

Pacific Islands



In the Pacific Islands The Asia Foundation focuses on supporting Pacific solutions to Pacific challenges. Our programs address priorities by advancing women's leadership on climate action and disaster management, strengthening regionalism and resilience, countering trafficking in persons, and laying the groundwork for the future of work, including digital literacy and economic opportunities.

Project Highlights

Countering trafficking in persons in the region

In partnership with USAID, Pacific RISE-CTIP strengthens national policies and supports locally led implementation of action plans addressing the rising issue of human trafficking in Fiji, RMI, Palau, PNG and Tonga.

The Future of Work for Older Women

Partnered with the Fiji Women's Rights Movement to survey the future of work for older women in Fiji, Marshall Islands, and Samoa. This study documents the experiences and challenges faced by older women in finding and maintaining work opportunities.

Greening women-led businesses

Collaborated with Women's Entrepreneurs Business Council and Talanoa Consulting to design green business policies and networks in Fiji; 250 women-led businesses setting the standards for green businesses in the Pacific.

Supporting children's literacy through Pacific stories in Pacific languages

Created 50 Pacific Island stories through Let's Read, an open-access digital library. With financial support from Pacific Community, distributed books on oceans and climate action to schools and libraries in Fiji. Hosted book creation workshops in Fiji, Samoa, and at the Melanesia Arts Festival in Port Vila, Vanuatu, under the banner of The Mighty Melanesian Girl.

2023 Snapshot



87k people in Fiji, RMI, and Tonga informed about countering human trafficking



12.5k+ textbooks distributed to universities, schools, and local organisations



980 people participated in Sanma Food Revolution events



Flagship Initiatives



Care Economy in Fiji and the Pacific Region

Taking a holistic approach, it is clear that the Care Economy has not received sufficient attention in the Pacific. To address this issue, the Foundation collaborated with key stakeholders to assess the specific care needs of the Pacific region, starting with Fiji. As part of the annual Pacific Update at the University of the South Pacific, we hosted a Care Economy–Fiji Case Study panel. To further inform the Fiji Care Economy dialogue, the Foundation is conducting research in Fiji that will be shared with participants from selected countries across the region at the Fiji Care Economy dialogue.

Children's literacy

The Pacific region has a literacy rate of 53% in children below the age of 10. The Let's Read program works to increase children's literacy by creating relatable Pacific stories and characters written in the region's indigenous languages. We work with Pacific authors and illustrators to create the stories. We also partner with the region's education practitioners and literacy programs to support local solutions in addressing the region's literacy challenge. The books are available through Let's Read's free digital library.

Addressing human trafficking

In partnership with USAID, the Foundation is leading the Pacific RISE-CTIP program to address trafficking in persons in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, The Republic of Marshall Islands, and Tonga through a multisectoral approach with stakeholders from government, civil society, and private sector to strengthen prevention, protection, and prosecution. Our approach prioritizes:

- Working within existing systems, structures, and priorities
- Facilitating connected community interventions with regional and national systems
- Conducting evidence-based adaptive programming
- Promoting gender equality and social inclusion
- Harnessing digital innovations

Political Economy Analysis

Through a strategic partnership with DFAT, the Foundation undertook a political economy analysis of Kiribati, Nauru, and Tuvalu, to better understand the values, needs, and interests of different groups in these countries. We also conducted a political economy analysis of the water sector in 14 Pacific countries with funding from the Australian Water Partnership. We continue to deliver masterclasses and micro courses in the region on Political Economy Analysis techniques.

Women in Media

The pandemic has had an unequal impact on women and girls; some Covid-19 mitigation policies further restricted their freedom of movement and expression. Regrettably, some countries have yet to reverse this trend even after the general restrictions have eased. The Foundation is collaborating with national media organizations, a regional media association, and a feminist group that specializes in media training for women to address critical areas such as gender-based violence and protecting freedom of expression.

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives and expanding opportunities across Asia and the Pacific. Informed by decades of experience and deep local expertise, our work across the region is focused on good governance, women's empowerment and gender equality, inclusive economic growth, environment and climate action, and regional and international relations.