

# ANNEXURE

# **WRITTEN RESPONSE**

**MINISTRY  
OF  
ENVIRONMENT  
CLIMATE CHANGE**

**SUBMISSION BY THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**DELIVERED TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND  
DEFENCE**

**17 FEBRUARY 2026 – PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI**

Honorable Chairperson, Honorable Deputy Chairperson, Honorable Members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense:

Bula Vinaka and good morning.

I thank the Committee for the invitation to appear before you today to address the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility. I do so with a profound sense of responsibility, and with pride, because this is not merely a treaty—this is Fiji’s opportunity to help build a Pacific-owned, Pacific-led solution to the greatest existential threat our region has ever faced.

I wish to begin by placing this Agreement in its proper context.

**Context: Why the PRF is necessary**

For decades, Pacific Island countries have been navigating a paradox. We are on the frontlines of climate change. We contribute almost nothing to global emissions, yet we bear the heaviest burden. And when we seek climate finance—for adaptation, for disaster recovery, for addressing loss and damage—we encounter systems that were not designed for us, for the Pacific, for our economies and societies. These processes are slow. They are complex. They are expensive to access. They are administered by teams that are based thousands of kilometers away, by officials who have never experienced life in the Pacific and do not understand our needs and context.

Honorable Members, the Pacific Resilience Facility was borne out of the Pacific Leader’s vision to offer an alternative and their drive to ensure our needs will not continue to be overlooked and misconstrued.

To be clear, the PRF is not a replacement for global climate funds. It is complementary. It is designed to do what global systems cannot: deliver simplified, contextualized, rapid, and affordable financing directly to our communities, our national governments, and our local civil society, on our terms, through our governance, in accordance with our values.

## **Fiji's strategic interest in joining**

Let me be unequivocal: Fiji's accession to this Treaty is overwhelmingly in our national interest.

Firstly – it was in our **financial interest**. The PRF is structured to provide grants—not loans—for climate adaptation, disaster preparedness, nature-based solutions, and loss and damage. For a country like Fiji, which faces repeated cyclones, flooding, and coastal inundation, this is not abstract. This is about rebuilding schools in the North faster. This is about restoring water supplies in the Western Division within weeks, not months. This is about community-level resilience projects that do not require thirty pages of application forms written in technical English.

Honorable Members – the PRF has not only received the support of the Pacific Region and been established through the collective decisions of Pacific Leaders it has received significant backing from a range of key development partners. Approximately 172m USD has been committed to date from 13 development partners from within and from outside our region. This is finance that is ready to be deployed to support the most vulnerable. It reflects both financial and political support from our key development partners.

Second, **fiscal protection**. Article 5(c) of the Treaty explicitly provides that no PRF Member shall be liable for the acts, omissions, or obligations of the PRF. Fiji assumes no financial or legal liability by joining. There is no drain on our national budget unless we choose to contribute, and even then, only as a pathway to access funding. Our fiscal position is fully safeguarded.

Third, **institutional strengthening**. The PRF is mandated to support capacity building in public financial management, resilient development planning, and budgeting. This is not a burden—it is an investment in Fiji's systems. It will align our national planning with international standards and strengthen our ability to absorb and manage climate finance from all sources.

Fourth, **regional leadership**. Honorable Members, Fiji has long been a voice for the Pacific. We have chaired the UNFCCC COP. We have hosted the Pacific Islands Forum. We have championed the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. To be absent from the founding membership of the Pacific Resilience Facility would be a retreat from that leadership. It would be inconsistent with our foreign policy narrative. It would diminish our influence at the very moment Pacific solidarity matters most.

Honorable Members, Fiji has advocated alongside our Pacific Members and wider family of small island developing states for the finance required to address loss and damage wrought by climate change since the 1990s. Fiji convened the Suva Expert Dialogue on loss and damage ahead of our hosting of COP23, highlighting the major ongoing deficit in support for climate impacts we cannot adequately adapt to. We have put in motion the world's first national legislative and policy framework, process and financing mechanism for supporting the planned relocation of at-risk communities and used it as an exemplar for progressing the global push for loss and damage under the UNFCCC. Our voice within UNFCCC negotiations over the last decade, direct national formal submissions, membership to the transitional committee tasked with setting up the new international

fund for addressing loss and damage, and leadership as SIDS member of the Board of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage has directly contributed to the recognition of the need to finance the losses, we face but are not responsible for creating. The Pacific Resilience Facility, as a direct result of our efforts, is recognized in the COP28 decision and governing instrument of this new global fund as an example of a regional mechanism equipped to support national loss and damage response. We are invested in not only the PRF but in the larger evolving financial architecture within which must function.

### **Addressing implementation obligations**

The Committee has rightly asked about legal, policy, and institutional implications. I will address them directly.

**Legally**, ratification will require parliamentary approval under section 51 of the 2013 Constitution. This Committee's own review is a critical part of that process. Upon ratification, Fiji must recognize the PRF's legal personality and capacity. This is routine. We have done this for other international organizations. The enabling mechanism is the Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities Act 1971. This is standard practice, not novel burden.

**Operationally**, Fiji will be required to use PRF funds strictly in accordance with the Facility's rules and to report transparently on their use. Honorable Members, this is not an imposition—it is accountability. It is what we already do for our own national budget. It is what we already do for Green Climate Fund projects. It is what we already do for World Bank and Asian Development Bank programmes. The PRF's standards are aligned with international norms.

**Institutionally**, the Ministry of Finance will designate a representative to the PRF Council—normally the Minister for Finance. This is appropriate, given the financial nature of the decisions. Other agencies, including but not limited to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, the Ministry for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Risk Management, Disaster Management Office, and community development bodies, will be engaged in project implementation. This requires coordination. I do not minimize that. But coordination is not a barrier; it is a function of effective government. We already coordinate across cyclones, floods, and public health emergencies. We can further coordinate to build resilience and strategize access to finance and through the Climate Change Act and the oversight function of the National Climate Change Coordination Committee we have the formal mandate and structure to do so.

### **On privileges and immunities**

Some have asked whether granting privileges and immunities to the PRF represents an issue for Fiji.

Privileges and immunities are not about elevating an organization above the State. They are about enabling an international organization to function independently and without improper interference. Fiji grants these immunities to the United Nations, to diplomatic missions, and to

regional bodies. We do so because we understand that for an organization to serve its member States effectively, it must be protected from litigation and fiscal disruption. The PRF is no different. These immunities are standard. They are limited. They are necessary.

Moreover, Article 13(c) provides that the Council—on which Fiji will sit—may waive immunities where appropriate. Fiji retains a bearing on the collective control of the organization.

### **Inclusivity**

Honorable members, I wish to respond to a recent media article in which civil society has claimed that the structure of the PRF is not inclusive. I want to be clear that the PRF exists to empower community action and enable direct investment that by default requires the involvement and direct implementation capacity of civil society organizations and NGOs. Indeed, as civil society has recognized, here in Fiji we have taken forward an open dialogue at the national level to inform our approach to the PRF, and we are committed to continuing that internal domestic dialogue. The core issue, highlighted by civil society is around representation in the governance of the PRF and the potential to input into governance decisions. All I would say at this stage is that we should not prejudge arrangements that are being developed and recognize that this new fund is born out of an international treaty that must in the first instance clarify and formalize the political support and ratification of member governments. Beyond that – operationally – there are ways and means to ensure the inclusivity required to ensure operational effectiveness and consultation.

