



DIPLOMACY
TRAINING PROGRAM



2026 Capacity Building Program on Climate Change, Human Rights and Business in the Pacific – March 23-27, Suva, Fiji

Concept Note

1. Summary

This concept note outlines the purposes, rationale and background for DTP's 2026 capacity building program for Pacific Civil Society focused on Climate Change, Human Rights and Business in the Pacific. It provides information on the objectives, proposed activities and expected outcomes.

This program continues the work of the partners in developing the knowledge, skills and networks of civil society in the Pacific, to strengthen their voices as they engage with business, governments, international forums and negotiations.

The program will build knowledge of human rights, the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and international agreements such as the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions Agreement (BBNJ -The High Seas Treaty), and proposed Fossil Fuel Treaty. Program participants will also build skills and confidence in strategic advocacy and effective engagement with governments and business.

Expert resource persons, including human rights academics and practitioners will lead sessions, share knowledge and help build networks. The workshop aims for 25-30 participants across the Pacific, subject to funding constraints. The program aims to help strengthen existing networks and organisations, especially in support of PIANGO and their commitment to build the next generation of civil society leadership in the Pacific.

The program continues DTP's engagement with civil society capacity in the Pacific. It follows from previous regional programs and the successful PIANGO/DTP *Pacific Voices on Climate Change Program (Australian Awards Fellowship)* in November 2025.

The timing is important considering the commitment for a Pacific Pre-COP31 and growing urgency of negotiations on climate change and its impacts, including climate mobility. There is a need and an opportunity to strengthen voices in and from the Pacific. Strengthening civil society strengthens democracy in the region at this time of growing authoritarianism and strategic rivalry.

This program is held in the partnership with the Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO), Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS) and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR – ROP) Regional Office for the Pacific. It will contribute to longer term strategies of capacity and network building by the partner organisations.

2. Purpose, Background and Context

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this program is to enhance the effectiveness of Pacific civil society to promote and protect human rights through building the knowledge, skills and networks of carefully selected

participants. It develops the capacity of Pacific civil society to promote the integration of human rights into government and business responses to climate change, and the implementation of commitments under the United Framework Convention on Climate Change/Sustainable Development Goals.

The program will explicitly integrate a feminist lens, recognising that women, girls and gender-diverse persons experience disproportionate and differentiated impacts of climate change. It will strengthen the role of women's organisations and women's rights organisations (WROs) in responding to climate change. The program will highlight gender-responsive access to remedy, meaningful participation of women in NCP processes, and protection from gender-based violence in the world of work.

This program is part of a longer-term strategy among the program partners and participating organisations of investing in the individuals and organisations who can make a difference within their countries, regionally and globally. It consciously fosters collaboration and networking for greater impact and resilience.

2.2 Rationale – DTP's Theory of Change

Climate change is the key human rights challenge for the Pacific. For the communities of the Pacific the environmental, development and human rights impacts of the climate crisis are interlinked.

Underpinning this program is an understanding of the critical role played by CSOs in protecting and promoting human rights and shared values of human dignity, including through engaging government and business. Sustainable development requires the informed participation of individuals and communities. Informed advocacy by civil society is essential to implementation of human rights, the rule of law, good governance and sustainable development. Targets policies and practices on climate change are determined by global, regional and national processes involving civil society representatives. Climate change action at the community level is community led.

Knowledgeable and confident advocates are more effective in engaging with officials and businesses. Human rights standards provide a shared legal and moral basis for dialogue and resolution of differences. The risks of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies harming human rights will also be reduced. Climate change impacts the rights of women and rights of persons with a disability in greater and specific ways, and a human rights approach addresses these impacts in the context of responsibilities to address discrimination, inequality and the right to participate in decision making.

Pacific advocacy has led the world on responding to the impacts of climate change, including through the Paris COPs. The climate advocacy of Pacific civil society and Pacific governments will be strengthened by more explicit reference to the human rights responsibilities of governments and the private sector, especially in the context of UN forums and international cooperation. These responsibilities have been further clarified by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and [International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea advisory opinion on climate change and international law](#).

DTP's partners, alumni and environmental advocates have identified the demand for more knowledge of human rights – standards, processes and mechanisms.

2.3 The Regional Context - the Pacific

The Pacific Islands Forum, [2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific](#) places emphasis on all levels of society working together for human rights and equity across the region.

Climate change and its impacts are existential issues for the communities of the Pacific. Rising sea levels, climate events, warming seas and changes in weather patterns are impacting the existing challenges of achieving sustainable development and leading to increased migration and displacement. These impacts are different and greater for women and other marginalised groups.

