

# Exploring Transdisciplinary Research Methods for Understanding Circular Migration & Climate Mobility

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## Towards Adaptation Strategies in the Pacific Island Region

# OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

- ❖ Project background
- ❖ Transdisciplinary Research Methods
  - Causal Loop Diagrams
  - Q-sort Method
  - Mobility Mapping
  - Vanua Research Method
- ❖ Summary – Gaps/Challenges

# FRAMING THE PROJECT

- **Title:** Moving to Remain in Place: Micro-Mobilities and Circular Migration as Adaptive Strategies to Gendered Climate Risks in Fiji and Samoa
- **Case Study Sites:** Samoa & Fiji, 3-4 villages in each country
- **Project Partners:** University of Auckland, New Zealand; University of the South Pacific, Fiji; National University of Samoa, Samoa
  
- Examines the potential of short-distance and short-duration movements as adaptive strategies in response to severe climatic risks in Fiji and Samoa.
- Emphasis is placed on understanding who can engage in these strategies, identifying resilience outcomes, as well as exploring the exclusion and vulnerability of certain groups.
- The research aims to inform Pacific policymakers in the field of climate migration and planned relocation by providing evidence-based recommendations.
- The project adopts a transdisciplinary approach, involving expertise from development studies, geography, sociology, and marine science.
- Focus is placed on community engagement, policy interactions, and capacity development, seeking to promote just and transformative climate mobility strategies and adaptation practices.
- The study will utilize various research methodologies.

# Transdisciplinary Research

An integrative approach that transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries to address complex societal challenges by incorporating diverse perspectives and knowledge systems. In this case: Climate Change

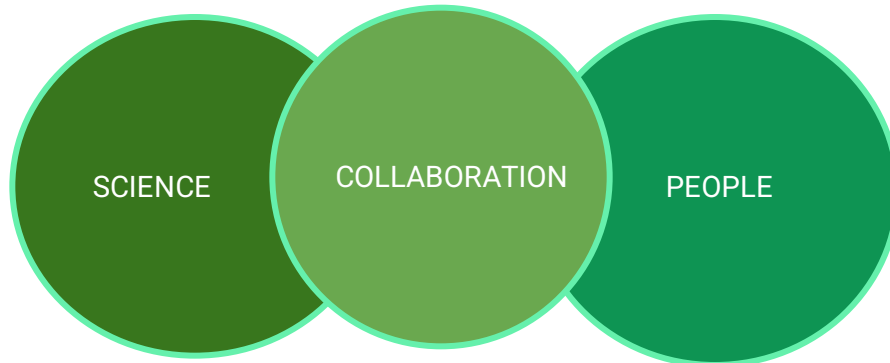
## Key Characteristics:

**Holistic Approach:** Integrates insights from multiple disciplines.

**Collaborative Process:** Involves stakeholders from academia, industry, and the community.

**Problem-Oriented:** Focuses on real-world issues and finding practical solutions.

Overlapping fields/sectors related to climate change and the impacts on all sectors and aspects of life.



# Transdisciplinary Research

## Steps that have been taken so far in the project process:

### 1 - Inception Workshops (Suva & Apia)

- Who do we have in the room?

### 2 - Field-Training Workshops

- What information are we capturing? What is working/what isn't?

