Rethinking human security: COVID-19 and the social solidarity economy in the Pacific

Steven Ratuva, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Introduction

During their Nauru meeting in 2018 the Pacific Island leaders declared that climate change remains the 'single greatest threat to the livelihood, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific' (PIFS 2018:1). However, COVID-19 has overtaken events and changed the global and indeed regional security narratives in unprecedented ways. The sudden impact of COVID-19 has forced people into rethinking security and reframing development in our region. The pandemic has starkly revealed the fragility and lack of resilience of the much touted neoliberal economic system – which had to be bailed out through direct state subsidies and other forms of economic nationalisation (OECD 2020). Many in the Pacific – who relied on the frail market system for most of their lives – had to resort to the social solidarity economy (SSE) when they lost their jobs, state social protection resources ran dry and reliance on the formal economy looked bleak – SSE was key to survival in the midst of the seemingly endless effects of the pandemic. The pandemic has become the dominant security threat in the region and the world even displacing climate change and geopolitics from daily headlines.

COVID-19 is unique as a human security threat because the virus has a domino effect on other human security conditions such as unemployment, poverty, psychological depression, collective trauma, sociopolitical unrest and instability, social risks and wellbeing hazard (UNDP 2020a). Social protection resources and mechanisms by the state are limited, especially for poor states and communities, which means that innovative alternatives have to be sought (ILO 2020). For many Pacific Islanders, this means falling back on the SSE – which has been part of their lives for centuries – despite dramatic social transformation resulting from globalisation and deepening incorporation into the market economy.

This paper examines the critical role of the SSE in Pacific Island communities in providing a vital human security response to the social and economic impacts of COVID-19. Human security is a term – first used and officially introduced in the 1994 United Nations (UN) Human Development Report – which refers to sustaining and protecting people's economic, political, health, personal, food, environmental and community wellbeing and dignity (Jolly and Ray 2006).

A central aspect of the Pacific SSE is communal capital, which refers to cultural mechanisms, norms and practices used to maintain collective social life, respond to crises and reproduce societal values, collective identities and communal institutions (Ratuva 2014). Since the advent of the capitalist system and colonial rule, Pacific Island economies consisted of a mixture of the introduced market system and SSE. Today, Pacific communities live at the intersection of these two systems – one of which is based on market exchange of individualised commodities – while the other is based on people-to-people social relations. Communities act as agencies for social life by selectively choosing aspects from both systems which they find convenient to suit particular circumstances – the result often a more nuanced system consisting of various degrees of both (Ratuva 2004). Thus, it would be nonsensical to talk of purely subsistence or purely capitalist economies because of the complex admixtures relating the two modes of production (Ratuva 2014).

When there is a crisis in the market economy people readily fall back on the SSE for sustenance and survival – exactly what is happening as a result of COVID-19 where a threat to human security has forced communities to seek alternatives as the crisis of the market economy deepens. This paper is divided into three main sections. Firstly, I examine the concepts of SSE and communal capital and their relationship to human security. Secondly, I provide an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on Pacific Island communities. Thirdly, I provide an example of how these communities have utilised aspects of the SSE and communal capital as alternative survival strategies when the reach of the state and the effectiveness of the market system are limited.

Social solidarity economy and communal capital: Conceptual narratives

The notion of SSE has a long historical genesis but in the 1990s, the significance of SSE in mainstream discourse was being recognised – especially when debates about alternative means of development raged amongst scholars and policy makers (Rafaelli 2017). A global conference organised by ILO on the subject agreed to define SSE as a 'concept designating enterprises and organisations, in particular cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations, foundations and social enterprises, which have the specific feature of producing goods, services and knowledge while pursuing both economic and social aims and fostering solidarity' (ILO 2009:1). This was in response to the need for alternate or complementary development paradigms to 're-balancing economic, social and environmental objectives' (ibid).

One of the basic foundations of the SSE is the recognition of the significance of ethical values which prioritise the wellbeing of people and planet over profit and blind growth in economic development. The mushrooming of SSE based strategies, policies and programs in the last three decades has been attributed to:

- deteriorating living conditions and deepening poverty of people around the world;

- reaction against the commodification and trivialisation of humans as dispensable entities to be bought and sold in the market as part of neoliberal logic; and
- unscrupulous environmental degradation and extractive commercial behaviour causing global environmental pollution and climate change (Rafaelli 2017).

