



Beyond Barriers: From Evidence to Action

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HUMANITARIAN
ADVISORY GROUP



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About HAG

Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) was founded in 2012 to elevate the profile of humanitarian action in Asia and the Pacific. Set up as a social enterprise, HAG provides a unique space for thinking, research, technical advice and training that contributes to excellence in humanitarian practice. As an ethically driven business, we combine humanitarian passion with entrepreneurial agility to think and do things differently.

About Disaster READY

The Disaster READY initiative is part of the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP), a five-year (2017–22), \$50 million partnership between DFAT and Australian non-governmental organisations to improve humanitarian response. Disaster READY was designed to strengthen disaster preparedness and management across the Pacific and Timor-Leste. A second five-year iteration of the program – Disaster READY 2.0 – was initiated in 2022.

About Beyond Barriers

The AHP commissioned HAG to conduct research (Beyond Barriers) in 2021 to determine persistent barriers to, and realistic opportunities for, better integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. We began by publishing a foundational [literature review](#) in July 2021, before proceeding to collect data across case study reports for [Fiji](#), [Vanuatu](#), [Solomon Islands](#), [Papua New Guinea](#) and [Timor-Leste](#) – the countries where AHP Disaster READY programming is active. An additional country case study was commissioned in [Tonga](#), where AHP is not active, and a [reflection and learning workshop](#) was held. Case study data collection was led by [national researchers](#) in each country and supported by a regional research lead based in Suva, and included desk review, key informant interviews and community focus group discussions. A second phase of the research was commissioned in 2022 to inform Disaster READY 2.0.



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Abbreviations

AHP	Australian Humanitarian Partnership
CCA	Climate change adaptation
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EAST	Easy, Attractive, Social, and Timely
FRDP	Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific
GDP	Gross domestic product
HAG	Humanitarian Advisory Group
INGO	International NGO
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PNG	Papua New Guinea
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UN	United Nations



Section 1: Introduction

The Pacific is among the world's most exposed regions to the impacts of disasters and climate change. Humanitarian and development actors are faced with the imperative to continuously adapt and scale up disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience-based programming to the wide-ranging challenges facing the region and its communities. This requires elevated participation and leadership from community members in decision-making to ensure the voices of those most at risk are heard, their lived experiences and local knowledge are valued, and their needs are met. Central to improving resilience-based action in the Pacific is the need to strengthen integration between DRR and climate change adaptation (CCA) at policy and programming levels (see Box 1).

This report provides a progress update of the Beyond Barriers research project, which is designed to reveal the challenges to, and potential for, better integration of DRR and CCA programming to support community resilience in the Pacific. As Beyond Barriers moves from its first phase into a second focused on action research, this report provides a recap of progress and summary of research findings to date, and draws on this to outline the priority areas and actions for the next phase of work.

Box 1: Definitions

Disaster risk reduction: DRR is aimed at preventing new and reducing existing disaster risk and managing residual risk, all of which contribute to strengthening resilience and therefore to the achievement of sustainable development.¹

Climate change adaptation: The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate change and its effects. In human systems, adaptation is intended to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In some natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate change and its effects.²

Integration: In this report, 'integration' refers to the integration of DRR and CCA, meaning the combination of interventions that address CCA and DRR with the intention of improving humanitarian and development outcomes for at-risk and crisis-affected populations.³

This report begins with an overview of the Beyond Barriers research process so far. This is followed by a summary of risks and strengths across the Pacific resilience landscape, and an analysis of key emerging themes associated with barriers to and opportunities for the integration of DRR and CCA in policy and programming. The next section draws together the research to date and presents a model with tangible actions that can support building a more resilient Pacific. Finally, the report sets the scene for action research initiatives that will test models of integration in action.

1 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2019) *Glossary*.

2 Ibid.

3 This working definition, adapted from the Global Nutrition Cluster (see https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/icnwg_developing_an_integrated_response_approach_gfsc_20191128.pdf), will be explored further and refined in this research.

Methodology

This report builds upon the findings produced during the first phase of Beyond Barriers – six country case studies, a literature review, a reflection and learning workshop, and a behavioural study. The research team analysed these findings and identified three priority areas that are essential to building resilience in the Pacific, and their key enabling actions. Ten key informant interviews⁴ were then conducted to test, validate, and refine these actions and higher-level behaviours, as well as identify associated behavioural influences.

The research was guided by a behavioural science approach, led by BehaviourWorks Australia at Monash University, which aims to solve problems through understanding and changing the behaviours that underpin them (see Box 2). Figure 1 provides an overview of the accumulated research methodology of Beyond Barriers.

Box 2: Why behavioural science?

Behavioural science uses scientific methods to explain and predict the behaviours of individuals and groups. It is an accumulation of knowledge and techniques from a range of disciplines including economics, psychology, neuroscience and sociology. Taking a behavioural approach is based on the premise that some of the world's most pressing social, environmental and organisational problems can at least be partially solved by influencing the behaviours that underpin them.

