



Climate Forced Displacement

SALOTE SOQO

SENIOR PROGRAM LEADER ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & CLIMATE ACTION

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE (UUSC)

UUSC's Program:



- ▶ **Goal:** To protect the rights of people that are forcibly displaced by climate induced environmental issues in the South Pacific and in Alaska.
- ▶ **Partnership with the most affected:** Through grantmaking, research and advocacy
- ▶ **Vision:** That a human-rights centered approach is adopted by local and international policy to address the needs of communities to build protections in place, to uphold their rights and to migrate with dignity.

Climate Forced Displacement

- ▶ 1 person/second is displaced by an environmental catastrophe/natural disaster
- ▶ Climate change is a multiplier of risks: food, water and livelihood insecurity, incites violence and conflict
- ▶ Climate displaced peoples don't have any protection under international laws

Existing environmental problems +
natural disasters & climate
change impacts

Widening existing problems -
economic injustices, gender and
class inequality, exploitation of
indigenous peoples and resources
= Forced displacement

Involuntary or Forced
Displacement

South Pacific Islands



Climate Change Impacts in the South Pacific



Coral Bleaching: Fiji



Food insecurity, Kiribati



Sea level rise, Tuvalu



Cyclone Winston, Fiji 2016



Cyclone Pam, Vanuatu 2015



Water insecurity, Tuvalu



Fiji

- ▶ 332 islands in 75,000 sq. miles
- ▶ ~900,000 population
- ▶ Economy: Tourism, sugar export, minerals, agriculture
- ▶ SLR, increased sea surface temps, increased cyclone frequency and intensities
- ▶ Food and water insecurity is prevalent in rural areas and outer islands
- ▶ Many villagers are battling with encroaching erosion due to sea level rise and coastal storms
- ▶ ~830 communities at risk.
- ▶ Over 45 coastal communities need to be relocated by 2025





Vunidogoloa & Narikoso



- ▶ Vunidogoloa relocated to Kenani
- ▶ Relocation period: 2007 to 2014
- ▶ Cost ~\$1million (Paid by the state & village)
- ▶ Relocated 126 villagers (26 houses)
- ▶ Benefits: Safety, easier access to transportation and healthcare, improved infrastructure, hope for the future.
- ▶ Challenges: Loss of cultural lands, ancestral ties, burial site.
- ▶ Narikoso relocating to neighboring tribal lands
- ▶ Relocation period: 2011 - ?
- ▶ Cost ~\$1.7million (Paid by the state & village)
- ▶ Relocate 7 households (26 houses)
- ▶ Benefits: Safety from coastal inundation
- ▶ Challenges: Physical separation from community ...

Fiji's National Response & Needs

- ▶ National Relocation Guideline
 - ▶ Based on pilot studies from Vunidogoloa and Narikoso
- ▶ Integrated Vulnerability Assessments (IVA)
- ▶ Build climate resiliency through adaptation
- ▶ Advocacy for GHG mitigation
- ▶ International commitments to reduce GHG emissions
- ▶ Funds & Technical Assistance for Adaptation
 - ▶ Coastal resilience
 - ▶ Flood control measures
 - ▶ Drought alleviation measures
 - ▶ Resilient agricultural systems

WE ARE NOT DROWNING
WE ARE FIGHTING!!

