

Country and Government Context

The Kingdom of Tonga is an archipelago of more than 170 islands located across an area of 740,000 square kilometers in West Polynesia in the South Pacific. The country is divided into five groups of islands: Eua, Ha'apai, Niua, Tongatapu, and Vava'u. The capital of Tonga is Nuku'alofa, situated on the Tongatapu group. Tonga has a population of about 105,000 citizens. The main languages spoken are Tongan and English, and the vast majority of the population is of Polynesia descent.

Tonga is the only hereditary constitutional monarchy in the Pacific. It became a British protectorate in 1900 and obtained its full independence from the United Kingdom in 1970. The monarchy has a long history in Tonga and the current head of state, since March 2012, is King George Tupou VI. A new Constitution was agreed upon in 2009, which significantly increases the role of the elected government, with the Monarchy retaining direct authority only for Foreign Affairs and Defence. Under the revised Constitution, the unicameral legislative assembly consists of 26 members, of which 17 members are elected by the general population and nine seats are reserved for nobles, elected from within the country's 33 nobles. Tonga held its first democratic election in November 2010, which was followed by other election on 27 November 2014. The second elections has boosted the country's democracy because of high voter registration turnout, which included women.

Land ownership in Tonga continues to be based on a social hierarchy. Land is classified into Crown estates, Royal estates, and Hereditary Noble estates. From these estates, commoners can be granted hereditary landholdings that can be passed on as inheritance or leases that can be used for commercial, farming, or residential purposes.

Tonga's Human Development Index in 2013 is 0.705, which is a high human development category. The value positions the country at 100 out of 187 countries and territories. Between 1980 and 2013, Tonga's human development index value increased from 0.602 to 0.705, an increase of 17% or an average annual increase of 0.48%.^a

A review undertaken by the government in February 2015 has stated that Tonga has fallen behind in three Millennium Development

^a http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/TON.pdf

Civil Society: An Overview

Community and faith-based groups and churches have long been a distinctive feature of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Pacific Islands, including Tonga. Hence, the development of civil society in Tonga is closely aligned with the historical role of the country's churches, the changing nature of rank and the monarchy, and the transition toward democracy.

Prior to the early 19th century, Tonga was composed of a loose association of autonomous chiefdoms, which were unified under young warrior Tāufa'āhau, with the backing of Wesleyan missionaries in 1845. He was baptized with the name, King George Tupou I, and declared Tonga as a constitutional monarchy. In 1875, he promulgated a national constitution, which enshrined various rights and liberties, and legitimized the role of churches.

As with many Pacific Island countries, the churches have played a major role in the development of Tongan society. Early attempts by missionaries in Tonga met with mixed success, until King Tupou I became an ardent supporter of the church¹ and placed it centrally in the country's 1875 Constitution.² Many of the earliest civil society groups in the Pacific were formed by youth and women's groups established by missionaries.³ One of the first regional CSOs in the region was the Pacific Conference of Churches, founded in 1961, with the Tonga National Council of Churches formed in 1973. Churches have played a leading role in education in Tonga, with 72% of high school students enrolled in church-run or private schools.⁴

The Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga has the largest congregation in the country, accounting for 37% of Tongans.⁵

The system of rank has been central to social arrangements in Tonga. Traditionally, Tongan society was based on a rigid hierarchy with the king at the top, followed by chiefs, talking chiefs, and commoners. This hierarchical social structure remained enshrined in the Constitution of 1875, however, King George Tupou I replaced the chiefs with 20 noblemen, which was expanded to 30 nobles in 1880.⁶ The links between the Free Wesleyan Church and the monarchy and nobility have prevented the church from "exercising a fully critical ministry in matters related to politics, society and culture."⁷

This social stratification is under challenge in the transition to democracy, with the first commoner, Feleti Sevele, being appointed Prime Minister in 2006. Rank still pervades society in Tonga. However, the village parliament *fono*, led by noblemen, is still in existence. Rank has implications for civil society, as it

Goals, namely, poverty eradication, gender equality, and noncommunicable diseases.^b The paper concludes that incidents of noncommunicable diseases are at a crisis level, while gender inequality still exists as indicated by no women representatives in Parliament, and “data is lacking to measure changes in equality.” However, the other eight Millennium Development Goals were reported as being “on track.”