Pacific community advocates have been engaging effectively with the COP processes. There are hopes that the proposed Pacific pre-COP 31 will enable Pacific concerns, voices and solutions to be heard and to influence outcomes.

Pacific community advocates are also looking to engage with other global frameworks and processes to raise their voices and be heard. These include the UN processes for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and reporting processes under UN human rights treaties that focus on the rights of the vulnerable and marginalised (Women, Children, Persons with a Disability) – and negotiations for treaties on plastics and on fossil fuels.

Every country in the region has ratified at least two international human rights treaties, and every country participates in the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Each country reports on its progress in achieving the SDGs. There are very limited opportunities to learn about these standards or how to engage with them effectively. In each country individuals and organisations are working to promote shared values of human dignity and human rights.

The Charter of the United Nations and human rights standards agreed through the UN provide a framework for civil society and governments and business to engage with each other.

3. Program Description

3.1 Main Activities

- Development and delivery of 5-day capacity building program for 25-30 participants drawn from other civil society movements across the Pacific;
- Dedicated sessions on international human rights standards, the UNFCCC, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, business and human rights, and climate change.
- Practical sessions, simulated and real life, implementing program content, engaging with government and business, developing strategies.
- Establishment of knowledge and learning network to be facilitated by the program partners.
- Development and distribution of resource materials.
- Evaluation and report on the capacity building program.

3.2 Proposed Target Audience/Participants

25-30 participants from across the Pacific CSOs working with and for affected communities will be selected with advice from program partners, DTP alumni and trainers working in the Pacific. The program partners will apply the following key selection criteria for participants:

- Experience in advocacy / climate change / human rights
- Involvement with community organisations/NGOs
- Capacity to apply the training to their work and organisation and support for Pacific networking following the program
- Gender and regional balance within the program overall

3.3 Program Methodology / Trainers and Facilitators

DTP recognises and values the experiences and skills that participants bring to its programs. The opportunity to share experiences and lessons with other participant and trainers is one the of the real benefits and highlights of participating in the program. The training methodology is interactive with an emphasis on group work, role plays, case studies, and discussion. Trainers are carefully selected by the program partners, and share DTP’s commitment to participatory learning methodology include leading academics and practitioners. They include individuals / DTP alumni with lived experience.

4. Program Location and Dates – Suva, Fiji - March 23 -27, 2026

The main activity of this program will be a residential program to be held in Suva, Fiji.

5. Proposed outcomes

- Capacity building (knowledge, skills, networks) of 25-30 civil society representatives.
- Strengthened Pacific regional networks and organisations
- Engagement by governments/private sector in dialogue with participants in the program
- Strengthening of knowledge and learning networks between human rights and climate change advocates in the Pacific.
- New resources and materials on human rights and climate change advocacy.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- DTP implements monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes involving DTP’s Training Committee, program staff, partners and alumni
- A training needs analysis is conducted and forms the basis for the M&E of the program.
- During the program daily evaluation and continuous improvement processes are applied.
- An end of training final anonymous evaluation is completed by all participants along with an oral feedback session.
- An end of program review is conducted with partners, key trainers and facilitators.
- A draft program report, which includes recommendations for future training is written and distributed to partners, trainers and participants for comment and advice prior to the final copy which is made available to the public.
- A post training survey is conducted to supplement the information on the implementation of the training which is captured through the E-Newsletter and social media networks.
- Profiles of alumni, their work and organisations are developed and shared.

