers for the international market. In addition, the Kiribati Institute of Technology (KIT) has moved rapidly to be granted accreditation as a higher education and training institute by the Pacific Board for Educational Quality (PBEQ). This provides Kiribati with the ability to develop a more qualified workforce that may be more competitive for jobs in other sectors abroad.

The seasonal labour recruitment team collaborates with KIT's Employment Services Section to deliver appropriate, and wide-ranging, pre-departure briefings to workers heading overseas on temporary visas. There is also training for workers employed in the Northern Australia Worker's Pilot Program (NAWPP) in the tourism and aged-care industries.

The MTI and the KIT are positive about their ability to keep up with future opportunities for seasonal workers, especially in Australia. Providing broad-based literacy and numeracy skills is an increasing part of new programmes and these are combined with the technical skills learnt while working overseas, to enhance livelihood prospects on their return home. These are also consistent with meeting the aspirations of the SDG goals. However, there is an urgent need for more detailed gender-sensitive research into the extent to

which seasonal work overseas is providing opportunities for return workers to develop more rewarding livelihoods in the islands. Detailed research on Kiribati's seafarers by Borovnik (2003), in the late 1990s and early 2000s, demonstrated mixed outcomes in this regard.

4.3.2 Tonga – "Tonga Skills"

There are relatively new opportunities to build educational and skills pathways into and from seasonal work programmes which align with Tonga's strategic development goals and the SDGs. These programmes would benefit from systematic monitoring to capture the flows of labour, by gender, so as to better understand the dynamics of the labour market. Expanding assessments of prior learning and skills and strengthening the uptake of skills and improvement on returning home are being carefully developed. There are various models in operation such as the Australian-funded Tonga Skills programme that is working to provide better access to quality skills-development services. These skills-development services are linked to economic development priorities and sustainable growth opportunities across Tonga.

There are opportunities to begin embedding a robust process of collecting data of prior learning and moving towards synthesising education and on-the-job training with qualification frameworks. This will raise the capability of the Tongan workforce and ensure a supply of labour that has the ability to effectively engage in domestic and international labour markets. It is important that employment-related education and training is dynamic and responds quickly to local industry demands.

4.3.3 Fiji – Assessing Prior Learning

Over the last 3 decades, the loss of professional and trades people overseas has affected Fiji's labour market with skill shortages in several areas. Besides specialist medical people, there is a growing demand for affordable and skilled trades people in the construction industry. While skilled personnel are increasingly being imported from abroad to fill this demand. At the same time, the lowering of the retirement age has meant many skilled workers and professionals are now without work and available for, and sometimes competitive in, regional labour markets.

After the earthquake in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 2011, the scheme to recruit skilled workers internationally, including from the Pacific, highlighted the ability of many Fijian builders, who did not have formal qualifications, to obtain work overseas. A process of assessing prior learning was successfully able to identify capable workers who were recruited on

essential skills temporary visas. With continued skills building, which they gained from working in Christchurch, some builders were able to transition to residency via the Skilled Migrant Category. This pathway from temporary to permanent residence is an option for some, but this will depend on the type of visa, the extent to which temporary work builds skills, as well as the availability of robust assessments of prior learning and appropriate skilled-employment opportunities in New Zealand.

There is definite need for Fiji to prioritise accredited and/or certified training programmes in specific in-demand sectors both in-country and abroad. These sectors include construction, other trade skills areas, and in care giving and the hospitality industry. Given the more diversified economic structure of Fiji, sustainable development policies have more levers to work with but a fundamental one will be to develop appropriate education and training policies for decent work – in Fiji, regionally and internationally.

4.4 Distinctive Marketing of Pacific Seasonal Workers

Given the growing competition for access to seasonal labour markets in New Zealand and Australia, new employers of Pacific workers will require some education about the scheme and about the people they are employing. Countries could assist in promoting what they consider to be distinguishing features of their citizens in addition to having healthy, fit and willing workers. Obviously, these distinguishing features are highly generalised but they can facilitate early engagement from which new relationships with accredited employers can develop.