The Codesign consultations will take place with CSOs with a Regional CSO workshop earmarked for 16 March, with national consultations to follow with Forum Members from March to May, which will include consultations with various arms of Government, CSOs, CBOs, private sector, and sub national, regional and international partners to inform the codesign.

The governance spaces have been designed in a way that community voices will be heard at Council level, like PIFLM and FEMM Partners Dialogue Forums and at Board level through Advisory Panels where representation will be inclusive to ensure the delivery of the PRF mandate.

The PRF Board Selection process is codesigned by Forum Members. It will be an independent board to assure a responsive and inclusive PRF.

Furthermore, the PRF Programming Quality Committee of the Board is also a space where civil society representation would be important.

A follow up programming workshop is expected to take place in May to finalise the elements of the programming and financial rules codesign, prior to the FEMM and the envisaged inaugural PRF Council, which will be initiated when the 8th ratification is deposited.

There are 3 more to ratifications to go and we hope that Fiji can be one of the 3 to become a founding Member of the PRF.

## **The alternative: inaction**

Honorable Members, I must also address the alternative.

If Fiji were not to proceed with ratification of the PRF Treaty, the operationalization of the Facility will still proceed. Seven Forum Member Countries plus Tonga are required for entry into force. That threshold will be met. The PRF will be established. It will operate. Its headquarters will be in Tonga. Its Board will make decisions. Its funds will be deployed.

The question is not whether the PRF exists. The question is whether Fiji has a seat at its table.

If we are not members, we cannot influence its rules. We cannot shape its investment policies. We cannot nominate Directors to its Board. We cannot ensure that our national priorities—our adaptation needs, our disaster response timelines, our community development models—are reflected in its operations.

In ratifying this treaty, we become recipients, beneficiaries, and shareholders in the institutional evolution and capital growth of the PRF and will directly benefit from its long-term investments and mandate to provide the grants vulnerable communities in Fiji desperately need.

## **Conclusion**

The Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility is not perfect. No treaty is. But it is Pacific owned. It is Pacific led. It is designed for our context. It protects our fiscal position. It advances our national priorities. It strengthens our regional influence. Importantly it seeks to create financial modalities that directly provide grants for community resilience building. This focus on real impact on the ground at grass roots level is what we have continued to struggle to deliver through the ill-fitting international financial architecture we must engage with. The PRF will help to crowd in Finance for our region and help provide us with a reliable and predictable flow of grant-based financing for resilience-building. It will allow our region to invest in capital markets and grow the capital base of the PRF creating a model that has potential to become self-sustaining overtime. In the absence of a dedicated Pacific regional development bank the value and importance of the PRF is clear.

I am aware that some have raised concerns about the pace of the process to establish the PRF, about the implications of immunities, about the obligations of membership. I have sought to address each of those concerns directly and candidly.

But let me close with this.

Fiji should not join the PRF or any other regional initiative simply because we are compelled to. We must join it because we believe in it, stand ready to promote it, and ready to assist in the process of developing and evolving it. We join because our communities need faster, simpler, fairer access to climate finance. We join because we refuse to accept that the Pacific should be a passive

recipient of decisions made elsewhere. We join because the 2050 Strategy is not a document to be admired—it is a blueprint to be implemented.

I commend this Treaty to the Committee. I urge your support for the existing agreement and process towards national ratification of the treaty. And I thank you for the opportunity to present our Ministry's assessment.

Vinaka Vaka Levu. Thank you.

## Questions and Responses based on the Guidance Document and the Submissions from Stakeholders at the Standing Committee

- **Q: What is the Pacific Resilience Facility and why do we need it?**  
The PRF is a dedicated regional climate fund created by Pacific Island governments to quickly channel grant financing to communities at risk. It addresses the shortcomings of global funds, which many countries find “too little, too slow, [and] too complicated” for Pacific needs. The PRF is specifically “community-centred” and will use each country’s own systems to deliver small-scale grants. By design, it provides local, tailored, grant-based finance (e.g. rebuilding schools or water systems after cyclones) on terms suited to our context. Fiji’s vulnerability to frequent cyclones, flooding and sea-level rise means we need faster, simpler access to funds; the PRF is built exactly for that.

- **Q: How is the PRF different from existing funds like the Green Climate Fund (GCF)?**

The PRF complements existing global funds. Unlike the GCF or World Bank climate funds, the PRF is Pacific-owned and led, with a mandate focused on small grants at the grassroots level. It is structured to disburse grants (not loans) rapidly through national budgets, reducing bureaucratic delays. As the PIFS notes, PRF is a “self-sustaining financial model” that won’t create debt for participating countries. We continue to use global funds for large infrastructure or national programs, but PRF fills the niche for local, community-driven resilience projects that often struggle to get funded otherwise.

- **Q: If Fiji joins, will we have to pay or go into debt?**

There are *no compulsory contributions or loans* from member countries under the treaty. Fiji could choose to contribute some capital (as a show of ownership), but only if the PRF Council makes contributions a condition for grant eligibility. Even then, those payments would be for the purpose of attracting larger donor financing, not as debt obligations. Importantly, all PRF funding comes as grants to Fiji, which we are completely free to use under Fiji control. There is no borrowing or strings-attached lending from the PRF.

- **Q: Does this treaty make Fiji liable for PRF debts or actions?**  
5(c) of the PRF Agreement explicitly states that “PRF Members have no liability for the acts or omissions of the PRF”. The government’s analysis confirms this point: Fiji is not exposed to any financial or legal liability for PRF’s debts or mistakes. This means Fiji’s budget and sovereignty are fully protected – we only gain benefits (grants and support) without risk of having to bail out the fund.

- **Q: What obligations will Fiji have if we ratify?**

We will designate a representative (normally the Finance Minister) to the PRF Council. Project funds must be used “strictly in accordance with the PRF’s Rules” with transparent reporting, but that mirrors our usual accountability for any donor-funded project. We will coordinate across ministries (Finance, Environment, Disaster Management, etc.) to channel PRF grants into eligible projects. Overall, these steps are routine: Fiji already

meets similar requirements for UN and development bank programs. The analysis calls these “*implementation costs*” minor and well outweighed by the benefits. Our experience with previous climate funds shows we have the systems in place to handle this.

- **Q: Is there a risk to Fiji’s sovereignty because of the PRF’s privileges and immunities?**

No. Granting privileges to international organizations is standard practice. Under our laws, diplomats and UN agencies already enjoy immunity from local laws so they can do their work freely. The PRF’s immunities (tax exemption, immunity from suit, inviolability of premises) are *identical to those* given to the UN and other agencies. In this case, the Government of Tonga as host of the PRF Secretariat would grant the immunities and privileges. These immunities do not place the PRF above the state; in fact, Article 13(c) allows the PRF Council to waive them if they interfere with justice or accountability. This is exactly how we have handled other treaty organizations. Tonga will simply extend to PRF the same courtesies that we grant to beneficial partners.