The economy of Tonga is characterized by large volumes of subsistence agriculture, extreme vulnerability to natural hazards, and a heavy reliance on external income (donor aid and remittances).^c The World Bank reported that in 2013, remittances constituted 12.6% of Tonga’s gross domestic product, compared to 5.0% for Fiji, and 23.5% for Samoa. Foreign aid is also a major contributor to Tonga’s economy, with official development assistance representing 19.1% of Tonga’s gross domestic product in 2010.^d

prescribes who can speak out and who should remain silent. Still, with the democratic transition and growth of civil society, lay people are now engaging in conversation and debate with those of higher rank.

Beyond the rankings of commoner and chief, a hierarchical relationship structure exists within families based on the timing of birth and gender. The *fahu* custom describes the status of women within the family hierarchy. The person with the highest status in the family is the father’s sister with the superiority extending on to her children. Superiority within the social and family hierarchies is expressed by deference in behavior and gift giving, and forms an important source of political power within Tonga.⁸ In modern Tonga, *fahu* continues to have strong influence, especially within the context of social behavior.⁹

Prior to independence, overseas chapters of international CSOs were set up in Tonga (and other Pacific states). For example, the Tonga Red Cross Society was established in 1961 under the auspices of the British Red Cross and with the patronage of Her Late Majesty, Queen Salote Tupou III. An act enabling the establishment of the Tonga Red Cross Society was passed in 1972, after the dissolution of Tonga’s British protectorate status. Similarly, the Girl Guides Association of the Kingdom of Tonga was established in 1952, also promoted by Queen Salote. The association started as a branch of the World Association of Girl Guides but became autonomous in 1986. Also, the Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific Tonga (FSP Tonga) was established in 1979, and formally registered in 1983, becoming the Tonga Community Development Trust in 1985 (<http://www.tcdt.to/index.html>).

In 1956, an indigenous association, Langa fonua ‘a e Fefine Tonga, was established and is now the National Council for Women, an umbrella organization for CSOs in Tonga. However, it was not until the 1970s and beyond that most indigenous community- and nongovernment organizations (NGOs) were established. The following lists other key CSOs established in Tonga since the 1970s (not all organizations have active websites):

- (i) In 1975, the Tonga Family Health Association was established by volunteers to provide integrated family health services to Tongans. Website: http://tongafamilyhealth.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=116:welcomes-to-tonga-family-health-association
- (ii) In 1979, the ‘Ofa, Tui, ‘Amanaki (translated as Love, Faith, Hope) Centre was established as a national center for young disabled children.
- (iii) In 1991, the Tonga National Youth Congress was established by church leaders, government representatives, and young people. Website: <http://tnycl.weebly.com/index.html>
- (iv) In 1992, the Tonga Leitis’ Association was established. Website: <http://www.tongaleitis.org/>
- (v) Since 1994, the Mango Tree Respite Centre Tonga, a ministry of the Church of Nazarene, has been acting as a respite center for disabled children. Website: <http://mtrc.oceanianazarene.org/>

^b <http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2015/February/02-26-07.htm>

^c <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/27805/ton.pdf>

^d United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). 2012. *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2012*. <http://www.unescap.org/STAT/data/syb2012/country-profiles/Tonga.pdf>