To do this, key behavioural methods include:

1. Unpacking the problem to understand, define and prioritise target behaviours
2. Taking a deep dive to understand the barriers and drivers of behaviour, which may be done by reviewing the evidence, developing theories, engaging in stakeholder consultation, and collecting and analysing other data
3. Developing interventions to change behaviour, which can be tested and evaluated for their impact.⁵

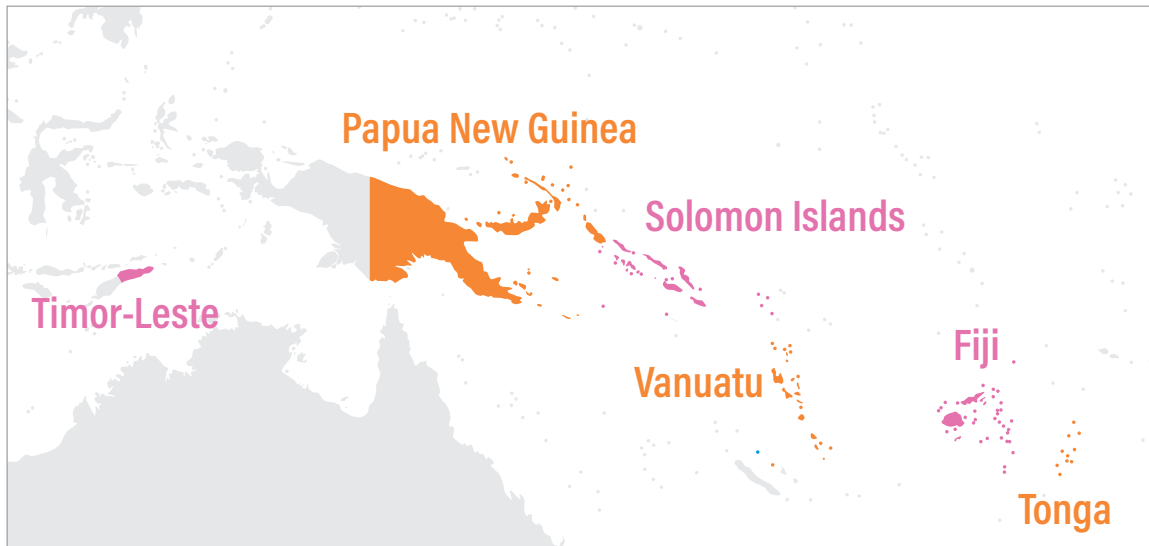
Collectively these methods have been organised into a three-part structure, known as the BehaviourWorks Method, to translate behavioural science knowledge into interventions for changing behaviour. Applying a behavioural approach can reveal a range of automatic and more deliberative influences that shape behaviour, such as attitudes, emotions, social norms, capability, cognitive biases, habit, context and culture, many of which have been overlooked in traditional approaches to encourage integration of DRR and CCA. These influences are crucial for understanding why humans do not always act according to a rational model or in their best interests, and for explaining why good intentions do not always lead to action.

Given the nature of the Beyond Barriers research, one consideration is how well behavioural science applies in a cross-cultural context. Behavioural science theories and findings are dominated by Western thinking and vary in terms of their cross-cultural applicability. Nevertheless, behavioural science *methods* – understanding the system, defining and prioritising behaviours, identifying behavioural barriers and drivers, carrying out impact evaluation – are designed for a wide range of contexts and used throughout the Beyond Barriers research.

4 Key informant interviewees came from a diversity of working backgrounds relating to DRR, CCA and Pacific resilience building, including research, operations and policy. Interviewees were either Pacific Islanders or Australians.

5 BehaviourWorks Australia, [The method book](#)

Figure 1: The Beyond Barriers research process



Audience

The Beyond Barriers research was commissioned to support Disaster READY agencies efforts to effectively integrate DRR and CCA; therefore, the primary audience for this report is Disaster READY implementing agencies. Additionally, this report presents emerging findings that are relevant for all stakeholders involved in resilience building in the Pacific.