- **Q: How will Fiji make decisions in the PRF, and what role will our people have?**

The PRF’s governance has two bodies. The Council is the top decision-maker, made up of each member’s finance minister (with the ability to co-opt climate/disaster ministers). Fiji’s Finance Minister will represent us on the Council. The Board (7–9 members) is an independent executive board appointed by members. This separation means political oversight (Council) is distinct from day-to-day management (Board). Fiji will have a vote on Council and can nominate eligible professionals for the Board.

In addition to these bodies, the PRF design includes advisory panels and forums where civil society and partners have input. For example, the PRF prospectus notes that the Board will work with country systems – so our own agencies and NGOs will implement grants on the ground.

- **Q: Isn’t this being rushed? Why is the timeline so fast?**

Climate impacts are accelerating, so waiting is costly. Nevertheless, we have already had multiple rounds of consultation. The Heads of Government signed the Treaty in September 2025 at the Forum Leaders in Honiara, and Fiji held a public submission process beforehand. The ongoing co-design phase (through early 2026) is meant to refine details. We already held a regional programming workshop with member states, and we have scheduled further legal/rule co-design workshops and CSO consultations. These will finalize the PRF’s operations in a participatory way. In other words, we are in the middle of the most extensive, region-wide consultative design process ever undertaken for a fund like this. The key was to establish the treaty legally, so those consultations have authority. We respectfully urge that the Committee allow this process to continue to completion.

- **Q: What if Fiji does not join – what does that cost us?**

If Fiji stays out, the PRF will still be established by other members. It will raise funds and make grants, but Fiji will have no seat at the table. We will have no voice in setting the rules or priorities. Practically, that means we could miss out on expedited funding when disasters strike.

Additionally, our national priorities (e.g. Fiji’s National Adaptation Plan or specific disaster response timetables) would not be formally reflected in PRF’s strategy. The treaty analysis makes it clear: by ratifying, “we become recipients, beneficiaries, and shareholders” in the PRF. By not ratifying, we risk being outsiders. For a country that has led Pacific climate diplomacy for decades, sitting out now would be a step backward. Joining means Fiji can influence a \$500m-plus resilience fund built for our region; not joining means missing that opportunity.

- **Q: Who else is supporting the PRF?**

A broad coalition of donors is backing this Pacific solution. Australia has pledged A\$100 million (≈US\$66m) as a “foundational” contribution at COP28. New Zealand has committed NZ\$20m. The United States Congress provided \$20m in the FY2026 spending bill[7]. European partners have also chipped in (e.g. €5m from Germany, €3m from Ireland, €1m from Portugal by late 2025). In all, about US\$166–172 million was pledged by the time of COP30. These are grants from development partners and philanthropies that will help build the PRF’s capital base. The Fiji Government’s source notes roughly 13 development partners have committed funds[5]. This demonstrates strong international confidence in the PRF. Importantly, these funds are *ready to flow*, our only job is to meet the membership threshold and governance conditions to receive them.

- **Q: How will the PRF help ordinary Fijians?**

By putting funding directly into villages and communities. The PRF will allow grants to flow through our own government systems, which means projects on the ground like school retrofits, seawalls, drought-resistant agriculture or community shelters, can be approved and delivered faster. Because PRF grants are small-scale and local, they can reach remote areas that big funds often overlook.

- **Q: Why join a new fund instead of just strengthening our ties with ADB or the Green Climate Fund?**

Even the strongest existing institutions haven’t solved the problem of accessible, local grant financing. ADB and GCF usually fund large national projects or budget support, and they involve lengthy procedures. The PRF deliberately fills a gap: it addresses the unmet need for community-scale financing. Forum documents note that small Pacific grants are “often under-served by bigger global climate finance funds”. By having our own regional fund, we can innovate on financing (for example, investing PRF capital in markets to grow the endowment) in ways global funds can’t. Rather than duplicating, the PRF will attract new finance (like the US\$20m and AU\$100m already announced) that might not otherwise come and then leverage it for community projects. This complements not replaces our partnerships with ADB, World Bank, etc.

- **Q: What happens if Fiji joins the PRF – who makes the first decisions?**

Once we deposit our ratification, Fiji will hold a PRF Council vote equal to any other member. The Council decides on the PRF’s strategic direction and can approve operating budgets, contributions, etc. Early on, the Council will likely focus on finalizing governance (Board elections), setting financial rules, and approving the initial

programming plan. Fiji will be fully part of those discussions. After 8 members join, the first official PRF Council meeting will be convened (likely in early 2026). Only after that Council is convened will the PRF Board be fully established and begin disbursing grants (targeting project start in late 2026/early 2027). Fiji's delegation (Finance Minister or nominee) will have a vote at those meetings, ensuring our interests are considered from the outset.

- **Q: Is the PRF like a Pacific development bank?**

Not exactly. The PRF is a single-purpose facility focused on climate and disaster resilience, not a full multipurpose bank. It will not offer general project loans or development financing outside of its resilience mandate. Instead, its unique features – small grants, rapid disbursement, and capacity building – distinguish it from what a regional development bank would do. That said, the PRF's goal of building a “self-sustaining capital base” and investing in financial markets could give it some banking-like attributes over time. But for now, think of it as a climate resilience trust fund co-owned by PIF members, not a broad-based bank. Fiji still works with ADB and bilateral partners for larger infrastructure lending or concessional financing outside the PRF's scope.

- **Q: Some worry that PRF might duplicate what we already do. What is the value-add?**

The PRF is explicitly designed to be complementary. It fills a niche that no other fund does well. For example, global funds rarely finance very small or community-initiated projects; the PRF will. Furthermore, the governance will be aligned with the Paris Declaration principles: it will use Fiji's own systems and standards, unlike some donor programs that set up parallel processes. In fact, the PRF Prospectus highlights that it will use country PFM systems (budget and audit) by default, which means it strengthens Fiji's system use. In terms of duplication, donors have confirmed they will not withdraw support from GCF or other programs because PRF exists – instead they see PRF as a new channel to reach vulnerable communities. All evidence indicates PRF will add new finance (see USA, Aus, NZ pledges) rather than simply shifting existing aid.

- **Q: Will Fiji still have input on future contributions and budgets?**

Any new contributions to the PRF from development partners are decided by the PRF Board/Council and donors – Fiji just benefits as a member. Conversely, if Fiji ever voluntarily contributes to the capital (for example, to access larger grants), that decision would go through our own budget process. We control our participation level. The PRF Council can recommend expanding the capital base, but it cannot compel a member country to pay unless that country agrees.

- **Q: How will this improve coordination domestically?**

The PRF will actually encourage better coordination. Since PRF grants will flow through multiple ministries (Finance, Environment, Disaster Management, etc.), it will strengthen the existing Climate Change Division's role in coordinating resilience projects.

