

# PACIFIC ISLAND NATIONS



Pacific island nations are incredibly susceptible to the effects of climate change, which acts as a threat-multiplier to other issues such as inequality, food and water insecurity, malnutrition, and disease.

## Country Context

Impacts of climate change present new risks for Pacific island nations, requiring adaptation assistance and real action from the global community to ease carbon emission. Rising sea levels, changes in rainfall patterns, and increased storm severity have intensified drought, threatened access to fresh water sources, increased food insecurity, and destroyed vital infrastructure in the region. Coral bleaching also threatens fisheries and crucial ocean food chains. If current estimates of sea-level rise are accurate—17-38cm by 2065—countries will see higher tides, more intense storm surges, and an increase in the frequency of coastal flooding. Overall, Fiji estimates that by 2050, damages from climate change will cause a loss of 6.5% of its GDP, and 32,400 Fijians will fall into poverty annually due to climate change. Many countries, including Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, have existing inequalities and access issues that will be compounded by the effects of climate-change-related disasters.

## Key Figures



**760 million**

affected by natural disasters across Asia and the Pacific region between 2014 and 2018



**\$675 billion**

in annual economic losses due to the damages caused by natural disasters



**5**

Pacific Island countries rank within the top 20 most at-risk countries



**67**

nuclear bombs dropped on or above the Marshall Islands during U.S. tests from 1946-1958

## How is the U.S. Involved?

The U.S. committed more than \$350 million in FY 2017 to benefit over 10 million people through projects, direct assistance, and operations. In August 2019, the U.S. pledged \$36.5 million in new foreign aid.

## On-the-Ground Perspective

- Several Pacific Island nations declared measles outbreaks, including Tonga, Fiji, and Samoa, which reported a state of emergency on November 15, 2019.
- China has a growing influence in the region and is now one of the largest aid donors in the Pacific, raising concerns about the investment's impact on sustainability, security, and transparency.

## Responses and Actions

- In 2018, USAID built the resilience capacity of 118 institutions and over 8,000 people across 11 partner nations in the Pacific to respond to extreme weather and climate change. Programs included stormwater management training in Palau and biodiversity preservation and natural resource management in Papua New Guinea.

References available at [interaction.org/2020globalsituationreport](https://www.interaction.org/2020globalsituationreport).