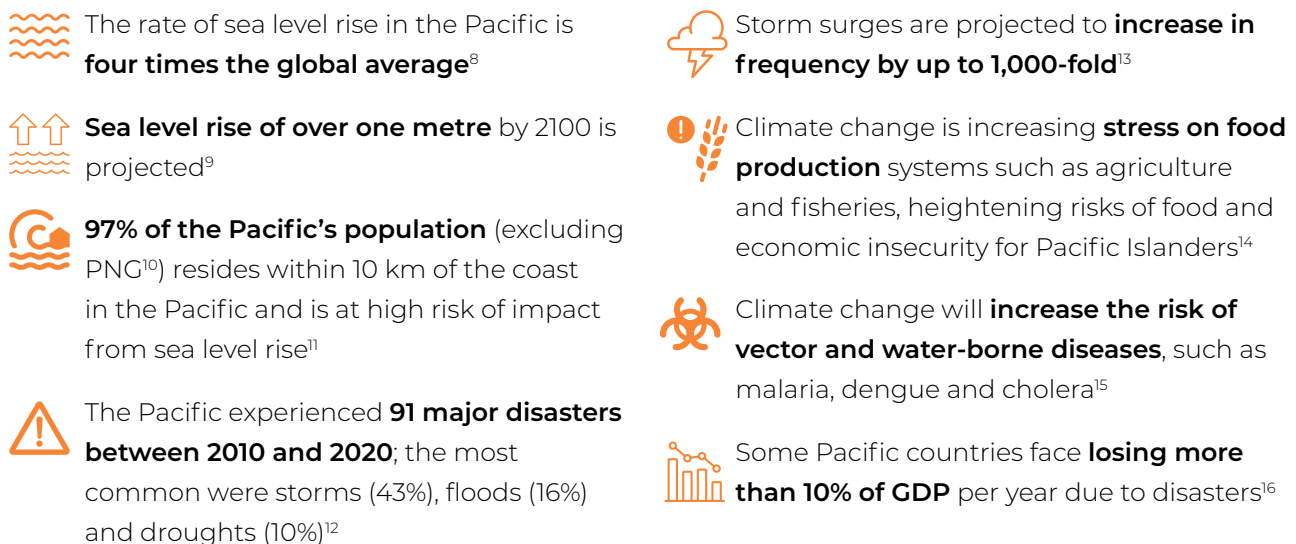
Section 2: State of play

While the Pacific has taken significant steps to scale up resilience-based programming in the region, high-level policy commitments have not consistently translated into action that meets the needs of communities most at risk of disaster and climate-related impacts. The region faces significant, increasing and compounding threats, which require a more holistic approach than has been achieved so far.

Climate and disaster context in the Pacific

The Pacific is home to approximately 12 million people and comprises 14 countries and territories⁶ within three ethnogeographic regions: Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.⁷ The Ring of Fire encircles the Pacific, making it highly vulnerable to disasters caused by tectonic activity, in addition to weather-related disasters that are being exacerbated by climate change (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Snapshot of key climate and disaster threats



6 This study covers countries where Disaster READY is active, all of which, other than Timor-Leste, are in the Pacific region. The information detailed in Figure 2 is not necessarily drawn from research that represents Timor-Leste.

7 Australia Pacific Security College (2021), [Pacific Island populations](#).

8 Asian Development Bank (2017), [Climate change in Asia and the Pacific](#).

9 World Climate Research Programme (2022), [New high-end estimates of sea-level rise projections in 2100 and 2300](#).

10 This figure is adjusted to over 50% when PNG is included.

11 Andrew NL et al. (2019), Coastal proximity of populations in 22 Pacific Island countries and territories, PLoS ONE, 14(9)

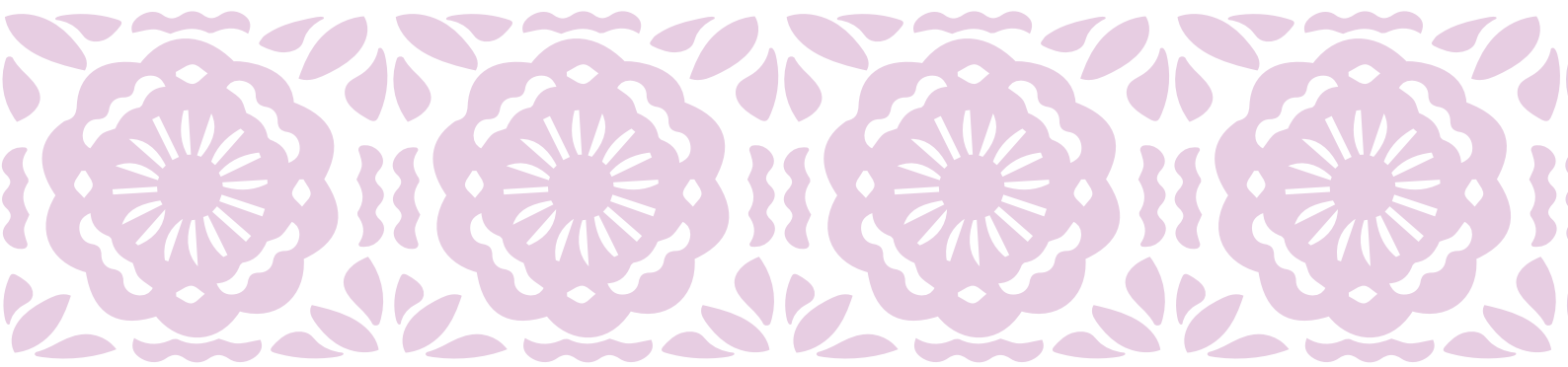
12 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia (2021), [Pacific risk profile](#).

13 Ibid.

14 Barnett J. (2020), Climate change and food security in the Pacific Islands, in Connell J & Lowett K (eds), *Food Security in Small Island States*, Singapore.

15 World Health Organization (2015), [Human health and climate change in Pacific Island countries](#).

16 United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2019), [The disaster riskscape across the Pacific small island developing states](#).



In recognition of these risks, Pacific nations have made significant progress towards the integration of DRR and CCA at the policy level. The [Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific \(FRDP\)](#) is the world's first regional framework for guiding integration between the two policy fields; its implementation is guided by the [Pacific Resilience Standards](#) and overseen by the Pacific Resilience Partnership. Other notable initiatives, including the [2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent](#), contribute to the resilience agenda. Figure 3 provides an overview of the regional and international resilience architecture.