All countries should send delegates to the New Zealand RSE Employers' Conference. This event brings together most of the accredited RSEs and ancillary service providers, such as health insurance providers and the Pacific labour liaison officers based in New Zealand, as well as representatives of key government agencies, to discuss issues linked with their labour needs and the development of their businesses. The employment services sections of ministries in Pacific countries would also benefit from attending these conferences because there is always

discussion about pre-departure training, workforce development and enhanced skills training for Pacific workers in New Zealand.

The RSE Employers' Conference provides a very important opportunity for members of marketing and recruitment teams to network with employers and discuss possible opportunities for employment of workers. The approach to "selling" the special qualities of I-Kiribati or Fijian or Tongan workers to employers in New Zealand requires a more nuanced approach than the kind of usual marketing that might be done via a stall at an agricultural fair. It also provides an opportunity for Pacific countries to demonstrate their commitment to meeting SDGs on decent work, protection of workers' rights and gender equality.

4.4.1 Kiribati – "they can work in glass houses"

There are some employers in New Zealand, like Southern Paprika in Warkworth, who only want I-Kiribati workers for their seasonal work. The reason for this represents a distinctive marketing opportunity for Kiribati. Southern Paprika have found that it is only the I-Kiribati men who can work consistently throughout the day in the heat generated by glass-house production of capsicums. I-Kiribati are used to working in their own country in a level of heat that is not as common in many other tropical Pacific countries. This may be a marketing edge that can be used in some areas of labour demand in both Australia and New Zealand.

There are other opportunities for employment of I-Kiribati in New Zealand that are under active discussion (a pilot for workers in the fishing industry) or being scoped in the tourism sectors. Given that Kiribati is

already developing training programmes for workers in Australia's tourism and aged-care sectors MLHRD, KIT and MTC will be well-positioned to move to take advantage of any new pilot projects that get off the ground in New Zealand.

4.4.2 Fiji – "more than security guards and soldiers"

Fiji has some opportunities to grow the numbers of workers it has in seasonal work in Australia by participating in agricultural fairs and other major recruitment drives by peak bodies and state-led promotions in Australia. To maximise these opportunities, dedicated liaison officers in Australia can assist with following up contacts made at the agricultural fairs, identifying potential future employers and providing support for SWP workers when they are in-country.

Opportunities are starting to emerge in the tourism industry and the aged-care support industry but it is important that responses in Fiji to these labour demands are managed carefully and that finding appropriate employers is prioritised.

With its human resource capabilities, Fiji can be proactive in a range of areas in both short-term and long-term labour migration, including close liaison with destination countries and the collection of pertinent information about labour markets in various sectors of the economy. Policy decisions about strategically training and deploying labour can be made on the basis of such up-to-date information.

4.4.3 Tonga – "I always picked more than my allocation"

Tongans have had a long-standing presence in New Zealand's labour market – both as permanent residents and citizens but also as

temporary seasonal workers. The presence of a sizeable Tongan diaspora in New Zealand and, often via New Zealand, in Australia, contributes to a situation where it is not easy to distinguish Tongan workers employed as seasonal workers from other Tongan workers employed in the two countries. However, given the critical importance of remittances to Tonga's national economy, policy makers in Tonga are committed to maintaining an attractive seasonal workforce. To strategically position Tongan workers into the foreign employment market, policy makers have identified features and skills that differentiate Tongans from other Pacific workers, like their strong community commitments and physical abilities.

There is interest in assessing and appropriately compensating the “work hard” mentality of Tongan workers, including closely analysing employer productivity assessments especially as they relate to worker's wages. There is also

interest in exploring new and innovative ways for women to participate in seasonal labour schemes, an especially sensitive issue given cultural norms about the importance and value of women in Tongan family life. This might require different models such as women working as a part of women-only teams and investigating other sectors which do not require hard physical labour.

There is also clear recognition of the need for further support for liaison officers in New Zealand and Australia to cover the range of problems that have faced Tongan seasonal workers in New Zealand and Australia, as well as their families back in Tonga (see Section 4.6.3 on social impacts). This is a good example of how the proposed quadruple wins-losses policy assessment framework can be useful. If there are these kinds of drawbacks on one dimension, what does this mean for the other dimensions given the imperatives driving labour mobility schemes?

