Tuvalu National Voluntary GOM Review

2002². Inward migration to its small, finite land area has driven population density to 1948 persons/km2 (2012). This combination of increasing urbanisation coupled with environmental change risks pushing many Tuvaluans into poverty or hardship, or even displacement. This in turn also fuels international migration which has been rising steadily. More people emigrate from Tuvalu each year than arrive to reside permanently. Aggregate migration between 2002 and 2015, excluding 2006, has seen a net outflow.

Pulled towards the labour schemes of Australia and New Zealand, higher emigration reduces population pressure, especially in Funafuti. However, it has also caused a severe case of brain drain in Tuvalu. The loss of skilled labour has been particularly acute (from the medical profession, teachers, other professional ranks, experienced senior public servants), leaving gaps in the labour force that are becoming increasingly difficult to fill from within the remaining labour force. For doctors, teachers, and other professionals, labour shortages are mostly filled by specialist recruits from other PICs, Australia, New Zealand, and the ROC. At present, the international migration pattern is split between migration-for-work often short-term (temporary), requiring workers to return home and permanent emigration, but predominated by the former. For the foreseeable future, emigration will likely continue at present rates, prompted by lack of development, the search for greater economic opportunity, and to a lesser extent that threat of climate change and sea level rise, and the loss of land.

Policy and Enabling Environment

The Ministry of Ministry of Justice, Communication and Foreign Affairs has the responsibility for the design of migration policy. The Tuvalu Oustoms Revenue and Border Protection Service oversees migration policy enactment. In addition, the interministerial Development Coordinating Committee meets every two weeks and looks at a variety of issues including migration.

Te Kakeega III (TKIII)³ or National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 aimed at mitigating the adverse impacts of internal migration and urbanization and capitalizing instead on opportunities offered by human mobility

It aligns with the goals of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda and the SDS Accelerated Modalities of Action

or the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 development efforts in achieving the National Vision

advantage of several initiatives to foster greater collaboration between groups of countries in the region in the search for and supply of labour to overseas markets, the Government of Tuvalu developed its National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP) 2015. The policy was developed in collaboration with t

by the EU-funded Pacific Climate Change and Migration Project (PCC-MHS).

Following a two-year consultation process with government, private sector, non-government organisations (NGOs), and Kaupule planners, and with technical support of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEA) and African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) Project, Tuvalu also developed the National Environment Management Strategy (NEMS). The NEMS2015-2020 set a solid policy platform for long term planning and action to respond to priority environmental issues.

In the last quarter of 2021, ESCAP closely worked with the Government of Tuvalu to prepare a National Trade Development Strategy, in partnership with the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) for Trade-Related Assistance for the LDC. The new Trade Policy Framework recognizes the importance of developing exports and strengthening domestic markets in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and labour mobility.

Tuvalu has ratified the following international conventions:

United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951 ratified in 1986
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 Ratified in 1995
Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women Ratified in 1999
Convention of Law of the Sea Ratified in 2002

Progress on GOM objectives

Given its remoteness and population size, various GOM objectives are not represented efforts to manage migration, partly because they are not relevant but also due to capacity constraints. This review has identified the relevant objectives towards which policies and programmes have contributed and has reported on their implementation.

Objective 2: Minimize the adverse drivers a #6)1000034107re 12 re9 0808871 0 184 W (194(e)104)4 (ew)80 g0 66(194i)10

communities affected by climate-induced displacement, advocate and support the establishment of international legal frameworks on the rights of person displaced by climate change.

Rising sea levels due to climate change has led to food and water insecurity in the country, forcing

Tuvalu adopted a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to labour migration through its National Labour Migration Policy (NLMP). The policy was designed to provide a coherent strategy for promoting overseas employment and protecting the welfare of Tuvaluans abroad, within the broader context of generating decent and productive employment opportunities. The objective of the NLMP is to assist Tuvaluans to access temporary and permanent employment in overseas markets by matching skills to labour demand while equipping workers with the skills and experience they need. Whilst it is does not comprehensively address climate change induced migration, the NLMP tied

opportunities exist abroad to help ensure a cohesive plan for how to create work for Tuvaluans. It also focussed on engaging diaspora communities in other countries, which can participate in integrating future migrants into different countries and contribute to development back in Tuvalu.

Regional initiatives such as the Pacific Labour Migration Framework, which is designed to facilitate the movement of workers in the Pacific region, and trade and investment pacts such as the Pacific Agreement on Goser Economic Relations (PACER) Plus, and other initiatives, will make it easier for job seekers to better access employment opportunities in the region. The Labour Scheme Recruitment Policy of 2011 supports recruitment of Tuvaluan workers for labour schemes.

Tuvalu is also a member of the New Zealand Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme, Australian

Objective 7: Address and reduce vulnerabilities in migration

The Government has a strategy with specific measures to aid immigrants during crisis and post-crisis phases in the country. Tuvalu has a national disaster committee mandated to provide support to all people at times of crises. The National Disaster Relief Coordination Unit (NDRC) under the Climate Change and Disaster Policy Unit is responsible for incorporating disaster risk reduction into sector policies and programmes. Tuvalu has established a local financing mechanism called the Survival Fund (TSF) to finance recovery and rehabilitation from climate change impacts and natural disasters. The Government has a national Disaster Risk Reduction strategy with specific provisions for addressing the displacement impacts of disasters. The National Climate Change Policy and the National Strategic Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management are currently under revision to align with the draft National Migration Policy.