- (vi) The Aloua Ma'a Tonga Women in Development Association was established in 1995 as an associate to the Country Women of the World.
- (vii) The Civil Society Forum of Tonga (CSFT) was established in 2001.
- (viii) In 2003, Naunau 'o e Alamaite Tonga Association (NATA), a national disability association, was established. Website: <http://onefunky.wayfunky.com/nata/intro.htm>
- (ix) In 2004, the Centre for Women and Children Tonga was established as a national-level NGO concerned with victims of domestic violence.
- (x) In 2006, another national disability association, Tonga National Disability Congress (TNDC), was established.
- (xi) On the Spot, an arts initiative for young people, was founded in 2006.
- (xii) In 2008, the Ma'a Fafine mo e Famili (MFF) was established, arising out of the Legal Literacy Project of the Catholic Women's League. Website: <http://mfftonga.wordpress.com/>
- (xiii) In 2009, the Women and Children Crisis Centre was established. Website: <http://www.wccctonga.org/>

It is not until the 1990s and beyond that Tongan civil society developed its collective voice as an advocate for social change. Traditionally, leadership in Tongan society was ascribed to those who held political or public authority. Under Tongan leadership systems, leaders should observe the six Tongan core communal values of mutual love and generosity (*fe'ofa'aki*), respect (*faka'apa'apa*), reciprocity, consensus and cooperation (*feveitokai'aki*), loyalty and commitment (*mamahi'i me'a*), humility (*lototoo*), and sharing and fulfilment of mutual obligations (*fetokoni'aki*). However, since the 1990s, with the advent of increased social development, globalization, and the transition to democracy in Tonga, more Western values of accountability, transparency, human rights, equality, and integrity have been incorporated into the Tongan cultural context.¹⁰

Coinciding with these developments was the establishment of the region's NGO representative organization, Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO), in 1991. PIANGO has national liaison units from each of its 22 member countries. Tonga's first national liaison unit was the Tonga Association of NGOs (TANGO), and its membership was limited to CBOs working at the village level. In order to establish a broader coalition of all CSOs, not just CBOs, CSFT was established in 2001. It has superseded TANGO to become PIANGO's liaison unit for Tonga.¹¹ Advocacy CSOs in Tonga are now affiliated with the CSFT.

Today, civil society in Tonga is a diverse and active space, with numerous formal and informal CSOs working across a range of sectors, in particular women's rights,

disability services, environment, youth services, primary service delivery (health, education, and sanitation), counselling, advocating for human rights and the rights of marginalized people, and monitoring of government and other groups.¹² CSOs are organized across all strata of society, from the village level to the national level.

One area where civil society has not flourished is in the development of trade unions. While the Constitution provides for freedom of association, the regulations for collective bargaining and registering trade unions was never promulgated. As such, there are no registered or official trade unions in Tonga. The Public Service Association, established at the beginning of the general strike in 2005, acts as a de facto trade union. The Friendly Islands Teachers Association and the Tonga Nurses Association (based in New Zealand) have been incorporated but are not registered trade unions.¹³

While freedom of the press is enshrined in Clause 7 of the Constitution, there have been some examples of media repression in recent years. The Communication Act 2000 allows the government to restrict or prohibit content. The Newspaper Act and Media Operators Act 2003 restricted the importation and sale of foreign media. The Tongan Media Council is now thought to be defunct.¹⁴ However, in 2012, the government enacted its Freedom of Information policy and established a website to facilitate access to information.¹⁵

There are some important cultural issues to consider for engaging with civil society in Tonga. These include the use of *talanoa*, an oral approach to engagement that is unhurried, involving an open and equal sharing of information; *faktokilalo* (humility), respect and deference to people of rank, a prerequisite for establishing trust and acceptance; and *fakafekau'aki*, the process of connecting or establishing mutual reciprocity.¹⁶

Government–Civil Society Relations

There are many indications of a growing engagement between government and civil society in Tonga. Civil society is being increasingly consulted by government for input into national planning and monitoring. Under the Strategic Development Plan 8, community consultations, including consultations with civil society, were recently held for the first time.¹⁷ Civil society and government have recently collaborated on a range of initiatives, including the introduction of the historic family protection bill, passed into law in September 2013. The bill was the result of a 3-year planning process involving the Attorney General's Office and the Ministries of Education and Training, Internal Affairs, and Ministry of Police. Many CSOs were partners to the process, including the Tonga National Centre for Women and Children, Women and Children Crisis