4.5 Emerging Regional Labour Markets

The LMA in the PACER Plus Agreement focuses on access by Pacific workers to labour markets in Australia and New Zealand. Pacific leaders have been very keen to achieve this for many years. Now that the PACER Plus has been signed by several Pacific countries it is important to focus on leveraging the LMA and its associated PLMAM to realise this access. Given that Fiji was not a signatory to the PACER Plus Agreement, it will continue to be prudent for Fiji and New Zealand and Australia to find other ways of meeting emerging labour market opportunities in neighbouring Pacific countries. This will require more work in Fiji between the

Ministry of Trade, which negotiates PACER Plus, and the MEPIR which manages the relevant labour acts including labour mobility programmes.

Workers from Fiji, Samoa and Tonga have long been mobile in the region as professionals (teachers, nurses, civil servants), in the church, and as ships' captains and crew. There is some research on intra-regional labour migration (Naidu & Vaike 2016; Rai 2017; Rokoduru 2006) but not a lot is known about the numbers of men and women involved and the sorts of gaps they are filling in Pacific labour markets. It is clear though that there will be

opportunities for the employment of Pacific people in other Pacific countries, as well as in parts of Asia, over the next 20 years. Labour market opportunities for trained Fijians to access jobs that already exist beyond Australia and New Zealand.

Given that the RSE and SWP are demand driven, and therefore subject to constraints on the number that will be recruited each year, it is important that other possible regional markets are considered as an outlet for all skill levels of Pacific workers. There will be shortages of labour to care for the older Pacific populations in countries that have experienced heavy migration to New

4.6 Social Impacts Assessment

Social impacts of labour mobility refer to the ways families and communities adjust to having many of their mainly younger adult men and women away from their spouses/partners, children, and extended families for long periods of time. Under these circumstances, significant adjustments must be made to economic activities, social responsibilities and engagement, and cultural maintenance and cohesion. Some impacts mentioned include marital dissolution or family abandonment, domestic violence, poor nutrition of workers and/or those who remain at home, disciplinary problems with children, cultural transgressions, and extreme emotions felt by workers and those who remain at home. These also have important implications for mental health – something that has been ignored in most of the research on seasonal employment schemes to date.

However, other challenges also exist, especially around mitigating the social impacts on families, which is also relevant

Zealand, Australia and the United States, such as the Cook Islands, Niue and Samoa. There is already migration of Fijian and Filipina aged-care workers to the Cook Islands. Most of Kiribati's 20th-century labour migration, until the seafarer employment began in the late 1960s, was to other Pacific countries – Nauru (phosphate industry), Vanuatu (copra industry) and Fiji (students finding work). Critically, taking advantage of regional labour markets requires closer analysis of the formal domestic markets in Pacific countries, in particular in the productive sectors of agriculture and fisheries.

to achievement of the SDGs globally (that is including New Zealand and Australia) especially around gender equality, the right to move and the right to decent work. This was discussed more fully in Kiribati and in Tonga than in Fiji.

4.6.1 Kiribati – Generational Experiences

Kiribati is very well placed to identify some of the costs, in addition to the benefits of temporary overseas labour mobility, by drawing collectively on the lessons learned by the employment of seafarers over the past 50 years. Because of this, and the availability of training facilities, Kiribati is well placed to take the lead in including more systematic consideration of the social costs of temporary mobility into their in-country responses to new work opportunities. The 2015 Kiribati National Labour Migration Policy is a useful step forward and deserves more support from development partners. It draws on the

research done on seafarers and recognises that social impacts need to be addressed for sustainable development.

Kiribati has a very long history of overseas labour migration dating back more than 170 years. Much of this was within the region, with the main destination being Nauru between the 1920s and the 1990s. During the years when phosphate extraction was at its peak, between 1,000 and 1,500 I-Kiribati were working on Nauru at a time when the total population of Kiribati was half its current size. Contract employment on Nauru was a major source of cash for families throughout Kiribati for several decades.