- **Q: Who will represent Fiji on the PRF Council or Board?**  
By convention, the Finance Minister sits on the PRF Council for their country. The Board members are chosen by the Council from nominated candidates (not representing countries). Fiji will likely nominate experts (e.g. senior officials, climate finance professionals) to the initial Board or as alternates. We are in dialogue about potential candidates. Until then, our priorities will be voiced through the Finance Ministry delegate at Council meetings. We will coordinate closely between Finance, Environment and Disaster agencies to present a united Fiji position.
  
- **Q: Can the PRF funds be accessed directly by NGOs or do they have to go through government?**

The PRF's design allows for three modalities: 1) grants via government projects; 2) grants via partner organizations (e.g. approved NGOs, multilateral agencies); and 3) direct funding to communities.

**MINISRTY OF**

**WOMEN**

**CHILDREN &**

**SOCIAL**

**PROTECTION**

# BRIEF SUBMISSION ON ESTABLISHING THE PACIFIC RESILIENCE FACILITY (PRF)

- ▶ PRF offers an opportunity to strengthen resilience financing across the Pacific.
- ▶ MWCSP supports establishment of PRF, emphasizing coordination with existing strategies and government agencies to ensure **timely and inclusive protection** for vulnerable populations.
- ▶ MWCSP supports PRF under the coordination of **MECC and NDRMO (MRMD)** to ensure alignment with gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) priorities.



- ▶ 1. Benefits of PRF for MWCSP
- ▶ 2. Adaptative Social Protection Strategy (ASP)
- ▶ 3. Key Benefits of ASP-PRF Integration
- ▶ 4. ASP Strategy Implementation Needs
- ▶ 5. Gender-Responsive & Inclusive Approaches
- ▶ 6. Strengthening Gender & Climate Work
- ▶ 7. Platforms & National Linkages
- ▶ 8. Regional & International Linkages
- ▶ 9. Conclusion

# PRESENTATION



Supports ASP Strategy and  
Anticipatory Action Framework

Strengthens Safety & Protection  
Cluster and Cash Working Group

Enables scale-up of climate-  
related pilot projects and  
sustainability assessments

BENEFITS  
OF PRF  
FOR  
MWCSP



- ▶ First national ASP Strategy endorsed in 2024 (2024–2029)
- ▶ Opportunity to integrate ASP into Disaster Risk Financing (DRF)
- ▶ MWCSP part of DRF policy steering committee advocating ASP inclusion

# ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION (ASP) STRATEGY



- ▶ Pre-arranged financing triggers for early support to vulnerable households.
- ▶ Enables vertical and horizontal expansion of assistance without waiting for assessments.
- ▶ Improves people-centered timely responses and coordination across finance, disaster management, and social welfare.

## KEY BENEFITS OF ASP- PRF INTEGRATION



- ▶ Pilot for 15,000 social protection beneficiaries
- ▶ Demonstrates effectiveness of early warning–early action
- ▶ Scaling via PRF: expand coverage, institutionalise protocols, strengthen coordination

## EXAMPLE 1: ANTICIPATORY ACTION CASH TRANSFER PILOT



- ▶ Provides rapid financing through pre-agreed triggers
- ▶ Scaling up: better preparedness, reduced delays, predictable support

## EXAMPLE 2: PARAMETRIC INSURANCE PILOT



- ▶ Strengthen systems and targeting
- ▶ Improve shock-responsive delivery systems
- ▶ Build frontline staff capacity
- ▶ Integrate climate and disaster data
- ▶ Support long-term resilience building

# ASP STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION NEEDS



- ▶ Climate shocks disproportionately affect women, children, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable households.
- ▶ ASP–PRF collaboration supports:
  - ▶ Women’s economic resilience
  - ▶ Nutrition and food security
  - ▶ Services for marginalized groups

## **GENDER-RESPONSIVE & INCLUSIVE APPROACHES**



PRF can help recognise and strengthen:

- ▶ **Gender Transformative Institutional Capacity Development** with MECC and NDRMO.
- ▶ **Gender Responsive Planning & Budgeting (GRP)** with Ministry of Finance & ADB

## **STRENGTHENING GENDER & CLIMATE WORK**



PRF should align with:

- ▶ Safety & Protection Cluster
- ▶ Food security mitigation, renewable energy (Barefoot College)
- ▶ Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE-NAP 2025–2030)
- ▶ National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women & Girls
- ▶ Women, Peace & Security, including DV & Child helplines

## PLATFORMS & NATIONAL LINKAGES



- ▶ Coordination with UNFCCC Gender Action Plans
- ▶ Alignment with Pacific Leaders Declaration on Gender Equality & 2050 Strategy
- ▶ Support for rural communities, women-led groups, persons with disabilities

## **REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL LINKAGES**



- ▶ PRF presents a major opportunity to institutionalize ASP, scale early action and insurance mechanisms, and ensure inclusive, gender-responsive resilience approaches across the Pacific.
- ▶ Ministry looks forward to clarity on PRF's **financial sustainability** and sources.

## CONCLUSION



## **Brief Submission on the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility**

- It is an opportunity for Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection (MWCSP) to provide a brief submission on the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility. It is a great idea to establish the facility but it has to be a coordinated approach and integration of the existing strategies/framework or established forums to ensure that resilience financing translates into timely and inclusive protection for vulnerable populations including children, women, persons with disabilities and older persons.
- For a better and more coordinated approach within Government machinery, MWCSP will be in support through the coordination and lead of Ministry of Environment and Climate Change including NDRMO under Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development (MRMD) as we consult with these agencies for gender equality and social inclusion interventions related to the Ministry's mandate.
- The establishment of the facility will support the ministry to implement the endorsed Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) Strategy, Anticipatory Action framework, support the existing forums such as Safety & Protection cluster and National Cash working Group. It also would support to scale up the pilot climate related projects, conduct impact assessment and ensure sustainability of the project.
- MWCSP had Fiji's first Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) Strategy endorsed by cabinet in 2024, including an implementation plan from 2024 to 2029. From the social protection perspective, integration of Adaptive Social Protection into a Disaster Risk Financing provides an opportunity to integrate Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) into climate and disaster risk financing (DRF) mechanisms. MWCSP is represented at the steering committee responsible to draft DRF policy and has been highlighting on the ASP inclusion in the DRF.
- ASP strengthens the capacity of social protection systems to prepare, anticipate, cope with, respond to and adapt to climate and disaster shocks.
- Linking disaster risk financing with existing social assistance programmes and social protection platforms. It also enables early financing triggers to scale up assistance to vulnerable households. The funds need to be pre-arranged and ready to vertically and horizontally expand the system in response to a disaster without waiting for assessments and provide support to the most affected and vulnerable to have high chances to falling into further vulnerability during disasters.
- Strengthen coordination between finance, disaster management, and social welfare systems. It ensures financing mechanisms translate into timely, inclusive, and people-centred responses.

Example 1, Ministry is currently implementing pilot project on cash transfer anticipatory action for selected 15,000 beneficiaries of social protection programs. This is aligned to Anticipatory Action Framework.