Thus, the growth of SSEs has been more or less spontaneous and grassroots led as communities rediscover traditional practices and cultural traits that they adapt to new technologies in the rapidly changing global climate (Peterson and Taylor 2003). SSE encompasses a wide range of programs that span multiple dimensions – including economic, social, environmental, political, communal and psychological spaces. The SSE is framed in different ways but some common principles on which it is built are equity, diversity, inclusion, democratised distribution of power and collective participation. The reaction against the predatory excesses of neoliberalism and the increasing inequality and marginalisation of the poor have raised issues about the ethics and morality of maximisation of profit at the cost of economic subjugation of others (Carrier 2018).

SSE draws meaning and identity from local histories, culture and local socioeconomic realities while simultaneously being transformative. The idea of SSE has been around for centuries, and became a rallying point in response to the predatory, extractive and exploitative nature of capitalism (Laville 2010). SSE is now being promoted by international organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Labour Organization (ILO), civil society organisations, scholars and grassroots communities. During the Rio+20 Summit, there was growing demand for the UN system to be more active in promoting and mainstreaming SSE into its programs – which led to the formation of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSE) in 2013. The UNTFSSE consists of 18 UN agencies and the OECD as members, 13 civil society organisations as observers and ILO the Chair and Secretariat. The UNTFSSE approaches SSE as a system of:

> production and exchange of goods and services by a broad range of organizations and enterprises that pursue explicit social and/or environmental objectives…guided by the principles and practices of cooperation, solidarity, ethics and democratic self-management, among others, and can take the form of cooperatives, social enterprises, self-help groups or community associations, among others (UNTFSSE 2017:1).

At the UN level, the SSE is seen as a mechanism to facilitate the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Debate on the nature and role of SSE has, however, continued to yield new discourses. For example, dominant discourses on SSE 'remain poorly positioned for understanding the diverse models across the global South' (Martinez et al. 2019:1). These alternative forms of production, exchange and consumption have found traction because of the failure of the market economy to protect the wellbeing of the poor and vulnerable in society globally – especially in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis. Some UN member states have put in place legislation, policies and programs to frame and support SSE programs – and some states even formed an International Leading Group on Social and Solidarity Economy (ILGSSE).

Pandemic and human security in Pacific communities

Although the COVID-19 infection rate in Pacific Island Countries (PICs) was uneven – with some having relatively high infection rates and some without any infection at all – the impact on human security in such areas as poverty, unemployment, lack of income, and state and other services has been deep and overwhelming. No PIC has been spared. WHO figures of 15 October, 2020 show the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the PICs had reached 16,909 (WHO 2020a). The most affected countries are French Polynesia with 10,971 confirmed cases and 52 deaths; Guam with 5755 cases and 91 deaths and Northern Mariana with 100 infections and two deaths (WHO, 2020b).

When the pandemic started, a total of 13 countries in the Pacific declared a state of emergency – American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Guam, Nauru, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Palau, PNG, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu (UNESCO 2020). Around six countries had a combination of partial and full lockdowns and curfews – Guam, Fiji, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Tonga and Vanuatu. Schools were closed in almost all the countries with some later reopened (UNESCO 2020). As in other countries around the world, the lockdown in the Pacific was accompanied by challenges in information dissemination, misinformation on COVID-19, anxiety, psychosocial stress, and stigma. Those who were infected, as in the case of Fiji, became targets of online abuse and threats. Another associated challenge is physical distancing, especially as it is common for many to sleep and live in the same room in small houses (Lindsay 2020). A number of initiatives have been established, such as the Vanuatu WASH project, to teach students at school to hand wash and cough into their elbows. One of the challenges is that some schools do not have hand washing and toilet facilities.

Loss of jobs as a result of the collapse of the tourism industry has severely impacted Pacific economies and undermined young people's employment prospects with the labour market's ability to recover a huge challenge (ILO and ADB 2020). Some countries have been able to respond to this through wage subsidies but by and large these were not sufficient to mitigate the ever deepening economic crisis. People had to resort to the SSE. Many PICs had to seek emergency assistance from traditional aid donors to address their budgetary shortfalls adding to their already mounting debt levels (World Bank 2020a). Amongst other forms of assistance by various donors, for example, the World Bank provided US$20 million for PNG and US$7.4 million for Fiji for COVID-19 response programs (World Bank 2020b). The Solomon Islands government issued a SI$120 million bond to absorb excess liquidity in the

market and minimise the impact of COVID-19. In addition, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and China offered financial assistance as part of budgetary aid. Due to close contact with their diaspora population which make up the highest infection rate in the US, the Marshall Islands have been quite cautious but optimistic about their resilience based approach, developed from their climate change adaptation strategies. The World Bank provided a US$2.5 million assistance package to help strengthen the Marshall Islands resilience program.