Figure 3: Key initiatives relating to DRR and CCA in the Pacific



In addition to the broad range of initiatives that make up the Pacific resilience architecture, a dynamic network of community-led resilience is at play, and too often goes unrecognised in the regional resilience dialogue. Networks such as the Pacific Islands Climate Action Network and its coalition of members are highly engaged in grassroots activism and climate justice, frequently challenging common characterisations of Pacific communities as being hapless and vulnerable to climate change impacts.¹⁷ Communities have long deployed traditional practices at the local level to build resilience to disaster and climate change impacts; traditional knowledge has helped communities monitor climate and weather patterns, enabling them to plan for basic needs such as food, water and shelter;¹⁸ and exposure to environmental change over time has incentivised communities to build their capacity to adapt to climate and environmental changes.¹⁹

17 Ligaiula P (2021), [Pacific Islands Climate Action Network launches Pacific climate demands](#), *Pina*, October 22

18 Campbell J (2009), [Islanders: vulnerability and resilience in Oceania](#), *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures*, 3: 85-97

19 Warrick O et al. (2017), The “Pacific Island Capacity Analysis Framework”: guiding the assessment of adaptive capacity in Pacific island communities, *Regional Environmental Change*, 17: 1039-1051; Latai-Niusulu A et al. (2019), Climate change and community resilience in Samoa, *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 41(1): 40-60.

Barriers to effective resilience programming

Despite the broad range of initiatives across the Pacific, and the commitments contained within these to address commonly identified challenges in integrated resilience programming, barriers inhibit effective integration of DRR and CCA. Through analysis of the accumulative Beyond Barriers research to date, the research team identified three overarching barriers hindering efforts to improve resilience programming across the region.



1. Siloed ways of working remain prominent across the Pacific.

Silos continue to hinder opportunities for effective data and information sharing, particularly across governmental ministries and between implementing agencies, which in many instances, results in programming duplication and incoherence.²⁰ Research shows DRR and CCA are often not considered separate entities at the community level, yet at the national level and within organisations, this is not the case: DRR and CCA are commonly housed under separate ministries and legislative frameworks within Pacific governments, while organisations are still grappling with the task of integrating them into their programming.²¹ Interviewees highlighted potential drivers of this issue, including a lack of incentives and confidence to collaborate, share data, and inertia in governmental structures and processes.

“There are several examples where data could be shared easily and it wasn’t. Often staff move on, meaning linkages and communication channels easily break between ministries. It’s not necessarily in the culture we work in to share data systemically and consistently.”²²

Interviewees also noted international funding mechanisms perpetuate silos across governmental structures, with bureaucratic international disaster and climate financing systems requiring Pacific governments to adhere to compliance procedures across governmental ministries that are ultimately at odds with efforts to integrate DRR and CCA institutions and programming.²³



2. Lack of effective two-way information exchange limits opportunities for community participation and leadership in decision-making processes.

While there is much to learn from the community level about integration, community voices and first responders to crises are too often excluded from decision-making around program and policy design. This creates barriers to communities’ needs and knowledge being heard through effective two-way information channels, and prevents the elevation of traditional knowledge into resilience programming at national and regional levels. Interviewees highlighted how, due to border closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, local and national actors were more empowered in the absence of international actors – with some evidence of examples where effective two-way communication channels established during the pandemic were being sustained – yet there is still a long way to go in establishing sustainable mechanisms that ensure voices at the community level are represented in policy- and decision-making processes at the national level.²⁴

20 Interviews 2–4, 6, 8, 9, 10; McCommon J et al. (2021), *Beyond Barriers: integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in the Pacific*, Humanitarian Advisory Group

21 McCommon J et al. (2021), *Beyond Barriers: integrating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in the Pacific*, Humanitarian Advisory Group

22 Interview 1

23 Interviews 3, 4, 5, 9

24 Interviews 1, 2, 6, 7, 9



Photo: Vicki Garside on Unsplash

“The COVID-19 pandemic taught us a few things about sharing information. For example, we launched a virtual campaign to promote the vaccine in PNG. The feedback was astounding, revealing how people felt about the vaccine. We changed our game plan because of those comments. We’ve had to look towards community champions to channel out info on and promote the COVID vaccine.”²⁵



3. Coordination and coherence between stakeholders are lacking.

While the region has made significant progress in DRR–CCA programming, the number of frameworks, initiatives and bodies engaged in resilience programming is vast and complex. This has resulted in a lack of clear and coordinated approaches and policy incoherence, which is hindered further by limited resources and capacity to carry out the many fragmented implementation demands across the region’s policies and initiatives. The under-resourced resilience sector, tasked with competing priorities to meet multiple policy outcomes in the face of increasing disaster and climate threat, needs to be supported by a more effective and unified vision for Pacific resilience programming.