- Anticipatory action pilots demonstrate effectiveness of early warning–early action approaches.
- Early financing reduces disaster impacts and humanitarian costs.

Scale-up through PRF financing would (i) Expand coverage to high-risk and vulnerable communities, (ii) Institutionalise early action protocols within national systems, (iii) Strengthen coordination between meteorological, disaster management, and social protection systems.

Example 2, Ministry is also implementing pilot climate risk insurance project (Parametric Insurance) that has opportunities for expansion

- Parametric insurance provides rapid post-disaster financing through pre-agreed triggers.
- Scaling up would of this pilot project would (i) ilmprove financial preparedness for climate shocks, (ii) Reduce delays in response financing, (iii) Increase predictability of support for affected households.

Adaptive Social Protection strategy requires support to fully implement it.

- The facility can support to strengthen implementation of national ASP strategies through (i) Strengthening social protection systems and targeting, (ii) Enhancing shock-responsive delivery systems, (iii) Building capacity of frontline service providers, (iv) Integrating climate and disaster risk data into social protection planning (v) Supports long-term resilience and system strengthening.

ASP implementation would support gender-responsive and nutrition-sensitive.

- Climate shocks disproportionately affect women, children, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable households.
- Gender-responsive targeting and benefit design (i) Supporting women’s economic resilience and caregiving roles, (ii) Protecting household food security and nutrition outcomes during shocks (iii) Ensuring inclusive access to services for marginalized groups.

The Pacific Resilience Facility presents an opportunity to institutionalise ASP within regional resilience financing, scaling anticipatory action and parametric insurance, have pre-arranged funds to scale up social protection systems, alongside gender- and nutrition-responsive social protection, will strengthen preparedness, reduce vulnerability, and support inclusive and sustainable resilience across Pacific communities.

Through the coordination of the Department for Women in relation to Gender and Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction (GCCDRR) work, we also envisage this will recognize:

- Gender Transformative Institutional Capacity Development (ICD) work that the Ministry will be working closely with MECC and NDRMO in strengthening gender mainstreaming efforts which will be aligned to PRF;
- Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting work in collaboration with Ministry of Finance and ADB that complements the gender mainstreaming work that MWCSF is currently undertaking. This will address Point 2.3 of the analysis provided.

- We would like to see how this regional facility work in recognition on the following platforms PRF will facilitate/incorporate with national interest specifically on gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) lenses in addition to the above:
  - Safety & Protection Cluster work;
  - Mitigation work with line agencies on food security and capacity building component, renewable energy efforts with Barefoot college – with communities on the ground on adaptation as well;
  - National Action Plan on Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE-NAP) 2025-2030 and National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (NAP-PVAWG) in corporate national efforts in relation to GCCDRR work;
  - Women Peace and Security during emergencies and also helplines (DV Helplines 1560/Child Helpline 1325) as mitigation factors on impacts of CC & DRR to all women and girls.
  - How this will coordinate with MECC/NDRMO on UNFCCC Gender Action Plans with the Pacific Leaders Declaration on Gender Equality framework in alignment to 2050 Strategy;
  - Financial Support towards rural communities including women-led organizations, disabilities and all vulnerable groups;
  - PRF approach to be gender responsive and inclusive in all its deliberations which also incorporates social inclusion components in all its deliberations and interventions to the region. This is in support of the ICD/GRPB with social protection, safety and child protection efforts, disabilities and inclusion component.

Ministry will look forward to understand the sustainability of the facility, noting the financial sources.

**MINISRTY  
OF  
AGRICULTURE  
WATERWAYS  
&  
SUGAR**



# MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATERWAYS AND SUGAR INDUSTRY

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File Ref: C56/2

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2026

## MEMORANDUM

From : The Permanent Secretary for Agriculture, Waterways, and Sugar Industry.

To : The Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence – Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua

Re : **Response from the Ministry of Agriculture, Waterways, and Sugar Industry to the National Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence on the Establishment of the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF)**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways welcomes the opportunity to present its assessment of the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility, a significant regional initiative that marks a critical shift toward Pacific-owned and managed climate finance.

This feedback presents the Ministry's views on the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF), with emphasis on the anticipated implications for Fiji and its communities should Fiji accede to the Agreement.

It also outlines the Ministry's assessment of the potential implications for the agriculture sector, Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA), waterways management, including Nature-Based Seawalls (NBS), and the sugar sector.

### 1. Potential Implications for Agriculture

Should Fiji accede, the PRF will provide a dedicated funding stream for community-level climate adaptation, specifically addressing gaps in current global financing.

- **Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA):** the Ministry views the PRF as a vital vehicle for scaling CSA technologies, including drip irrigation, climate-resilient seed varieties, water-efficient farming systems, sustainable soil and land management, and community-based food security initiatives. These interventions are essential to address the projected rise in cyclones and droughts, while strengthening the agriculture sector through increased investment in resilient and sustainable practices. By promoting climate-resilient

crop varieties and improved resource management, the PRF directly supports the development of resilient, food-secure, and sustainable communities.

- **Rural Livelihoods & Food Security:** by providing small-scale grants directly to farmers and local organisations, the PRF can reduce food insecurity and support economic recovery after disasters without increasing national debt.
- **Infrastructure:** the agreement supports financing for Nature-Based seawalls and hybrid infrastructure solutions, enabling the scaling up of watershed rehabilitation, riparian buffer restoration, erosion control, and Nature-Based solutions such as mangrove restoration and living shorelines. These interventions help reduce flood risk, protect coastlines, and enhance overall ecosystem health, while also directing funding toward resilient agricultural infrastructure, including small-scale systems, community-based water catchments, and flood protection measures such as those planned under the Nadi Flood Alleviation Project.
- **Sugar sector:** the sugar industry will benefit from investment in drainage rehabilitation, flood protection structures, climate-resilient cane production systems, and maintenance of rural access routes critical for cane supply during extreme weather. This supports safeguarding rural incomes and production stability.

## **2. Anticipated Implications for Fiji and the Communities**

Accession to the PRF offers an opportunity to strengthen national and community-level climate resilience through simplified access to grant financing for climate adaptation, disaster preparedness, rapid response mechanisms, and nature-based solutions. This will result in reduced disaster losses, enhanced adaptive capacity, and improved livelihoods for vulnerable rural communities.

## **3. Policy, Legislative, and Institutional Considerations**

Acceding to the Agreement will require Fiji to align its domestic agricultural, legal, and institutional frameworks with PRF governance, reporting, safeguards, and public financial management standards, ensuring full compliance with the Fund's operational and accountability requirements.

To effectively manage these obligations and strengthen national readiness, the Ministry recommends establishing a dedicated PRF Project Preparation and Delivery Unit to coordinate pipeline development, oversee compliance with fiduciary and safeguard policies, support implementation, and monitor reporting and performance outcomes.