Since 1967 there has been a steady stream of seafarers trained at the MTC employed on cargo ships operating from Hamburg. Numbers overseas at any one time have fluctuated depending on demand. There has been some detailed research on seafarer migration examining both its economic as well as its social benefits and costs. The research by Dr Maria Borovnik (Massey University, New Zealand) is especially important in this regard. Her findings about some of the social impacts of lengthy absences of young single and married I-Kiribati men have considerable relevance for Kiribati in the new era of overseas temporary labour migration of mainly young adult men to Australia and New Zealand (see, for example, Borovnik 2012, 2011, 2007; also, Kagan 2016).

It is timely to build a stronger “social impacts” dimension into overseas migration programmes. Kiribati has an opportunity to be a leader in the region in this regard, building on the experiences of the seafarers and their families. The workers who will be

going to Australia under the NAWPP will be entering contracts that are not dissimilar in length from those of many seafarers. They will be working in isolated resorts, very different from cargo ships, admittedly, except in the impacts that isolation has on interaction with families. The next phases of New Zealand’s SPP programme and Australia’s PLS (Pacific Labour Scheme) will be giving much more emphasis to social impacts on families and communities in the source countries of schemes such as the RSE, SWP and the newly developed pilots.

4.6.2 Fiji – Still Early, but Tough Days with RSE

Fiji has experience with the social impacts of citizens who work abroad for long periods of time mostly in the military and in security services but also in care-giving services. This includes considerable historical experience of Fijians working in New Zealand dating back to the 1960s. However, their early experience with seasonal workers’ at the time of fieldwork was not long enough for interviewees to fully assess the impacts. There were however, concerns around the inappropriateness of the first cohort of workers – most of whom came from urban areas and did not have the right skills for work in the rural horticulture sector.

The existence of a sizeable Fijian diaspora in New Zealand and Australia, and the relative familiarity of life in these countries to urban Fijians, was suggested by officials as contributing to poor work experiences. The social impacts on the workers and families back home included reduced remittances, on-going health problems and being banned from future international

work opportunities. These issues were often exacerbated by a strict policy that banned recruitment from villages where workers had transgressed rules while they were on seasonal contracts. More recent practices of recruitment have targeted rural villages, especially those in particularly impoverished areas. This latter strategy is one which Fiji's department responsible for employment in the 1980s used in a successful temporary worker programme in New Zealand up to the time of the first military coup d'état in May 1987 (Bedford 1989; Levick & Bedford 1988).

Concerns were also raised about the impact of overseas migration on re-building after Tropical Cyclone Winston, when many builders had been recruited to the post-earthquake building in Christchurch. The economic impact of having a shortage of builders at a time when they were needed most is often mitigated by increased remittances from seasonal workers - this occurred after Tropical Cyclone Gita in Tonga as well. The situation remains difficult nonetheless, according to officials, because of a shortage of builders to replace permanent houses.

4.7 Monitoring and Evaluation: Longitudinal Research and Databases

The first recruitment of 30 RSE workers from Fiji generated important learnings which have been incorporated into subsequent recruitment drives with more emphasis on re-entry/ integration briefings. This points to the importance of more systematic and dynamic monitoring and evaluation processes as part of the suite of approaches that will ensure effective and

4.6.3 Tonga – “it's a serious, but sensitive, matter”

RSE liaison officers from Tonga have been asking officials in Immigration New Zealand, for some time now, for greater consideration to be given to the social impacts of the seasonal work schemes at home. They are aware of the serious impact on Tongan families and communities of having an increasing share of their younger male working population (20–39 years) in seasonal employment overseas in Australia and New Zealand (Bedford & Ingram 2018). They have reminded New Zealand employers at the annual RSE Conference that this is also the age group that provides many overseas students as well as workers with skills in demand inside the country as well as in other overseas destinations.

The connection between labour mobility and climate change also requires careful examination, which was made more apparent after Cyclone Gita in February 2018. Increasingly, the impact of climate change is seen [clear] in variable agricultural production in times of drought or flooding (affecting economic activities), the need to prepare for disasters (affecting social practices) and the effect on the environment (such as inundation of low-lying areas and the spread of vector-borne diseases).

sustainable flows into and out of the country.