“The Pacific has the highest number of climate change declarations by leaders in the world, but there are too many for the staff to implement.”²⁶

The lack of effective relationships between stakeholders engaged in DRR and CCA at community, national and regional levels prevents coordinated progress towards a shared vision in the Pacific. The discussion around the need to integrate DRR–CCA programming has, at times, led to confusion and incoherence between stakeholders at the regional level, with organisations and practitioners struggling to identify their roles in DRR and CCA and how they contribute collectively towards realising pathways to effective integration.²⁷

25 Interview 2

26 Interview 5

27 Humanitarian Advisory Group (2022), [Beyond Barriers: Behaviours to enable a resilient Pacific](#)

Section 3: Opportunities for realising resilience

The barriers identified above – many of which are echoed throughout the literature on DRR and CCA in the Pacific – demonstrate a need for meaningful and collective change. We undertook interviews to understand the behavioural influences that would allow us to identify precursors and opportunities for change.

The main themes from these discussions are presented below in terms of opportunities for enhancing integration and resilience building. This is followed by a suggested model or approach comprising enabling actions that can support achieving these outcomes.



1. Long-term partnerships and trust are key to building sustainable change.

Developing partnerships underpinned by trust can enable knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning between stakeholders. This is a critical component of building resilience in the Pacific.²⁸ Creating and fostering relationships and networks between national non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society, community-level actors such as local governments, local NGOs, community leaders and civil society can broaden understanding of needs specific to communities and local environments. International NGOs (INGOs) should also be involved; they can establish similar relationships built upon trust with national NGOs who can communicate the needs and knowledge at the community level – ensuring information is channelled upwards to inform decision-making at the provincial, national and regional levels. Peer-to-peer learning at the government level can also help overcome silos between ministries and government actors. It is important to take time to build such partnerships that will, in the long term, enable cross-cultural knowledge brokering around building resilience to climate and disaster impacts, and allow community-led flows of knowledge and information to inform policy and decisions. This can overcome siloes and build bridges across existing structural, sectoral and cultural divides, and enable collective action towards shared objectives for stakeholders across the system.²⁹

“It’s everyone’s business to build good partnerships between all actors, and that needs to be long term to build trust. There needs to be an incentive to trust someone and a want to build that partnership with them. Relationships and trust are the key currency in the Pacific.”³⁰



2. Champions of change can drive messaging around community-led resilience.

Individuals in positions of power within NGOs, governments and communities should identify and support the right people to champion change – those who are most influential, and who are best placed to drive conversations around DRR–CCA integration and community-led resilience. These champions of change should include a diversity of knowledge holders, such as youth, elders, women, people with disabilities, indigenous people and scientific knowledge brokers.³¹ Champions must be actively supported

28 Interviews 3, 7

29 Interviews 1, 3

30 Interview 3

31 Interviews 2, 7

through communication channels and the media, to profile best-practice examples of how collaboration can support integration and community-led resilience. Champions can help break down barriers between stakeholder groups and foster innovative partnerships through enhanced collaboration. They can create opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, allow the sharing of best practice approaches, and feed into decision-making. Similar themes can be found in the behavioural science literature, where social influences, credible authorities, and influential messengers feature prominently in models of behaviour change, such as the Behavioural Insights Team's EAST framework and Cialdini's 'Principles of Persuasion' (see Box 3).

"You need someone to champion stuff to make it happen. They need to have the network and the skills to do that. You need someone who has the passion and the networks to draw on. Not necessarily the leader, but the enabler ... People who are boundary riders [and] change agents are the ones who would help info sharing; they would help break down the silos, because they bring people together."³²

Box 3: Behavioural principles to support champions of change

The EAST framework was developed by the Behavioural Insights Team in 2014 to support the effective development of public policy. The EAST acronym stands for Easy, Attractive, Social, and Timely. Champions of change can employ this model by ensuring their messaging is *easy* to understand and access, and *attractive* – grabbing people's attention and using appropriate incentives to encourage changes in behaviour. Champions based in the community are best placed to understand what formats and messaging strategies will reach the most people. The most important component of the model for climate champions is their ability to influence the *social* aspect. People enjoy being part of social groups with others they can relate to, so are highly influenced by the thoughts, approval and behaviour of others. Identifying and supporting climate champions is a great way to reach and influence people who may not be reached through typical information channels.³³

Cialdini (2001) identified seven 'principles of persuasion'.³⁴ One of these principles focuses on authority – the idea that people follow the lead of credible knowledgeable experts. It is important to choose climate champions wisely so they are well regarded and respected by the community to spread messaging and influence change.