- **Policy Alignment:** the PRF aligns with Fiji's National Development Plan 2025–2029 and Vision 2050, which prioritise building resilient food systems and improving rural access to resources.
- **Legislative Integration:** while the PRF is a regional treaty, Fiji must ensure that domestic frameworks, such as the Agricultural Landlord and Tenant Act (ALTA) and the Crop Liens Act, are harmonised to protect farmers' investments in PRF-funded resilience projects.
- **Institutional Capacity:** The Ministry must strengthen its internal capacity to support communities in applying for and managing PRF grants, ensuring these funds complement existing bilateral programs like the Pacific Climate Smart Agriculture and Sustainable Land Management Partnership.

#### 4. Cross-Cutting Benefits

Accession is expected to improve rural livelihoods, enhance national food security, strengthen resilience infrastructure, and introduce improved public financial management and safeguard frameworks through PRF capacity-building provisions.

#### 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways **strongly supports** Fiji's accession to the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) Agreement, viewing it as a transformative solution that places Blue Pacific communities at the centre of resilience financing.

Accession to the PRF will unlock targeted grant funding essential for reducing climate and disaster risks across agriculture, waterways, and coastal communities, strengthening national resilience, safeguarding livelihoods, and protecting critical infrastructure.

The Ministry is confident that the substantial benefits of joining the PRF far outweigh any potential implementation challenges, which can be effectively managed through well-coordinated institutional arrangements.

6. For any further clarification or information, please feel free to contact Director Waterways – Mr. Marau Vuli at email [marauvuli10@gmail.com](mailto:marauvuli10@gmail.com) or phone 9987145 or Director Land Resource Planning and Development – Mr. Amena Banuve at email [amena.banuve@moa.gov.fj](mailto:amena.banuve@moa.gov.fj) or phone 9907382.



.....  
 Dr. Andrew Tukana  
**Permanent Secretary**

**MINISTRY  
OF  
RURAL MARITIME  
DISTATER  
MANAGEMENT**

# MINISTRY OF RURAL & MARITIME DEVELOPMENT & DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT SUPPORT FOR THE PACIFIC RESILIENCE FACILITY



## Leveraging Pacific Resilience Finance to Deliver the Strategic Development Plan of the Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Risk Management



Presentation by: Mr. Mitieli Cama

Date: 17 February 2026

# What is the Pacific Resilience Facility?

- The Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) is a Pacific-owned and Pacific-led international organization that provides dedicated grants for climate adaptation, disaster preparedness, rapid disaster response and community resilience projects in Pacific Island countries.
- It has its headquarters in Nuku'alofa, Tonga and has the full international legal personality and capacity to enter contracts, hold assets and provide finance in member countries.



## PRF and Strategic Priority 1 – *Sustainable living standards and resilient communities*

- The PRF finances climate adaptation, disaster-preparedness, nature-based solutions, loss and damage and community-level SDG projects, supporting safer housing, WASH, health, education and food security in rural and maritime communities (Strategic Priority 1, Key outcomes 1-3).
- PRF community-centred grants can be programmed through Divisional Development Plans and the National Rural Development Policy (NRDP) to address development priorities, including Self-Help social projects and high-priority water and sanitation interventions (Strategic Priority 1 objectives 1-4).



# PRF and Strategic Priority 2 – *Connectivity and Accessibility*

- PRF funding can support resilient rural infrastructure and communications, including roads, crossings, jetties, wharves and communications systems that remain functional during and after disasters, aligning with Key outcomes on reliable transport, communications and early warning (Strategic Priority 2, Key outcomes 1–4).
- By backing evidence-based, risk-informed infrastructure (e.g. **Community Access Roads, Footpaths and Footbridges** ((CARFF) and other rural projects) the PRF reinforces coordinated rural infrastructure planning, National Rural Development Policy (NRDP)-based prioritisation, and early-warning and post-disaster restoration arrangements with communications providers (Strategic Priority 2 objectives 1–5).





## PRF and Strategic Priority 3 – *Sustainable growth and resilience of the rural economy*

- PRF support for nature-based solutions, community livelihoods and loss-and-damage projects contributes to sustainable use of natural resources and diversified, resilient livelihoods in rural and maritime communities (Strategic Priority 3, Key outcomes 1-5)
- Through PRF-funded projects, MRMDDM can coordinate partners to develop inclusive value chains, support community enterprises and MSMEs, and integrate DRR and risk-financing tools into livelihood programmes, in line with Strategic Priority 3 objectives on livelihood opportunities, traditional skills, land-use mapping and risk screening.



# PRF and Strategic Priority 4 – *Disaster operations and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)*

- The PRF provides grants for disaster preparedness and rapid response, helping Fiji strengthen inclusive, well-coordinated disaster operations and increase investments in DRR and resilience (Strategic Priority 4, Key outcomes 1–4).
- PRF governance through the Council and Board, and its emphasis on partnerships and safeguards, complements MRMDDM objectives to strengthen disaster governance, SOPs, partnerships with CSOs and the private sector, and integration of DRR into divisional development plans and rural capital projects (Strategic Priority 4 objectives 1–5).





## PRF and Strategic Priority 5 – *Planning, facilitation and knowledge management*

- The PRF explicitly supports capacity building in resilient-development planning, budgeting and public financial management, reinforcing MRMDDM's role as a facilitator, knowledge broker, relationship manager and DRR coordinator, and supporting high governance and accountability standards (Strategic Priority 5, Key outcomes 1-4).
- PRF reporting, MEL and safeguard requirements encourage development of a rural development database, GIS mapping, MEL systems and risk management policies, and strengthen partner engagement and communication mechanisms consistent with Strategic Priority 5 objectives on MEL, databases, communication, partner engagement and risk management.



# How PRF Finance Works and Implication for MRMDDM

- PRF funding comes from voluntary contributions, investment income and other approved sources, and there is no compulsory contribution to become or remain a member, although the Council may decide that a contribution is needed to be eligible for finance.
- Finance must be used strictly for PRF's purposes and reported transparently, which will require coordination between the Ministry of Finance, MRMDDM and other agencies to ensure projects are aligned with Divisional Development Plans, NRDP priorities and risk-informed capital programming across all Strategic Priorities.

# Legal and Institutional Steps for Fiji

- Fiji's participation in the PRF requires domestic treaty processes (Cabinet and Parliament), recognition of PRF's legal personality in Fiji and granting of privileges and immunities through legislation such as the Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities Act 1971.
- MRMDDM will need to engage in a whole-of-government coordination for project pipelines, governance participation and implementation arrangements, ensuring that PRF-supported projects reinforce divisional plans, NRDP processes, DRR integration and rural development databases across Strategic Priorities 1-5.

# Direct Benefits to MRMDDM Operations

- Faster and more predictable access to grants for rural and maritime community projects – essential services, resilient infrastructure, livelihoods and DRR – will help MRMDDM deliver its Key outcomes under Strategic Priorities 1-4 more effectively and at scale.
- Capacity-building, strengthened public financial management, improved planning and monitoring and enhanced regional partnerships will reinforce Strategic Priority 5 by improving coordination, knowledge management, partner engagement and risk-informed decision-making.