The issue of successful re-integration of workers into economic and social settings in the islands has been a subject of discussion among officials in Australia, New Zealand, the ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries and Pacific states for some time now. The

ILO Office for Pacific Island Countries (based in Suva) commissioned work on this topic in Papua New Guinea at the time of the Australian seasonal worker pilot (ILO 2015a, 2015b). New Zealand's SPP Programme (now known as Toso Vaka o Manu) and Australia's LMAP (replaced in November 2018 by the Pacific Labour Facility⁵) both have re-integration as a key theme. However, substantive research on the success or otherwise of re-integration programmes has not been carried out to date.

To this end, much can be learnt from ongoing research into understanding the value and use of remittances. There is already a body of past scholarship on remittances in the Pacific but there are gaps in detailed analysis of the way remittances have been used to enhance economic activity in the islands. Given the importance of remittances to the economies of many

island countries, further research on the impacts of remittances would be timely. Recent data from the World Bank estimate that personal remittances received in Fiji were about USD274 million which is 5.4% of GDP; in Kiribati USD18 million or 9.4% of GDP; and in Tonga USD145 million or 34% of GDP. (World Bank 2018)

Some research will also emerge from systematic monitoring and evaluation processes – if these are done in a rigorous and iterative manner – that is, having monitoring and evaluation as part of programme delivery rather than at the end of programmes. Finally, there is considerable potential to initiate household-level longitudinal research. Given the sensitive social and economic impacts mentioned earlier, including the troubling findings that emerged from long-standing research on Kiribati seafarers, careful work is needed at the household level.

⁵ The Pacific Labour Scheme is the name of Australia's new programme allowing migrants from the Pacific to spend up to three years in the country working in a wide range of industries. The Pacific

Labour Facility is an operational facility that is being delivered by Palladium on contract for DFAT. LMAP had the contract at the time of interviews.

5. Policy Opportunities and Recommendations

This is a period of rapid change for seasonal labour mobility policy in the Pacific and there are a number of imperatives to consider when crafting policy opportunities. The development of systematic policy tools, in the context of rapidly emerging new imperatives and opportunities, requires careful discussion involving a range of policy makers in each country. Even so, the uptake of policy tools is an inexact science so we make two broad recommendations:

1. consider the range of policy tools below, and
2. work with the proposed draft wins/losses policy assessment framework to ensure that policy tools are addressing issues across the range of imperatives balanced by a recognition that there are wins and losses.

Three policy areas where **Kiribati** could to achieve its goal of growing employment opportunities were identified:

- developing different approaches to marketing I-Kiribati workers in Australia and New Zealand,
- directly addressing negative social impacts that can arise when workers spend lengthy periods away from their families in overseas employment,
- keeping an eye out for new employment possibilities for I-Kiribati within the labour markets of other Pacific countries, and
- considering the number and location of liaison officers in New Zealand and Australia.

Possible policy tools include: producing profiles of workers, which identify particular

features that make I-Kiribati desirable employees; and including a substantive mandatory session on dealing with family and social relationships through the entire contract process – before workers leave, while they are working off-shore and when they return. These policies need to be regularly reviewed and assessed for their effectiveness.

Three policy areas where **Fiji** could achieve its goal of long-term labour market development are:

- remaining engaged in the development of PACER Plus Agreement and its associated LMA, which Fiji has not signed (as of January 2019). (The minister responsible did indicate that Fiji is close to signing the PACER Plus Agreement late in 2018 [Fiji Times, 8 October, 2018].);
- enhancing the on-going investment by New Zealand and Australia in education, TVET, as well its own short term and longer term apprenticeship training programmes, and labour mobility;
- engaging more closely in further phases of New Zealand's SPP programme (Toso Vaka o Manu) and Australia's new Pacific Labour Scheme and Pacific Labour Facility; and
- considering the number and location of liaison officers in New Zealand and Australia

Possible policy tools include: establishing regular meetings between the Ministries of Labour and Trade to develop a synchronised approach to the operations of labour mobility programmes and the Arrangement on Labour Mobility;

developing a formal process to monitor and evaluate the programme; developing a longitudinal research project to gather information on the social and economic impacts of the return of seasonal workers.