32 Interview 8

33 The Behavioural Insights Team (2014), [EAST: four simple ways to apply behavioural insights](#).

34 Cialdini RB (2001), The science of persuasion, *Scientific American*, 284(2): 76-81.



3. Effective communication practices are essential for coordination and collaboration.

Ensuring information is streamlined, accessible and consistent across communication channels is essential.³⁵ This can overcome information gaps and knowledge duplication and improve accuracy. Interviewees recommended translating key messages from policy and influential documents – such as the FRDP – into local languages, and in accessible formats, as well as simplifying them to ensure their messages are accessible to communities.³⁶ In addition, ensuring engagement with communities is underpinned by respect for needs, knowledge, cultural and social values is essential for effective communication. This also points to opportunities to apply behavioural principles for more effective communication, such as the use of positive framing and making messages salient (see Box 4).³⁷

“If you’re going to give information, then you need to get something back. How will it be summarised and fed back to you in a way that the communities can do something meaningful with? It’s about knowledge sharing – about tools, processes, managing complex environments and complex players. It’s not just about the tools; it’s broader than that.”³⁸

Box 4: Behavioural principles to support effective communication

Insights from behavioural science can inform effective communication between stakeholders. The framing effect is the cognitive bias in which a person’s choice is more influenced by how the information is worded than by the information itself.³⁹ This strategy can be useful in discussing why the integration of DRR and CCA is important. If the messaging is framed around the benefits and opportunities of advancing integration rather than the barriers, stakeholders may be more likely to engage with the issue.

Saliency refers to a person’s tendency to focus on information that stands out, while ignoring information that does not grab their attention.⁴⁰ It is important to ensure information around climate and disaster risk stands out clearly and in a way that is accessible and attention grabbing for community members and other key stakeholders. Policymakers must also consider saliency bias when developing and implementing policy, because people are less likely to support and abide by policy if they do not see an immediate benefit.⁴¹ Initiatives focused on building resilience should seek to highlight short-term benefits to stakeholders and community members, rather than solely focus on reducing longer-term risks associated with a changing climate.

35 Interviews 2, 4, 6, 8

36 Interviews 2, 3, 7, 9

37 Interviews 1, 3; Faulkner N et al. (2018), The INSPIRE framework: how public administrators can increase compliance with written requests using behavioural techniques, *Public Administration Review*, 79(1): 125-135.

38 Interview 7

39 Perera, A. (2023), Framing Effect in Psychology. *Simply Psychology*.

40 The Decision Lab (2023), *The Saliency bias, explained*.

41 Ibid.



4. Traditional knowledge can guide and support approaches to building resilience.

Traditional knowledge has long been embedded in the social fabric of Pacific communities and has guided adaptation and resilience building.⁴² As part of these knowledge systems, Pacific communities predict climate and weather patterns, practices that governments and aid agencies should acknowledge and incorporate into their resilience programming.⁴³ It is important that traditional knowledge is reflected in policy from the community level up. Policymakers, governments and programming leads must work with traditional knowledge holders to identify how scientific and traditional practices align or complement one another; doing so successfully, can strengthen resilience mechanisms and approaches across the region. Innovative and collaborative programs seek to combine traditional knowledge with scientific knowledge, such as the Baru Conservation Alliance in Solomon Islands, and the Mangoro Market Meri project in Papua New Guinea (PNG) (Box 5).

“If we look at the two in terms of knowledge and information, there’s the scientific, or the modern way of knowledge – we refer to this as the ‘the big road; the concrete road’; and then the traditional way of understanding what’s around us; the community perceptions, the community way of seeing things: that’s the ‘path’. We need to bring them together, which we can call an interface in the middle.”⁴⁴

42 Interviews 4, 7; Vierros M & Ota Y (2019), Integration of traditional knowledge in policy for climate adaptation, displacement and migration in the Pacific, in Cisneros-Montemayor AM, Cheung WWL & Ota Y (eds), *Predicting future oceans: sustainability of ocean and human systems amidst global environmental change*, Elsevier Science.

43 Interviews 1, 3

44 Interview 2

Photo: Shutterstock



Box 5: Examples of good practice in Solomon Islands and PNG

The Baru Conservation Alliance is a Kwaio-led ecological conservation, education and cultural rejuvenation initiative in the Solomon Islands. The Kwaio people live in the mountains of Malaita and have preserved unique ecosystems in the area for generations. The Alliance was established in March 2019 through a collaboration of community leaders with the Australian Museum to build the research capacity of the Kwaio people, to document traditional knowledge, and to preserve culture and strengthen approaches to conservation in Malaita's highlands. The Alliance has facilitated information exchange workshops to discuss and learn how scientific methods can complement traditional Kwaio conservation approaches, and intends to continue scientific exchange with the Australian Museum to further this process.⁴⁵

The Mangoro Market Meri project in PNG demonstrates how an INGO can work with a local NGO as a knowledge broker between scientists and communities. The project was implemented by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), in partnership with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), CARE International, and local community groups in two provinces of PNG. TNC served as a knowledge broker between communities and CSIRO scientists in a two-way information exchange. TNC collected data from communities to identify priorities, CSIRO developed tools, methods, and activities based on community needs, and then TNC contextualised the resources through community consultation and collaboration with local NGOs.⁴⁶



5. There is a need to ensure staff are better resourced and supported.

Evidence tells us that too often we focus on establishing the next big policy, target or technical process, rather than on building core skills in leadership and management. While the Pacific has an extraordinary number of DRR and CCA proposals and plans, the personnel tasked with overseeing their implementation are overburdened and under-resourced.⁴⁷

“As we learn more about climate change, we take on more responsibility and actions to address it, but it’s not possible to do it all within current systems, capacity and staffing levels. We need to take a step back. Leadership needs to hit the pause button and take a step back to understand the root causes of the issues.”⁴⁸

There is a need to ‘take a step back’ and ensure staff are trained, supported and resourced to carry out the increasing number of DRR and CCA initiatives.⁴⁹ Increasing the number

45 Flannery E (2019), *The Baru Conservation Alliance: Kwaio-led ecological conservation, education and cultural rejuvenation in the Solomon Islands*, Australian Museum, 26 July.