# Regional Leadership and Strategic Fit

- The PRF is grounded in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and 2023 Leaders' Declaration, and reinforces regional solidarity on climate and disaster resilience.
- Active participation by Fiji, with MRMDDM as a key implementing partner, strengthens Fiji's regional climate leadership and directly supports long-term resilience and development outcomes in the Strategic Development Plan, including increased investments in DRR, resilient infrastructure, sustainable livelihoods and risk-informed planning.

## Key Messages and Next Steps

- The PRF is a practical, Pacific-designed tool to mobilize climate and disaster resilience finance that directly supports all 5 Strategic Priorities in the MRMDDM Strategic Development Plan, from essential services and connectivity to livelihoods, DRR and governance.
- MRMDDM formally endorses Fiji's participation in the PRF, and should engage in the national ratification process, and prepare a pipeline of risk-informed, community-centred projects aligned with Divisional Development Plans to maximize early benefits.



THANK YOU!

**FIJI COUNCIL  
OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES  
[FCOSS] &  
PACIFIC ISLANDS  
ASSOCIATION  
OF  
NGO'S  
[PIANGO]**

Date 06/02/2026

# **Submission on the Treaty of the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility**

**To the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence**

## **Introduction**

This submission is made jointly by the Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS) and the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO).

FCOSS exists to support and empower vulnerable and marginalised communities in Fiji to make a difference. FCOSS members of 21 District Council of Social Services (DCOSS ) across Fiji with 320 plus Community Based Organisations (CBOs), 10 National NGO Members and 200 more empowered communities – collectively bring decades of experiences in Humanitarian response, disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation, community-led development through investing in leadership and coordinated community engagements.

PIANGO is the regional peak body for Pacific civil society, representing national NGO platforms and civil society organisations across more 24 Pacific Island countries and territories. PIANGO's membership includes community-based organisations, national NGOs, and civil society networks deeply embedded in local contexts across the Pacific.

Together, FCOSS and PIANGO represent well over thousands of civil society organisations, with extensive, long-standing experience supporting Pacific communities before, during, and after crises. This provides a strong and practical basis for commenting on the design and implications of regional resilience financing mechanisms such as the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF).

## **Overall position**

FCOSS and PIANGO support Fiji ratifying the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility and becoming an early and constructive member.

We view the PRF as a timely and important initiative that aligns with long-standing Pacific priorities for regional ownership, self-determination, and accessible resilience finance, consistent with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

From a civil society perspective, the PRF has the potential to play a meaningful role in strengthening resilience at community, national, and regional levels, provided its implementation remains true to its stated principles.

## **Regional stability and resilience**

Pacific countries are facing escalating and interconnected pressures from climate change, disaster risk, economic stress, broader geopolitical destabilisation and ODA decreases. These pressures are already manifesting in increased humanitarian need, displacement, and strain on public institutions and community systems.

FCOSS and PIANGO strongly believe that investment in community-level resilience is a stabilising force. When communities are better able to anticipate, withstand, and recover from shocks, the impacts of crises are reduced, social cohesion is strengthened, and reliance on repeated emergency response is lessened.

In this context, the PRF should be understood not only as a climate or development financing mechanism, but as a strategic investment in regional stability. Supporting Pacific-led resilience initiatives contributes directly to a more secure, resilient, and self-determining Pacific region at a time of increasing uncertainty.

### **Localisation and the role of civil society**

FCOSS and PIANGO strongly welcome the PRF's emphasis on Pacific ownership, governance, and leadership, as well as its stated commitment to community-centred and nationally contextualised approaches.

Civil society organisations - particularly Pacific community-based and national organisations, play a critical role in resilience building. They bring local knowledge, trusted relationships, and the ability to reach communities that are often least served by large-scale financing mechanisms. For localisation to be meaningful in practice, the PRF must:

- Enable realistic access for Pacific civil society and community-based organisations, not only for governments or large implementing entities;
- Apply proportionate and enabling accountability and safeguarding requirements, rather than replicating barriers that have limited civil society access to global climate funds; and
- Recognise civil society not only as implementers, but as partners in shaping priorities, approaches, and learning.

FCOSS and PIANGO encourage the Government of Fiji to use its role within the PRF Structure of the Council and Board to actively champion these principles of accountability and development effectiveness in the Public Finance Management legislation to inform the development of the facility's rules and procedures.

### **Engagement and partnership**

FCOSS and PIANGO strongly encourage the Government of Fiji to:

- Establish a national version of the PRF structure specific for Fiji exploring existing mechanism that are already in place to ensure the principle of partnership and engagement with communities are enhance.

- Representation of Civil Society upon the recommendation of the Fiji Government to be in the Advisory Body of the PRF Board and at the PRF Dialogue Forum.
- In the PRF Fiji structure to incorporate the set up of a National Coordination model to develop that Grant modality for Fiji and must be developed in a co-design methodology that is inclusive of Civil Society and communities.
- The funding modality must factor in the principle of partnership recognising that some national partners have developed funding mechanisms that PRF can help scale up and provide match funding and co-financing community initiatives. FCOSS and PIANGO can offer the FALE (Facilitay Aiding Locally-Led Engagement) an Anticipatory Action facility supporting community as first responders to disaster as a partnership case in point to inform the development of the PRF Community programmes.

The PRF is intended to complement, not substitute for, existing mechanisms. Its value lies in filling a specific gap in accessible, community-level resilience finance. That role will be compromised if its establishment results in the contraction of other effective and already-stretched programmes. It is important that Fiji NGOs are able to continue to partner and support this work through the Facility.

## **Conclusion**

FCOSS and PIANGO support Fiji ratifying the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility and engaging early and constructively in its governance.

If implemented in line with its stated principles, the PRF has the potential to strengthen Pacific-led resilience and self-determination, advance localisation and meaningful civil society participation, and complement existing humanitarian and development mechanisms. In doing so, it can contribute to a more stable and resilient Pacific region at a time of significant global and regional disruption.

FCOSS and PIANGO stand ready to support continued dialogue, learning, and collaboration as the PRF moves from establishment to implementation.

**FIJI BUSINESS**

**DISASTER**

**RESILIANCE**

**COUNCIL**

**[FBDRC]**



FCEF/External/2026/18  
6th February 2026

**The Chairperson**

Parliamentary Standing Committee  
Economic Affairs  
Parliament of Fiji  
**SUVA**

**Dear Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna,**

**Submission: Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF)**

The Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council (FBDRC) is pleased to submit its written submission on the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) for the consideration of the Committee.

FBDRC operates under the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF), the recognised voice of the private sector in Fiji, and serves as the private sector's disaster resilience mechanism. The Council works closely with Government and stakeholders to strengthen business preparedness, continuity, and recovery, particularly for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

This submission expresses FBDRC's in-principle support for the establishment of the PRF, while highlighting the critical importance of ensuring that private sector and MSME resilience is meaningfully supported through accessible, practical, and grant-based financing mechanisms. Given that MSMEs form the backbone of Fiji's economy and employment, strengthening their disaster and climate resilience is essential to national and regional economic stability.

The submission further outlines how the private sector, through the FBDRC, can serve as a ready implementation partner for PRF-supported initiatives, including preparedness, business continuity, and risk-financing efforts.