Three policy areas where **Tonga** could achieve its goal of long-term labour market development are:

- creating a whole-of-government collaborative forum to develop a long-term multi-dimensional labour market plan (which has begun),
- enforcing a policy process that is evidence-based and making it more receptive to research,
- securing funding for labour market-specific research priorities, and
- considering the number and location of liaison workers in New Zealand and Australia.

Possible policy tools include producing profiles of workers, which identify particular

features that make Tongans desirable employees; including a substantive mandatory session on dealing with family and social relationships through the entire contract process – before workers leave, while they are working off-shore and when they return; and exploring new opportunities for women to participate in seasonal labour schemes. This might require different models such as women working as part of women-only teams and investigating other sectors which do not require hard physical labour.

Developing iterative monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes is urgent and requires on-going resourcing, as does initiating on-going longitudinal research. There was a lot of interest in having external researchers working alongside local researchers to establish and maintain this important work.

6. Conclusion

Labour mobility will continue to be a part of economic development in the Pacific, as it is in most other parts of the world. This can be seen in the development plans of the three countries examined in this study as well as in the development aspirations of particular New Zealand and Australian sectors that are experiencing labour shortages for particular types of work. Interest among officials with whom we talked was engaged and thoughtful – from concerns over the practical policy details to an interest in deepening their understanding of the complex interlinkages between key sectors of government in high-level policy discussions. There was also a recognition of the importance of intra-regional discussions, between Pacific countries as well as with development partners.

However, for seasonal labour mobility to be economically sustainable for everyone involved and to contribute to the social wellbeing of citizens of Pacific countries, more attention is needed to balance the well-known wins alongside the less-often recognised losses. In this report, we propose an exploratory wins/losses assessment framework which can be used to assess various bundles of policy tools which are developed in-country. As we said in this report, we are in a particularly fluid political, economic, social and environmental context which means policy tools need to be flexible and constantly reviewed. But we are also in a time of Agenda 2030 and the imperatives of the SDG Goals 5 and 8 can be used to sharpen policy development and assessment.

On-going systematic and robust analysis at all scales, over various time periods and in all countries of the Pacific, is essential. Critical to this analysis is the need to also understand the dynamics of domestic labour markets in the Pacific, which are shifting in many and various ways as a result of demographic, economic, political and development imperatives. This requires a whole-of-government approach including ministries/departments of labour, immigration, trade, education, continuing and higher education, women's affairs, agriculture, fisheries, statistics and planning.

It will be a challenge to develop the best policies so that Pacific citizens can rightfully contribute their labour to the development of sustainable Pacific economies and societies in their own countries while contributing to the development of economies in Australia and New Zealand. But we are confident, based on the interviews we had in the three case study countries, that there is will and expertise to do this in the region. The quadruple wins-losses policy assessment framework is offered as a way to ensure the wins and losses of labour mobility are surfaced and addressed in new policies. All countries are working towards meeting the aspirations articulated in the SDGs, and, for this research, Goals 5 and 8 on gender equality and migration are especially relevant.

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Appendix A: Guiding Research Questions

1. What is known about the development effects (impacts, outcomes, cost-effectiveness – directly and indirectly on different stakeholders) of the RSE scheme in the Pacific since 2005?
2. What is known about how seasonal employment under the RSE contributes to wider development aspirations of Pacific countries?
3. What are the main gaps in the evidence on effects and on wider development aspirations?