### 3- Refining the project research methods based off of feedback provided in all workshops

- Back to the drawing board if necessary

### 4 - Data Collection

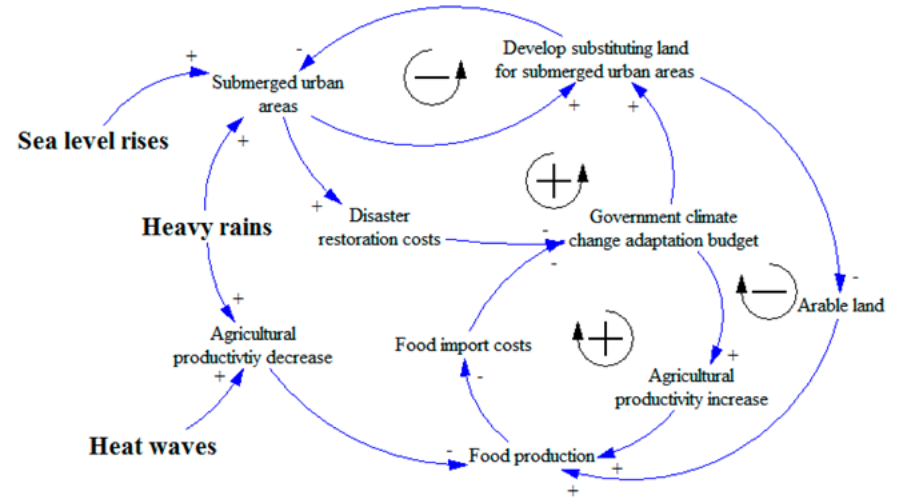
# Causal Loop Diagrams

Example from case study in Fiji



Source: Renata Varea 2018

Example of CLD drawn in Vensim



Source: <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/9/4/524>

# Q-sort Method



Source: Neef 2024

# Mobility Mapping



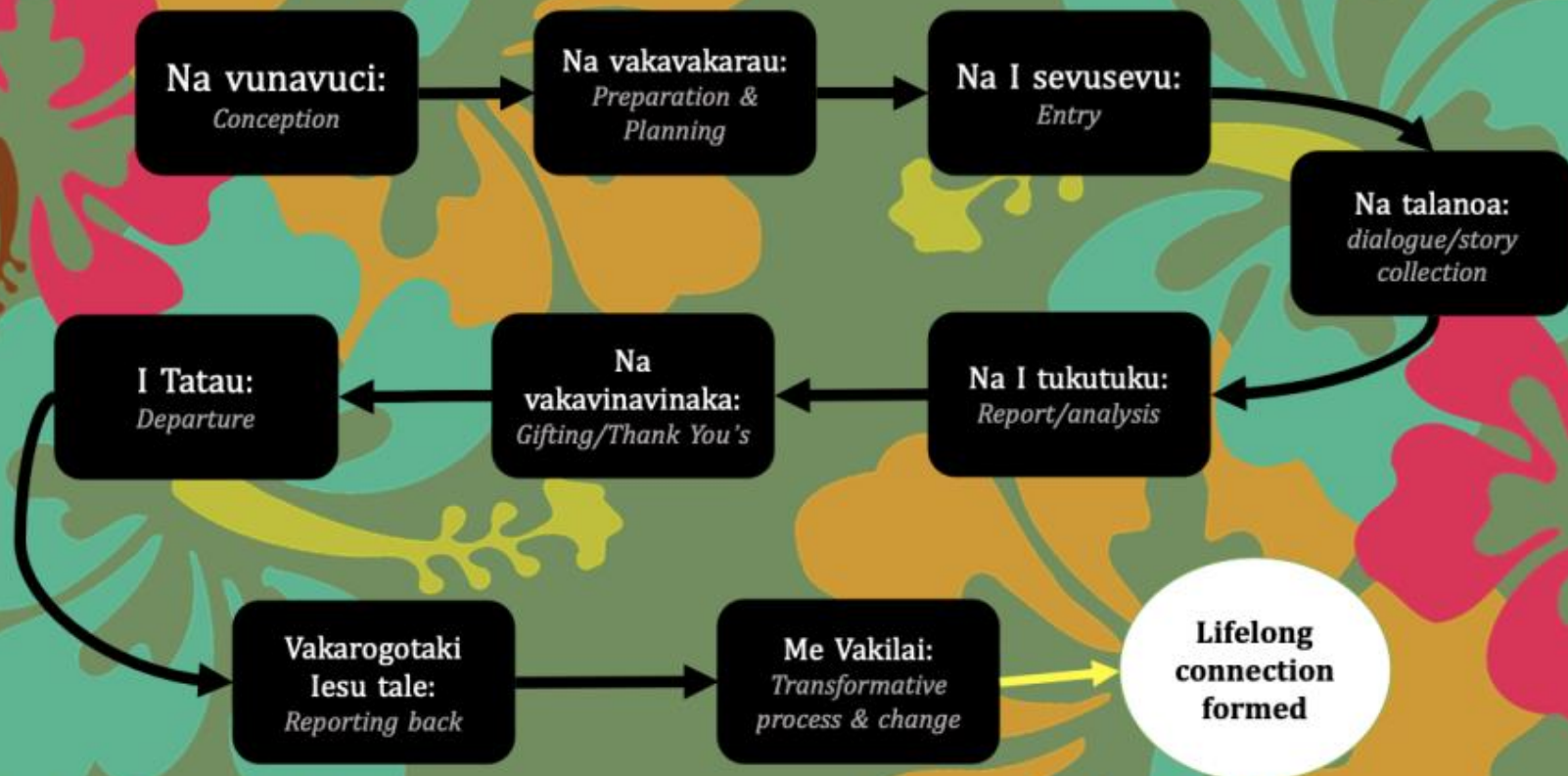
Source: Neef 2024

...Oka Na Colo...

## Vanua Research Framework

- ❖ Developed in Fiji, it recognizes the interconnectedness of Fijian culture, knowledge systems, land, spirituality, relationships, and values.
- ❖ It aims to decolonize research by validating Indigenous knowledge and incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing.
- ❖ Its principles and application are relevant for other Pacific Island Countries and Territories.
- ❖ Talanoa Research Method

# Steps of Vanua Research



# SUMMARY

- ❖ Numerous challenges: Communication Barriers, Coordination and Collaboration, Resource Allocation, Stakeholder Engagement, Institutional Barriers, Complex Problem Framing, Data Integration, Outcome Measurement, Ethical Considerations, Policy and Practice Integration.
- ❖ Transdisciplinary method in Climate Change research if well planned can allow for a holistic view of complex climate issues by combining insights from multiple disciplines amongst other numerous advantages.
- ❖ In the context of this project these methods best compliment each other because they address the gaps each method may have and allows for a rich data set while being mindful of resource constraints in the Pacific.



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VINAKA  
THANK YOU