Centre, Ma'a Fafine & Famili, CSFT, Tonga National Council of Churches, Tonga Law Society, Friendly Islands Human Rights & Democracy Movement, Tonga Women National Congress, Talitha Project and, from the region, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community Regional Rights Resource Team.¹⁸

Another recent area of government and civil society engagement has been the consultations for the Tonga National Leadership Code, conducted by the Tonga National Leadership Development Forum, supported by the Government of Australia. The Tonga National Leadership Development Forum is a collaboration between the nobility, civil society (led by the CSFT), the civil service, and senior politicians. Since consultations started in 2011, about 3,000 people have participated in 58 consultations on the Leadership Code, across six of Tonga's islands.¹⁹

Government is increasingly expressing an interest in working with civil society and has supported a number of civil society-strengthening initiatives. In some fields, CSOs have direct input into government policy. For example, the Tonga Family Health Association helps guide the development of the national HIV policy. In addition, the CSFT is a member of the National HIV Council.²⁰

While collaboration and engagement between government and civil society has increased in recent years, since the public service strike of 2005 and riots of 2006, civil society, particularly the pro-democracy movement, has also become increasingly vocal in its criticism of the government. Example areas of concern for sections of civil society have included the terms of Tonga's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2007, and the tragic 2009 sinking of the inter-island ferry, the MV Princess Ashika.²¹ More recently, civil society was mobilized to protest against a failure to cut electricity prices after the opening of a solar power station.²²

In recent years, civil society has provided robust assessments of the government's performance. In 2012, a CSO Human Rights Taskforce was formed to provide commentary on Tonga's human rights performance and to mainstream human rights into national policies. Seven CSOs made the first joint submission to the second Tongan Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council of the United Nations. The submission highlighted several areas of concern for civil society in Tonga (including the MV Ashika case, calls for further electoral reform, protection for women, judicial reform, and others). It also praised the government on several fronts, particularly the democratic reforms.²³

Both national and international CSOs operate in a free and open environment without government restrictions, and that government is fairly cooperative with civil society and responsive to its views.²⁴ Freedom House

notes that there has been a recent decline in the government's and elite's restrictions on the formation and activities of CSOs.²⁵

The Legal Framework for Civil Society Registration

CSO Registration

In Tonga, CSOs may be incorporated or unincorporated, and may be set up as membership-based organizations or not.²⁶ There is general legislation applicable to most CSOs, along with specific instruments that apply to particular organizations. The relevant general legislation for CSOs is provided by the Charitable Trusts Act 1993, Incorporated Societies Act, and the Cooperative Societies Act. The special legislation for specific CSOs includes the Tonga Red Cross Society Act, and the Polynesian Heritage Trust Act. The Charitable Trusts Act applies to organizations that are operating "exclusively or principally for charitable purposes," while the Incorporated Societies Act is more general, applying to "[a]ny society consisting of not less than five persons associated for any lawful purposes but not for pecuniary gain." The Cooperative Societies Act applies to organizations established for "the promotion of the economic interests of its members in accordance with cooperative principles." Depending on which category the organization falls into (charity, incorporated society, or a cooperative society), an organization applies to either the Registrar of Incorporated Societies or the Registrar of Cooperative Societies for registration. Prescribed documentation must be provided with the application (such as the rules or bylaws of the proposed organization, a statutory declaration or members' register, etc.). Organizations apply and, if approved, are issued a certificate of registration.

There is no central registry that lists all registered CSOs in Tonga, although members of the public may, upon payment of a fee, inspect either of the above mentioned registers.

Tax Treatment of CSOs

Compared to other jurisdictions in the Pacific, CSOs in Tonga receive only minimal preferential tax treatment. For example, CSOs may apply for a waiver for the fee payable for a license for a dance, if it is for charitable purposes. Organizations registered under the Charitable Trusts Act 1993, Incorporated Societies Act, and the Cooperative Societies Act, do not pay stamp duty on registered documentation.