Appendix B: People Interviewed for the Study

Kiribati

- Michael Upton, New Zealand High Commissioner
- Tauaasa Tafaaki, Deputy High Commissioner
- Batetaake Tatoa, Department of Labour/MLHRD
- Daisy Korina, Department of Labour/MLHRD
- Tanoii Teaeki, Department of Labour/MLHRD
- Tomitiana Eritama, Department of Labour/MLHRD
- Ross Craven, Project Manager Infrastructure Projects, New Zealand High Commission
- Matt Young, Second Secretary, Development Co-operation, Australian High Commission
- Tessie Lambourne, Secretary to Cabinet, Office of the Prime Minister
- Bwakura Metutura Timeon, Secretary Ministry of Labour and Human Resources Development
- James Webb, Director of NEPO
- Etekieru Iotua, Deputy Captain Superintendent, Marine Training Centre
- Akoia Kwong, Assistant Manager, SPMS
- Linda Uan, Nei Tabera Ni Ka Video Unit
- Taborio (an I-Kiribati contact of Prof Bedford's who is a private researcher on Tarawa)
- Dr Naomi Biribo Atauea, National Labour Mobility Planning Office/Seafarer
- Mbwenea Teioki, National Labour Mobility Planning Office/Seafarer
- Sarah Moses, Team Leader, Skills for Employment Program, Director, KIT
- Tauaasa Taafaki, First Secretary at MFAT

