

Operationalising the Peace-Development-Humanitarian Nexus through the Boe Declaration in the Pacific

August 2020



A Network of People Building Peace

Recommendations are drawn from the expert-level thematic consultation for the 2020 Peacebuilding Architecture Review co-convened by GPPAC¹ and the Shifting the Power Coalition,² as well as evidence from network members³ demonstrating how a peace-development-humanitarian nexus approach can be operationalised across the Pacific⁴

As COVID19 and Tropical Cyclone Harold challenged the joint capacity of the Pacific region to ensure inclusive response and recovery measures to protect the most vulnerable and address the drivers of violence, civil society mobilisation supported prevention, awareness raising, preparedness and protection. GPPAC Pacific and Shifting the Power Coalition human security assessments, found:

- o Women cannot afford to feed their children, purchase sanitary pads or even masks; in addition, people with disabilities receive little support;
- o Economic insecurity is rising due to job losses which in turn is fuelling domestic violence, crime as well as community violence;
- o It is evident rural and community health infrastructure must be strengthened to support ongoing prevention as well as safe and inclusive maternal, sexual and reproductive health services;
- o There is a critical need to ensure that humanitarian response is civilian led and the security sector have a critical role in the maintenance of law and order;
- o Gender inclusive conflict prevention, dialogue and mediation training should be provided to security personnel involved in humanitarian

response;

- o Information is vital to reduce insecurity within communities. Information must be available through public and community platforms, in local languages, accessible for people with disabilities and focusing on remote outreach through a community media approach.

“ It is important (...) that people learn to practice peace and lessen conflicts and also people learn to promote a peaceful community and decrease violence and conflict in community – Monika, Vanua Levu, Fiji

Background to GPPAC Pacific

GPPAC Pacific has consistently convened multi-stakeholder dialogues aimed at rethinking of national peace and security sector governance where decisions are made for the allocation of resources and national budgeting that can result in investment that tackle power imbalances, SGBV, and patriarchal structures in peacebuilding and humanitarian action. Since 2016, when GPPAC Pacific contributed to the establishment of the Shifting the Power Coalition, we continue to demonstrate the need to shift the power to national and local women’s rights actors, strengthen agency, amplify voice, build on collaborative opportunities, including women-led coalitions and feminist practices

1 Members of GPPAC Pacific: FemLINKpacific, Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation, Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding, Pacific Conference of Churches, Talitha Project, Transcend Oceania (Regional Secretariat), Vanuatu Young Women for Change, Vois Blong Mere Solomon

2 There were 15 respondents to the Shifting the Power Coalition’s online questionnaire from Fiji, Papua New Guinea including Bougainville, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu representing urban and rural women, young women and women with disabilities, as well as sports networks, government and private sector. An additional 35 women leader of networks representing close to 25,000 diverse Pacific women were interviewed by the Coalition’s focal points. This included rural women, young women, women with disabilities and members of the LGBT network. 49% of interviewees in Fiji were young women (30 years and under), all the respondents in Tonga were young women and 50% of respondents in Samoa were young women. The report also draws on activities members have undertaken in response to TC Harold as well as COVID19, with the support of small emergency grants

3 Members of Shifting the Power Coalition: ActionAid Australia, ActionAid Vanuatu, FemLINKpacific, Fiji Disabled People’s Federation, Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation, Pacific Disability Forum, Talitha Project, Transcend Oceania (Regional Secretariat), Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy, Vanuatu Young Women for Change, Vois Blong Mere Solomon, YWCA of Papua New Guinea, YWCA of Samoa

4 See also GPPAC Pacific resources: <https://www.gppac.net/resources/climate-security-achieving-inclusive-peace-development-and-humanitarian-nexus> & <https://www.gppac.net/resources/and-she-persisted-peace-redesign-table>

and local innovation in the Pacific.

GPPAC Pacific also continued to be heavily involved in ongoing discussions and collaborations to progress the conflict prevention and human security agenda in the region through Track II dialogues.

Through this work, we amplified the value and supported all stakeholders in the region, supporting the spirit of Pacific regionalism outlined by Pacific Leaders as “working together to address our common challenges, harness shared strengths, and ensure that our individual and collective advancement brings practical benefits to all Pacific people.” The convening of multiple different CSOs, advocates, human rights defenders, and peacebuilders creates an environment where like-minded individuals can identify any gaps in current formal WPS processes, as well as explore any potential initiatives that have yet to be introduced.

The GPPAC Pacific network includes the Pacific Conference of Churches and together with strategies our members use to engage with faith and traditional leaders, we continue to recommend the need for regional and national multi-stakeholder coordination across peacebuilding, development and humanitarian efforts that are inclusive of women in communities and capitalises on existing regional commitments on Women, Peace and Security and gender equality to effectively build and sustain peace.

“The drivers of conflict are the ones that push the people to do and the reason why people do so. The economic situation, that’s why people there is unemployment. When we talk about Law and Order, the dissemination to information, where only few people received information but not very clear, the disadvantages and advantages. Also the clear vision from the leaders, meaning the leaders should have a clear view so that the people would know where we’re heading to, what are we doing now and what things we’re doing that would lead us to the future.