Tonga's Income Tax Act stipulates that no tax will be payable on "the income derived by any charitable institution or by any body or trust established

exclusively for charitable purposes, other than income derived by such institution, body or trust either directly or indirectly from the carrying on of any business.” Commercial income generated by charities is, however, subject to tax. Gifts to registered organizations that are principally or wholly for charitable purposes (up to a prescribed maximum) are tax deductible.

Umbrella and Coordinating Bodies

The CSFT is the umbrella body for CSOs in Tonga, which aims to create a conducive environment for the development of CSOs through open dialogue, equal participation, partnership, collective decision-making, and consensus building. It provides CSOs with opportunities for capacity building and leadership development.²⁷

CSFT has 75 members, including church organizations, CBOs, professional associations, and human rights groups, and is the national liaison unit for Tonga to PIANGO. Its five key goals are as follows:

- (i) strengthening the CSO sector;
- (ii) capacity building and institutional development;
- (iii) enhancing communication and information sharing;
- (iv) strengthening key relations to advocate for common voice; and
- (v) developing a legal framework.

The Government of Tonga recognizes the CSFT as the key umbrella organization for capacity building and coordinating civil society in Tonga.

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The Tonga National Youth Congress was founded in 1991 by church leaders and government representatives as the umbrella organization for youth groups in Tonga. Its mission statement is “[t]o better the welfare of the youth of Tonga through programs that foster responsibility, citizenship, community services and leadership.” It holds a National Youth Summit biannually, organizes the Young Women’s Caucus and various other events. The organization works both at the grassroots level and at the national level on youth policy.²⁸

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Civil Society Capacity

Civil society makes a significant contribution to development in Tonga and that the civil society network is robust and active.²⁹ Numerous examples are available of Tongan CSOs providing services to their constituencies. Tongan CSOs are also increasingly engaging in public awareness and advocacy, and some innovative programs exist. An example is the work of the Women and Children Crisis Centre, which produces short, issue-focused papers targeting members of Parliament and the heads of government departments.

The center also produced a short video directed at candidates prior to the 2010 elections featuring girls expressing their views on women’s rights and climate change. Other CSOs are engaged in advocacy via radio talkback and interview programs.³⁰ The On the Spot Arts Initiative, a youth-focused NGO, has trained young people in social media and online literacy.³¹ The CSFT has ventured into video production and a nationwide broadband upgrade is underway.³² Mobile phone density is also high in Tonga.³³ Women-focused CSOs operate a radio station (98FM), and church groups broadcast on different television and radio frequencies operated by church groups.

The CSO sector in Tonga is well connected.³⁴ While duplication in programs exists, there is also high level of cooperation among CSOs. They are aware of what other organizations are doing and work in a collaborative way to maximize development impact. Programs on areas such as health, education, gender, youth, disability, environment, human rights, trade, and poverty alleviation are all well represented.

However, civil society in Tonga faces a number of capacity constraints.³⁵ Tongan CSOs have an uncertain funding environment, since donors have been unwilling to fund the organizations’ core costs, and the high donor expectation of cofinancing. Across the sector, civil society in Tonga has uneven capacity in its financial stability and capability. As a result, there is a degree of competition among Tongan CSOs over the very

limited available funding. However, CSOs in the country have an impressive ability to get the job done despite constraints.

Limited financial and general management capacity has led to Tongan CSOs requesting assistance with strategic planning, general management, proposal writing, budgeting, and report writing. Addressing the competing demands of multiple reports in various formats for numerous stakeholders is also a problem for Tongan CSOs. High staff turnover compounds this issue. To address this, the government is considering establishing a help desk to assist civil society with writing funding proposals and grant acquittals.

Tongan civil society has limited capacity to conduct research on evidence-based policy and the state and needs of the sector. This is exacerbated by the limitations in information and communication technology (ICT), despite the innovations being implemented by some organizations. Many CSOs do not have websites; those that do are often out of date or inactive. In May 2013, PIANGO conducted a survey of its national liaison units in Tonga, Fiji, and the Solomon Islands and found that none has an ICT plan, none has backups of all institutional data, and local ICT support was generally scarce and expensive.