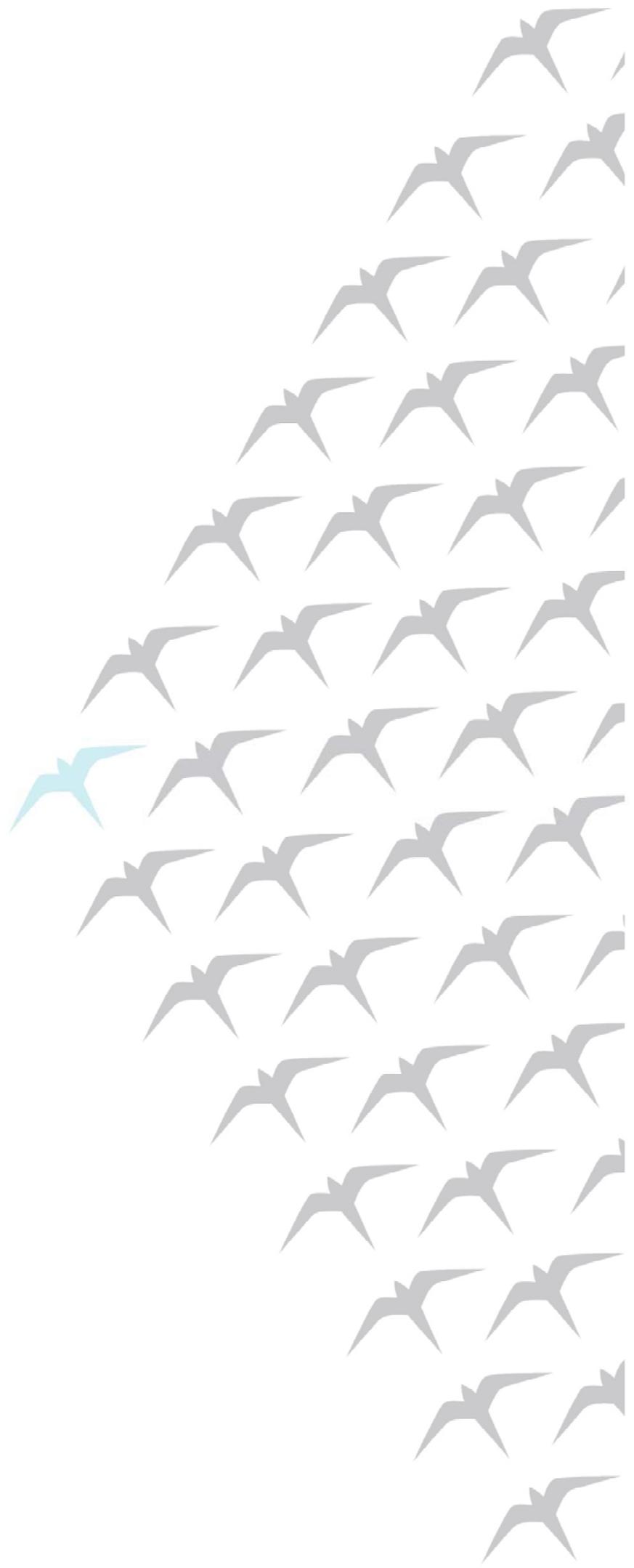
Fiji

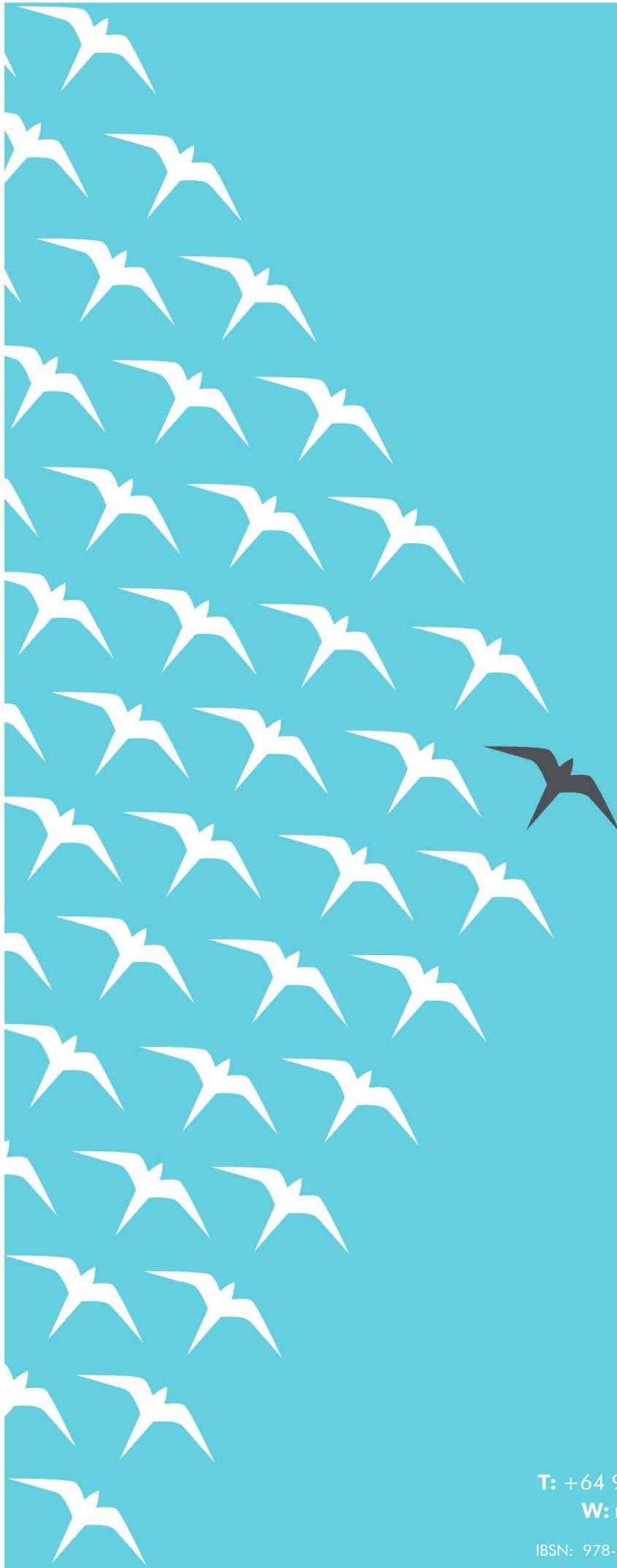
- Mark Ramsden, New Zealand High Commissioner
- Amanda Vercoe, Deputy High Commissioner
- Satoshi Sasaki, ILO
- Amy Crago, Australian Deputy High Commissioner
- Mark Tamsitt, Third Secretary
- Hon. Jone Usamate, Minister for Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relation
- Vilimone Baledrokadroka, Deputy Secretary

- Dr Neleesh Gounder, Senior Lecturer, USP
- Caroline Waqabaca, Chief Manager, Economics Group, Reserve Bank of Fiji
- Shelvin Karan, Senior Economist, Reserve Bank of Fiji
- Attar Singh, General Secretary of the Fiji Islands Council of Trade Unions
- Peni Delabatiki, Fiji Teachers Association
- Marika Uluinaceva, Fiji Teachers Association
- Epeli Waqavonovo, Fiji Bureau of Statistics

Tonga

- Hon Nick Hurley, New Zealand High Commission
- Indra Prasad, New Zealand High Commission
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