46 Gero A, Chowdhury T & Winterford K (2022), *Integrating climate change action across the international development sector: Enablers of best practice*. University of Technology Sydney – Institute for Sustainable Futures, prepared for the Australian Council for International Development.

47 Interviews 5, 7

48 Interview 5

49 Interviews 5, 7

and frequency of trainings and workshops is less important than ensuring quality training programs, and that they foster positive workplace cultures in which staff are motivated and well supported. Balancing the need for both technical specialist and leadership and management roles is critical to enabling progress in scaling up resilience programming across the region.⁵⁰ Under-resourcing can risk positive interventions not being followed through. Giving staff the capacity and time to think critically about what is needed, what approach is most effective, and how best to carry it out is key to building resilience.



6. International funding mechanisms and donor priorities must shift to better support integration.

While Pacific actors face challenges in streamlining effective coordination across the region, it is fundamental that international donors and financing mechanisms support and complement pathways towards integration.⁵¹ Current systems are at odds with this.

“There is resistance for adaptation to new ways and approaches of doing things from the donor side, because their countries don’t operate in the same ways that Pacific countries do. This is a major issue; unless donors are open to not importing their world views on Pacific countries, then nothing will change. Donors want them to implement their approach and adapt to their system of doing things, and often make this a requirement of receiving funding.”⁵²

The need to prioritise meeting donor standards to access finance disincentivises governments and agencies from including community voices in decision-making. To support integrated approaches that have a better chance of supporting communities facing disasters and climate change, donors should work with Pacific governments and key regional stakeholders to ensure financing structures are flexible and adaptable to Pacific needs.⁵³

50 Interview 7

51 Interviews 3, 4, 5, 9

52 Interview 4

53 Gero A, Winterford K, Maguire R, Mangubhai S, Manley M, Carter G & Howard E (2022), *Institutional barriers to climate finance through a gendered lens in Fiji, Samoa, and Solomon Islands: Synthesis across research objectives*. UTS-ISF, Sydney, Australia.



Paving the way to a more resilient Pacific

Alongside identifying opportunities to improve integration of DRR and CCA in the Pacific, a behavioural science approach was used to propose actions to overcome the three key barriers identified in Section 2. The purpose of this approach is to identify concrete actions Pacific stakeholders can take to shift or nudge the barriers towards becoming enablers. At the centre of this approach are the three key barriers that must be overcome to support improved integration of DRR and CCA. These barriers are addressed below in three priority areas that are applicable to all Pacific stakeholders including communities, civil society, NGOs and INGOs, governments, regional actors, and donors.

Priority areas to support improved integration of DRR and CCA:

1. **Support new linkages to overcome siloed ways of working**
2. **Prioritise two-way information flows to support inclusive community participation and leadership in decision-making**
3. **Strengthen coordination and coherence between stakeholders and across initiatives.**

These priority areas were developed, refined and validated through interviews to translate them into concrete actions and higher-level behaviours for making actionable progress. Interviewees were also asked about the perceived impact of these actions, allowing us to prioritise them.

Fifteen priority actions were identified through this process, which were then developed into an approach for realising a resilient Pacific (Figure 4). A key success factor for this approach will be allocating adequate resources and staff to lead and oversee efforts and maintain accountability for sustainable change. This may require additional budget lines and funding from donors, which must be prioritised so as not to reduce important initiatives to 'tick box' exercises or unrealised intentions.