FBDRC welcomes the opportunity to appear before the Committee to provide oral submissions and to respond to any questions arising from the written submission.

We thank the Committee for the opportunity to contribute to this important legislative process and remain available should further information or clarification be required.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "E. Bernard", is enclosed in a light blue rectangular box.

Mr. Edward Bernard  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## **WRITTEN SUBMISSION BY THE FIJI BUSINESS DISASTER RESILIENCE COUNCIL ON:**

### ***Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF)***

#### **Submitted by:**

Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council (FBDR)

*A Council under the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF)*

#### **Key Note of the Submission**

This submission emphasises that strengthening national and regional resilience is inseparable from strengthening the private sector, particularly micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and ensuring they have accessible, practical pathways to disaster and climate resilience financing.

#### **1. Introduction**

The Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council (FBDR) welcomes the opportunity to make this submission on the Agreement to Establish the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF).

FBDR operates under the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF), the voice of the Private Sector in Fiji.

The Council works to strengthen private sector preparedness, continuity, and recovery in the face of disasters and climate change, with a particular focus on MSMEs, which form the backbone of Fiji's economy.

Importantly, the Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council (FBDR) is formally recognised within Fiji's national disaster governance framework. Under the National Disaster Risk Management Act 2024 (Act No. 14 of 2024), Schedule 2 (Section 10) provides for the "*Membership of the Disaster Risk Reduction Committee*", under which the private sector is represented through the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation and its relevant Council.

In this context, the Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council operates as the recognised private sector disaster resilience mechanism, supporting coordination between Government and businesses across disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response, and recovery.

MSMEs account for approximately 80% of registered businesses and employ around 60% of Fiji's workforce. When disasters disrupt this segment, the impacts extend beyond individual businesses to employment, household income, supply chains, and national economic stability.

## **2. Purpose of Submission**

The purpose of this submission is to:

- Express in-principle support for the establishment of the PRF;
- Highlight that private sector resilience remains under-financed and under-supported despite its central economic role;
- Demonstrate how accessible, grant-based financing can enable meaningful private sector preparedness; and
- Position the private sector, through FBDRC, as a ready implementation partner for PRF-supported initiatives.
- FBDRC has worked very closely with the NDRMO over the past years in preparation for disasters
- FBDRC has championed and promoted the vulnerability and the need in the Pacific communities for technical, & financial support for Fiji and the Pacific.

## **3. Disasters as a Private Sector and Economic Risk**

In Fiji, disasters represent systemic economic shocks, not isolated events. Major cyclones and floods damage business assets, disrupt utilities and transport, and reduce consumer demand—often for prolonged periods.

Experience from past disasters has shown that:

- Many MSMEs lack financial buffers to withstand prolonged closures;
- Access to post-disaster finance is often slow, complex, or debt-based; and
- Businesses without prior preparedness or continuity planning are significantly less likely to reopen.

This underscores the importance of financing preparedness, pre-arranged response and recovery support from donor agencies & development partners, rather than relying primarily on response and recovery funding only.

## **4. Financing Gaps Facing the Private Sector**

While global and regional climate finance mechanisms exist, most are not designed for MSMEs. Private sector access is constrained by:

- Complex application and reporting requirements
- High compliance thresholds
- Focus on sovereign or large-scale infrastructure projects

- Limited technical assistance for small businesses

As a result, private sector resilience remains largely self-financed, despite businesses being expected to resume operations quickly after disasters to support recovery and employment.

The PRF presents a critical opportunity to address this gap through simplified, grant-based financing mechanisms tailored to Pacific realities.

There is also the opportunity to partner with private sector to fast-track response and recovery efforts in Fiji and the Region.

## **5. Global Lessons and the PRF's Added Value**

International experience demonstrates the effectiveness of regional disaster financing mechanisms:

- Facilities in the Caribbean and Africa have improved speed and predictability of disaster funding, reducing economic disruption.
- Southeast Asian mechanisms complement national systems by providing risk financing and preparedness incentives.

However, these mechanisms are largely insurance- or government-focused. The PRF is distinct in that it is designed as a Pacific-owned, grant-based facility, with the potential to:

- Support preparedness and resilience, not only response; and
- Extend benefits to private sector and MSMEs, which are often excluded from existing mechanisms.
- Private sector be included as a partner with the public sector, donor agencies & development partners as a strategic partner for the entire process.

## **6. FBDRRC Private Sector Disaster Resilience Toolkit**

The climate crisis continues to be a challenge for employers as it disrupts business operations and plans. Tropical Cyclone Winston in 2015 resulted in estimated losses of 14,450,129 work days and F\$351.45 million in personal income. However, if we add the impact of TC Winston (Cat 5) and the two flash floods in 2016 and TC Sarai (Cat 1) in 2019, it would be approximately \$6.5 billion in costs. That is about 65-70 per cent of our (current) GDP, wiped out in six years due to multiple crises.

FBDRC is currently developing a Private Sector Disaster Resilience Toolkit, structured around four pillars:

1. Preparedness – risk assessments, business continuity planning, readiness checklists
2. During a Disaster – operational guidance for staff safety and continuity
3. Recovery – reopening, cashflow stabilisation, and supply chain restoration
4. Risk Financing – practical guidance on insurance, disaster finance, and financial preparedness

The toolkit responds directly to private sector needs by:

- Translating disaster resilience into practical, business-relevant actions;
- Improving financial literacy around disaster risk and financing options; and
- Reducing reliance on ad hoc, post-disaster assistance.

## **7. How the PRF Can Strengthen Private Sector Access to Financing**

FBDRC submits that PRF financing could play a transformative role by:

- Supporting the rollout and scaling of the Private Sector Disaster Resilience Toolkit;
- Funding preparedness and continuity planning for MSMEs and sector associations;
- Providing small, fast, and accessible grants for resilience-building measures; and
- Building long-term private sector capability to manage disaster risk proactively.

Such an approach would reduce post-disaster losses, protect jobs, and lower fiscal pressure on Government following disasters and allow for the speedy recovery of the economy.

## **8. Recommendations**

FBDRC respectfully recommends that Parliament:

1. Support ratification of the Agreement to Establish the PRF.
2. Encourage PRF governance that recognises the central role of the private sector in resilience and recovery.
3. Advocate for accessible, MSME-friendly financing windows, including simplified processes and technical support.

4. Support practical implementation initiatives, such as the FBDRC Private Sector Disaster Resilience Toolkit.
5. Promote PRF programming that prioritises preparedness and risk reduction, reducing future disaster costs.
6. Includes the private sector as a strategic partner with the governance mechanism of PRF.

## **9. Conclusion**

Strengthening resilience in Fiji requires strengthening the private sector's ability to prepare, adapt, and recover. The Pacific Resilience Facility offers a timely opportunity to address long-standing financing gaps by delivering accessible, grant-based support that reflects Pacific realities.

FBDRC supports the establishment of the PRF and stands ready to contribute through practical implementation, capacity building, and ongoing engagement with Parliament and regional partners.

FBDRC welcomes the opportunity to provide oral submissions to the Committee.