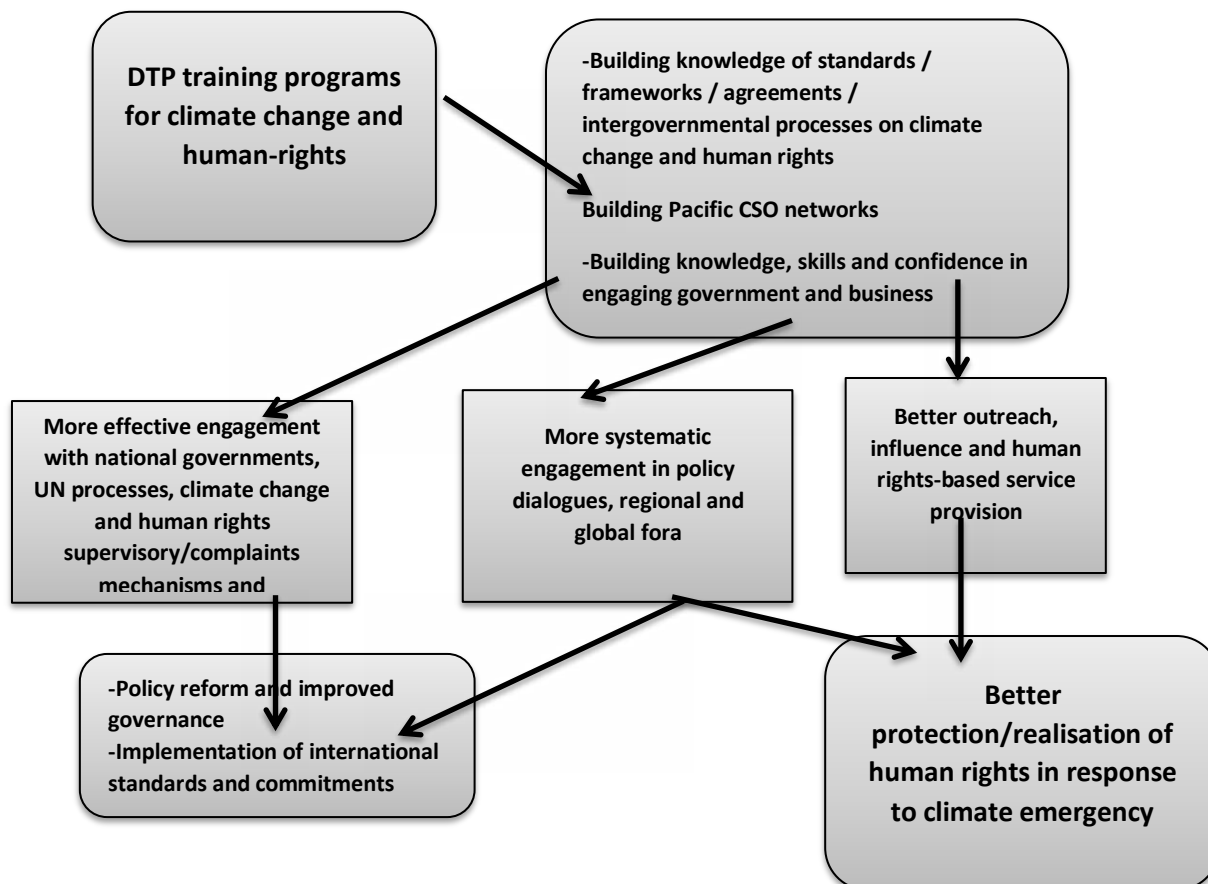
7. Risks and Sustainability

DTP has an established risk assessment, monitoring and management framework and a proven track record of successful program delivery in the Pacific. Major risks to implementation include the non-availability of key trainers, major regional climate or health events and political instability. DTP addresses the challenge of sustainability with its partners and through careful selection of participants. Participants are selected with advice from program partners based on the evidence and track record of commitment. Participant’s organisations will support the participants in the application of the knowledge and skills to their work. DTP maintains contact with participants following the training and knows from experience and evaluations that most participants go on to give many years of service to human rights causes.

8. About the Diplomacy Training Program and Program Partners

DTP is an independent NGO that has been developing and delivering education in human rights and advocacy in the Asia Pacific region and Indigenous Australia for 35 years. In 2019 DTP received the 2019 Asia Democracy and Human Rights Award. DTP is affiliated with the Faculty of Law, UNSW, Sydney, Australia. DTP is a registered charity in Australia and complies with the regulatory regimes for Australian development agencies and charities – <https://dtp.org.au/> PIANGO is the major regional network of NGOs in the Pacific with membership in 24 Countries and territories of the Pacific Islands. For over 25 years, PIANGO has served the Pacific through strengthening and building the capacity of the civil society sector – www.piango.org The **Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS)** is an NGO that strives to eliminate disadvantage and poverty from Fijian individuals and communities. **The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – Regional Office for the Pacific (OHCHR-ROP)** aims to ensure that the protection and enjoyment of human rights is a reality in the lives of all people. It provides assistance in the form of technical expertise and capacity-development in order to support the implementation of international human rights standards on the ground.

9. The Diplomacy Training Program's Theory of Change



10. For Further Information/Contacts

Patrick Earle, Executive Director

p.earle@unsw.edu.au

+ 61 401 932 196



The Diplomacy Training Program's Human Rights, Climate Change, and Business in the Pacific Program receives support from the Australian Government through the [Australian NGO Cooperation Program \(ANCP\)](#).