Figure 4: Model for realising a resilient Pacific



<p>Priority area 1: Support new linkages to overcome siloed ways of working</p>	<p>Priority area 2: Prioritise two-way information flows to support inclusive community participation and leadership in decision-making</p>	<p>Priority area 3: Strengthen coordination and coherence between stakeholders and across initiatives</p>
<p>1.1 Identify and create incentives for ministries and agencies to share data and information internally and externally. Who should do this? Donors Regional actors Governments</p>	<p>2.1 Identify areas where scientific knowledge and traditional knowledge are complementary and elevate these to inform policies and programs. Who should do this? Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>	<p>3.1 Identify and create incentives for ministries and agencies to share data and information internally and externally. Who should do this? Regional actors Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>
<p>1.2 Build relationships and trust between government bodies, organisations and communities, as well as women's, disability, and youth groups to overcome barriers to collaboration. Who should do this? Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>	<p>2.2 Establish bottom-up communication channels to enable community-level actors to voice their needs and priorities to decision-makers, at the same time as strengthening the competence and confidence of local leaders. Who should do this? Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>	<p>3.2 Review existing tools, frameworks and policies to identify areas of duplication and reduce unnecessary complexity. Who should do this? Regional actors Governments NGOs</p>
<p>1.3 Consult with Pacific governments and civil society to ensure funding mechanisms are long-term, flexible, and align to national policies and yearly national plans and do not perpetuate silos. Who should do this? Donors Regional actors</p>	<p>2.3 Work with community-level actors, including organisations for people with disabilities, to translate and socialise key messages and information from regional and national policies and plans in accessible formats. Who should do this? Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>	<p>3.3 Prioritise meaningful capacity strengthening and intentional recruiting for leadership and management skills to drive resilience initiatives. Who should do this? Governments Regional actors NGOs</p>
<p>1.4 Ensure new project designs and policies reflect key principles and messages of the FRDP, the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific, and other key integrated initiatives. Who should do this? Donors Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>	<p>2.4 Use common terminology to build a shared understanding of risk and avoid inconsistent language and messaging. Who should do this? Donors Regional actors Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>	<p>3.4 Strengthen the capacity of local civil society to work effectively with communities and complement government-led approaches to building resilience. Who should do this? Donors Regional actors Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>
<p>1.5 Socialise successful case studies and stories of best-practice application of the FRDP and other key integrated initiatives. Who should do this? Regional actors Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>	<p>2.5 Empower at-risk groups including women, people with disabilities, youth, elderly and gender and sexual minorities to contribute to DRR and CCA plans, policies and programs. Support diverse women's leadership in DRR and CCA, including young women, women with disabilities, and women of diverse genders. Who should do this? Donors Governments NGOs Civil society Communities</p>	<p>3.5 Strengthen coordination and partnerships between public and private sectors to develop cooperative approaches to building resilience. Who should do this? Donors Governments Private sector</p>

Section 4: The way forward

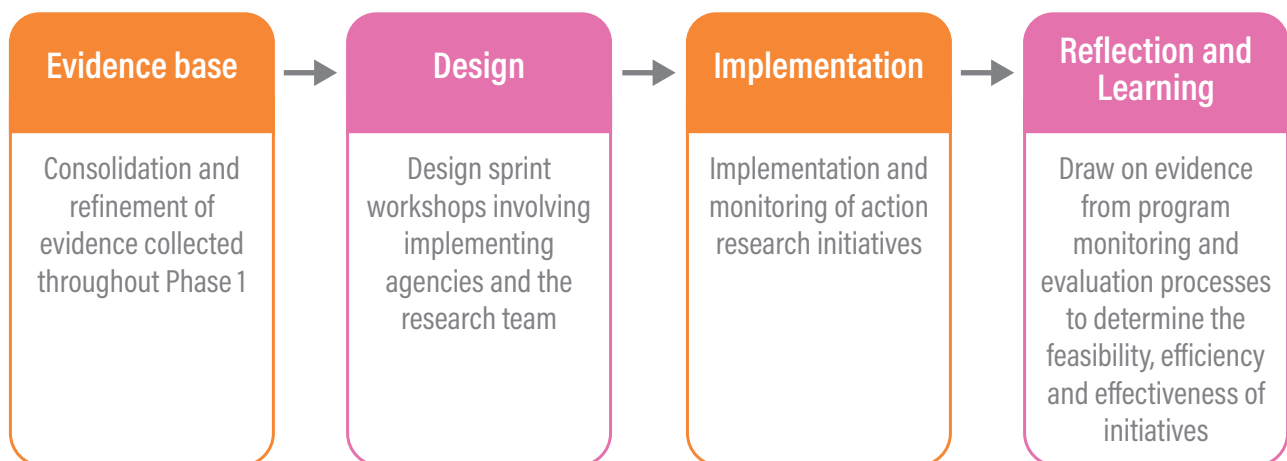
The next stage of Beyond Barriers is to translate the evidence-based actions in Figure 4 into behaviour change by designing and implementing a series of action research initiatives with agencies implementing DRR and CCA programming in the Pacific. Through the action research process, HAG will work alongside partner agencies to co-design, plan and implement action research initiatives that will produce real-time, evidence-based learning about best-practice approaches for enhancing community resilience.

Agencies will participate in design sprint workshops to develop small action research projects, aligned to partner agencies' priorities and objectives, that focus on the key themes presented in this report. The research team and partners will then monitor and evaluate these projects to determine their feasibility, efficiency and effectiveness in strengthening integration between DRR and CCA (see Figure 5).

The research will answer the following questions:

1. What works in practice for integration of CCA and DRR?
2. Which approaches have the most impact on communities?
3. Which approaches are replicable, scalable and broadly applicable?
4. How can integration strengthen anticipatory action within disaster risk financing systems?

Figure 5: Evidence to action cycle



Action research projects will be limited to implementing agencies in the Pacific, and evidence derived from initiatives will therefore be most relevant to Pacific-based agencies, but the research may offer valuable insights for other stakeholders engaged in resilience-based programming. The research team acknowledges approaches led by implementing agencies must be accompanied by larger structural shifts to achieve sizable change, but hopes outcomes from this research initiative can offer valuable insights to the wider resilience discussion.

If you are interested in learning more about this research, please contact the Beyond Barriers team:

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