The Government also launched Tuvalu Agriculture Strategic Marketing Plan (TASMP) 2016-2025 to increase the resilience of the Tuvalu people in relation to dimate change by fostering a sustainable domestic trading platform for local food and other local produce, mainly traditional handicrafts. The formulation of this TASMP is a result of the European Union funded and the Pacific Community (SPC) implemented Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (GCCA: PSIS) project.

The Government is seeking the establishment of an international legal framework allowing for the reestablishment of Tuvalu within another country in the event that present-day Tuvalu becomes uninhabitable due to the effects of climate change. Additionally, there is the expansion of the Special Pacific Access 5 Category (resident visas for New Zealand) and establishing professional training

Generally, immigrants have access to primary and secondary education, as education is compulsory for primary years (class 1—4) and is paid for by the Government in most cases. An exception are the children of migrants employed by the Government or a foreign institution. The Education (Compulsory Education) Order from 1984, revised in 2008, is a key piece of legislation. Tuvalu, furthermore, offers free healthcare to all citizens. Family reunification permits are available according to the Immigration Regulations of 2014. However, the conditions for these could be specified more clearly. Permits to enter and reside in Tuvalu are granted for one year, and they can be extended. There is a path to citizenship, in which immigrants are able to become citizens after seven years of residency according to the Otizenship Act of 1979, revised in 2008.

Objective 18: Invest in skills development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications, and competences

The transfer of remittances and associated high costs have been an inherent challenge for migrants within and outside Tuvalu. To this end, IOM has been supporting the Government of Tuvalu to implement a project Building Capacity of Migrant Workers and Governments in the Pacific Region to Harness the Remittance Potential of Labour Migration receivers have pointed towards the lack of financial awareness including knowledge on available international service providers. Through the project, IOM he Government of Tuvalu to develop a financial literacy guide.

Objective 21: Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration

There is no specific legislation relating to the reintegration of returnee labour migrants in Tuvalu. The NLMP recognizes this need however, specific packages are yet to be developed to enable sustainable suggested developing a reintegration framework focusing on starting small businesses with access to finance and business development services, supporting peer-to-peer exchanges, enabling skills circulation and transfer of knowledge from migrant workers.

To this end, IOM is supporting the Government of Tuvalu through the implementation of a project

regional Pacific project Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCMHS) implemented by IOM in partnership with several development agencies includes developing a regional framework focussed on migration in the South Pacific island countries including Tuvalu.

Tuvalu is also a part of a global coalition called the Rising Nations Initiative (RNI) along with island states to preserve the statehood of countries facing existential threat as result of the climate crisis and protect affected nations, their populations and their rich heritages. The RNI will be established as either a not-for-profit initiative of the United Nations Foundation or as an independent initiative facilitated by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). It will be structured around three pillars: Research, Partnerships and Advocacy.

Potential for further development

As a Small Island Developing State, Tuvalu faces a multitude of challenges including financial, human, and structural barriers in the successful implementation of the GOM objectives. Capacity building of key stakeholders, improved coordination, and increased financial input is pertinent to support the Like other Pacific countries, there is a considerable lack of data to inform policy and programming in Tuvalu. Efforts will be directed at strengthening data availability and ensuring that the collection and analysis of data is expanded beyond data currently available to identify key migration issues and inform future implementation activities.

Despite the high volume of migration within and from the country, Tuvalu has no specific national legislation or strategy to manage migration. Although the Tuvalu Central Statistics Division publishes migration data on an annual basis, available migration data is limited to visitor arrivals. There is also no website dearly outlining visa options. Neither is there a formal system for applying for specific visa types prior to arrival. Visas can be obtained only on arrival for visitors from countries with a reciprocity agreement. Tuvalu has no border information management system either. Strengthening border management is a potential area to better manage migration and enhance GOM implementation.

Collaboration with civil society, the private sector and the diaspora in agenda-setting and implementation of migration-related issues is limited. Tuvalu does not have an institution or body tasked with coordinating efforts to engage with its diaspora. Given the high rates of migration outflows from Tuvalu, enhancing diaspora engagement is a priority for the government.

There are limited communication systems in place to receive information during a crisis and how to access assistance. The climate change and national disaster committees were established to address these issues however, they still operate on an ad-hoc basis. Given its vulnerability to climate change it will be valuable to enhance climate resilience of the people and the country through targeted measures.

government partners to implement the policies and programmes mentioned in the review. Moreover,

budget.

Going forward, to strengthen GCM implementation, Tuvalu would require assistance from the various development partners in terms of financing, partnerships, enhanced data collection and management as well as capacity building.

Next Steps

The National Voluntary Review highlights efforts of the Government of Tuvalu t