The monitoring role played by civil society is generally weak but improving. For example, there is currently no formal role for CSOs in the annual budgeting process of the government and there is limited understanding of the role of the Parliament and the government. This lack of involvement is exacerbated in the outer islands of Tonga.

The development of civil society capacity in Tonga has been a significant focus of government, the sector, and aid donors. Tonga has participated in a number of civil society strengthening initiatives, including the Tonga Governance Strengthening Program, funded by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Australia (commenced in 2013),³⁶ an electoral civics education program in the lead up to the 2010 elections, and a participatory governance project led by CIVICUS: Participatory Governance Project—Leadership Development and Civil Society Strengthening in the Pacific in 2012.³⁷ A similar program was held in early 2014, with a collaboration among the Tongan Electoral Commission, its Australian counterpart, and civil society.³⁸

ADB–Civil Society Cooperation in Tonga

Tonga joined Asian Development Bank (ADB) in 1972 and has since received \$57.79 million in loans with an additional \$20.12 million in technical assistance.³⁹ The

ADB Pacific Department (PARD) covers operations in 14 countries, including Tonga. The Pacific Subregional Office (SPSO) was opened in 2004 and is the primary link in Tonga between key stakeholders, including civil society, for ADB activities.⁴⁰

In 2009, ADB and the World Bank jointly established a group liaison office in Nuka'alofa. The liaison officer, Siosaia Faletau, is also the ADB civil society anchor in Tonga. Contact details for the group liaison office are as follows:

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The ADB/World Bank Group Liaison Office has engaged with civil society in a number of fora. The ADB Pacific Approach, 2010–2014, which also serves as the country partnership strategy, was developed in consultation with civil society. For the past 3 years, the Country Operations Business Plans for Tonga were developed in consultation with civil society. ADB holds regular consultations with the Tonga Chamber of Commerce, the Manufacturers Association of Tonga, and the CSFT during country programming.⁴¹

Further, in a program aimed at increasing outreach of its Accountability Mechanism, ADB engaged consultants to conduct research on Outreach for Good Governance and Development Effectiveness through the Accountability Mechanism in 2011. Field research and a workshop with civil society leaders were conducted. Twenty-six representatives of Tongan CSOs attended the workshop held in May 2011 in Nuka'alofa. It was found that many civil society representatives were not very aware about the operations of ADB in Tonga.⁴² Another workshop was held with civil society in Tonga in 2012 to share information about the revised policy for the Accountability Mechanism.

ADB-Supported Activities Involving Civil Society

The ADB Country Operations Business Plan, Tonga, 2014–2016, focuses on renewable energy and effective and prudent macroeconomic management, and several of ADB's current activities in Tonga involve engagement with civil society.

The Climate Resilience Sector Project, a \$23.1 million grant approved in 2013, will systematically incorporate climate resilience into national planning processes and strengthen Tonga's capacity to develop, finance, implement, and monitor pilot investments aimed at climate-proofing infrastructure and improving ecosystem resilience. It will directly engage with civil society in a number of ways. At the project management level, the CSFT will be represented in the project steering committee. In addition, the project proposes the establishment of a \$5 million Tonga Climate Change Trust Fund, with CSOs and community groups able to apply for financing of small community climate change adaptation projects. A representative of the CSFT will be on the multi-stakeholder board managing the trust fund. The project will also establish a gender network involving a range of Tongan women's civil society groups to assist in the transformation to climate resilience for Tonga. NGOs and civil society will also be able to apply for scholarships and professional training in climate change adaptation.

Civil society engagement is embedded in the ADB technical assistance (TA) project, Kingdom of Tonga: Implementing Strategic Economic Management. Under this TA project, approved in 2011, outreach on economic management to NGOs is designed to create awareness on, and build demand for, medium-term budgeting reforms.