– Fr Bill John, Bougainville

This means taking the leadership in coordinating between humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts in order to address the root causes of conflict and humanitarian needs facing the region at the same time. This also means

integrating the Women, Peace and Security agenda and regional commitments to gender equality to avoid securitization of responses to climate change and other crises affecting the region, to ensure meaningful participation of women from communities in decision-making, and to integrate in the decision-making experiences of all women, including in the most remote islands.

“For example, in (the) Pacific we might say... we are secure because we don’t have wars, we have food. We have abundance of food and what does that mean? Is it really security? Do we have the quality of access to that (food) and we do not have wars but we have silence – Adivasu Levu, Executive Director for Transcend Oceania, Fiji

Introduction to the Nexus Approach

In 2011, the adoption of the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and the adoption of the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration, the Boe Declaration, the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) provide an pathway to addressing the Triple Nexus to progress commitments to an inclusive, peaceful and resilient Pacific.

Additionally, in 2015, GPPAC Pacific worked to integrate language on climate change in the Global Study on UNSCR1325 and supported the innovative – at that time – language of Security Council Resolution 2242 on the impacts of climate change and the global nature of health pandemics on the trajectory of conflict.

Now, as expressed in the consultation for the 2020 Peacebuilding Architecture Review on Gender, Climate and Peace in the Pacific, a key priority for women-first responders, faith communities and peacebuilders – is to connect all parts of the Triple Nexus and the women, peace and security agenda is a strong anchor.

This is evident through our GPPAC Pacific initiatives – human security assessments, food security programmes, community dialogue, the use of innovative information and communication platforms and mainstream media.

“The Boe Declaration is a very instrumental tool to be used by governments but the missing gap is that whereas the government participated and know about it, the missing gap is that the local communities affected by the crisis are totally disconnected from it. -

Carol Angir, ActionAid Australia

Recommendations

The current context in the Pacific requires regional multi-stakeholder coordination approach from local (sub national) to regional level that connects peacebuilding, development and humanitarian efforts to collectively identify and address the root causes of conflict including during disasters and humanitarian crises.

The decision by Pacific Forum Leaders to adopt the Boe Declaration in 2017 is a welcome commitment to a human security approach. In line with recent UNSC resolution 2493 , the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat must, however, ensure the Boe Declaration Action Plan can catalyse action so that the Women, Peace and Security agenda shifts from the silos of political, defence and policing networks to enhance focus and collaboration via a conflict prevention platform that integrates gender equality, faith and indigenous peacebuilding practice into the local, national and regional development processes and security frameworks.

The Boe Declaration Action Plan can be used to drive an inclusive triple nexus approach, which is possible, as evident through the Shifting the Power Coalition where members from local peacebuilders are using their peace and security expertise and mediation skills to influence the composition of the regional disaster management committee:

“We spoke for the need to include women in the design table of this disaster management or disaster recovery. I could see that you could hear a pin drop because it was the first time for these men who normally go to these meetings to hear that because we stressed the fact that women’s needs are actually different from men’s needs and so we have to take these things into account when we are preparing for disaster and recovery. So, I know that these things have come now to the table of the decision makers” – Agnes Titus, Bougainville

Such a shift towards a transformative gender approach to peacebuilding and sustaining peace would include:

- **Integration of the national commitments on women’s participation and gender equality should be better carried out through the Boe Declaration Action Plan:**
 - Member states are supported to provide input on a standing agenda item on women, peace and security at all national and regional security meetings, highlighting national efforts to implement the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women, Peace and Security) and successive resolutions;
 - Coinciding with the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women, Peace and Security) support the establishment of a Pacific Women’s Mediators network to enhance women’s leadership and contribution across the nexus including in the response to disasters and humanitarian crises.
- **Implementation of the Boe Declaration Action Plan must drive a “triple nexus approach”:**
 - Enhance use of conflict prevention analysis approach and strategies including in the implementation of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP), drawing on and updating strategies outlined in Pacific Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2012-2015)
 - Implementation plans for gender-sensitive Triple Nexus should be adequately financed through flexible peacebuilding funding streams that reflect the changing nature of threats. This requires a shift in funding beyond “traditional” peacebuilding in line with local initiatives that work across the Triple Nexus.

“The ward members should carry out awareness to the community. The church is doing it’s very best to ensure peace is there in communities. But the ward members should be assertive because they have the authority in the community. There are also community auxiliary police on every community who should be working with the ward members to ensure peace in the communities” – Helen Hakena, Bougainville

- **Implementation of the Boe Declaration Action Plan should support a multi-actor consultative process for regional peace and security:**

- The Pacific Islands Forum should convene a bi-annual peacebuilding dialogue between representatives of regional peacebuilding organisations and networks, women peacebuilders, member states and their officials

- National Security Policy Frameworks must institutionalise structural mechanisms for civil society engagement through a twice annual dialogue between representatives of regional peacebuilding organisations and networks, women peacebuilders, member states and their officials;
- National Security Programmes should be informed by joint inclusive human security assessments at national and sub-national level to address drivers of insecurities and conflict through peacebuilding initiatives including dialogue and mediation;