Other examples of ADB-supported activity that included engagement with civil society include the Tonga–Fiji Submarine Cable Project, and the Nuku'alofa Urban Sector Development grant, approved in 2011, which engaged women's groups and community associations in urban design and planning issues.

In 2010, Tongan CSOs, including the Fishing Industries Association, the Sports Fishing Association, and the Deepwater Fishing Group, were consulted regarding the potential environmental impact and mitigation measures for the project.⁴³

Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction

The Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) was established in 2000. It provides direct assistance to the poorest and most vulnerable groups in the developing member countries, while fostering long-term social and economic development.⁴⁴ It provides both project grants and technical assistance to developing member countries. As of April 2015, it has approved nine grants for the Pacific, two of which were approved in 2012. The \$500,000 Outer Islands Renewable Energy Project, a TA project to connect solar power to the country's electricity network, was approved in Tonga in 2011.

In addition, Tonga is involved in several JFPR-financed regional projects.

The Implementing the Pacific Regional Audit Initiative is a \$1.3 million project approved by ADB in 2011 that works with government auditing bodies to improve capacity. Building Capacity for Statistics in the Pacific is a regional \$1 million project, approved in 2011, which aims to build the capacity of national statistics offices to have an improved database for development policy.

In 2010, ADB approved the \$3 million Social Protection of the Vulnerable in the Pacific project. It has three streams of activities in three locations: the Marshall Islands, the Cook Islands, and Tonga. The project involves a grant of \$900,000 to Tonga to provide socioeconomic support to vulnerable populations and to assist governments in implementing effective safety nets. Within Tonga, this project directly engages with civil society on a number of levels. CSOs contributed to the design of the project. Local CSOs have also been contracted to conduct services under the project in Tonga through the Mango Tree Centre and Ma'a Fafine Moe Famili. The work Ma'a Fafine Moe Famili had been doing to provide care for the aging population and disability services to individuals in pilot communities was extended in August 2013 for an additional 12 months.⁴⁵

In addition, the JFPR is financing a TA project, Strengthening Disaster and Climate Risk Resilience in Urban Development in the Pacific, approved in 2012. This project assisted Pacific developing member countries, including Tonga, to build their capacity in mainstreaming climate change and natural disaster risk management into urban planning. Using available data and risk models, six Pacific countries, including Tonga, will be assisted through this project.⁴⁶ CSOs will be involved in the project through being recipients of project outputs and engagement in training and awareness.

Endnotes

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Definition and Objectives of Civil Society Collaboration

Civil society is an important stakeholder in the operations of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and its borrowers and clients. It is distinct from the government and the private sector and consists of a diverse range of individuals, groups, and nonprofit organizations. They operate around shared interests, purposes, and values with a varying degree of formality and encompass a diverse range—from informal unorganized community groups to large international labor union organizations. Of particular relevance to ADB are nongovernment organizations, community-based organizations and people's organizations, foundations, professional associations, research institutes and universities, labor unions, mass organizations, social movements, and coalitions and networks of civil society organizations (CSOs) and umbrella organizations.^a

ADB recognizes CSOs as development actors in their own right whose efforts complement those of governments and the private sector, and who play a significant role in development in Asia and the Pacific. ADB has a long tradition of interacting with CSOs in different contexts, through policy- and country strategy-level consultation; and in designing, implementing, and monitoring projects.

In 2008, ADB launched Strategy 2020, which articulates the organization's future direction and vision until 2020.^b Above all, Strategy 2020 presents three complementary strategic agendas to guide ADB operations: inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration. These agendas reflect the recognition that it is not only the pace of growth but also the pattern of growth matters in reducing poverty in the region. In this new strategic context, partnerships with a range of organizations, including CSOs, will become central to planning, financing, implementing, and evaluating ADB projects.

^a ADB. 2012. *Strengthening Participation for Development Results*. Manila.

^b ADB. 2008. *Strategy 2020: The Long-Term Strategic Framework of the Asian Development Bank, 2008-2020*. Manila.

In this publication, "\$" refers to US dollars.



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Publication Stock No. ARM157750-2

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