Apart from declaring emergencies, closing airports and ports and keeping strict watch on gatherings, there was also a challenge associated with general policing to ensure compliance with the regulations and political security, given the history of political instability in some PICs (The Guardian 2020). Vanuatu, like Fiji, had to confront the double jeopardy of COVID-19 and the destruction by tropical Cyclone Harold. Vanuatu's exposure to the cyclone path has made it more resilient to disasters as well as receiving constant humanitarian aid. Vanuatu's neighbour, New Caledonia, began easing social movement after a few days without any new cases of COVID-19. Samoa has followed a similar approach as it has been COVID-free from the outset, while taking strict measures to close the border to avoid a similar situation to the measles epidemic imported from New Zealand in 2019. French Polynesia, where infection has taken place, has relied largely on the French government to provide financial resources for its responses to COVID-19.

The relative isolation of most PICs also acts as a sort of safety net against large scale infection despite the fact that in human security terms, the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) are a very high risk category because of their susceptibility to non-communicable diseases. Ten countries in the Pacific have the highest obesity rates in the world – and there is a prevalence of the triple affliction of malnutrition – a condition where undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity coexist (FAO 2020). The leading cause of death in these countries is non-communicable diseases, a result of a dramatic change in diet from fresh traditional food from the sea and land to high carb, fat, sugar and salt processed food. In some Pacific communities, imported food constitutes more than half of the population's food intake. The Pacific Humanitarian Pathway has allowed the flow of imported food supplies to the islands as people focus more on family gardening.

Disruptions in food chain supplies due to port and airport closures resulting in high prices of imported goods, together with the surge in unemployment, drastic reduction in cash income and demise in corporate and state services, has compelled people to seek solace in alternative and more sustainable forms of production, sustenance and wellbeing. Many have fallen back on the SSE as a way of sustaining their wellbeing when the market economy which they had put so much faith in was no longer delivering goods, employment, food and other basic necessities of life, which they have been dependent on for a long time. I will now examine this in detail.

Human security, social solidarity economy and communal capital: The example of the barter system

Since the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown was felt, most Pacific Island communities resorted to alternative means of sustenance – the most familiar and one they naturally associated with was the SSE (UNDP 2020b). This is not to suggest that the SSE is new, but rather its significance has been heightened by the shortcomings of the market economy and the onset of unemployment, poverty, social deprivation and food insecurity. The relationship between the market system and the SSE has been a feature of Pacific socioeconomic life and human security systems. This syncretic relationship can be very complex and involves a dynamic synergy between a series of life narratives and worldviews, such as:

- subsistence production and capitalist exchange;
- individual ownership and collective rights to land and property;
- traditional cosmological narratives and Christian ethos; and
- indigenous episteme and globalised commodified knowledge (Ratuva 2014).

These narratives are not necessarily opposing binaries or dichotomous. Rather, they have created nuanced patterns of relationships over time, where various norms and practices oscillate across the cultural 'boundaries'creating new forms of cultural synthesis, accommodation and symbiosis. At the same time there can be conditions between these narratives, or more dominant values may prevail in certain contexts. Contrary to the deterministic deficit assumption that Pacific Islanders are helpless and always vulnerable to external and global forces beyond their control, the reality is that – despite their marginal position in the global neoliberal order – Pacific Islanders are still able to make conscious and rational choices in relation to both Western and indigenous modes of production, governance and innovation – as part of their adaptation and resilience strategies. These choices become much more urgent and distinct in times of crises as people become desperate to decide on the best priorities for their circumstances and available resources to support these priorities and responses.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, transformative effects of communal choices and expressions of community power provided the basis for SSE. Due to the dramatic demise in the availability of cash, an urgent task was to resuscitate the practice of barter system or what ethnographers refer to as generalised reciprocity. The regional barter system initiative started in Fiji as the 'Barter for Better Fiji' project and the idea spread to Tonga, Samoa, Vanuatu, New Zealand and other PICs (Williams 2020). Tora describes the situation in the Guardian article of 8 May 2020 thus:

> The barter system is experiencing a resurgence across the Pacific with similar Facebook pages in Tonga – 'Barter for Change' – two in Samoa 'Barter for Better Samoa' and 'Le Barter Samoa' with just over 1,000

> members – and one in Vanuatu 'Barter for Nambawan Life Vanuatu' – as the island nations are beginning to face economic difficulties due to Covid-19 (Tora 2020:1).

Since May 2020, this barter system has expanded in geographical reach and demographic participation and is now a major component of many PICs' economies. The traditional version of this reciprocity system in Fiji is referred to as *veisa*, which literally means to pair up, exchange or balance up. Various forms of reciprocity were common throughout the Pacific. For example, the Kula trade connected different islands and communities in PNG, while trade on red bird feathers, mats, canoes and other artifacts existed for centuries among Fiji, Tonga and Samoa.

While the barter system still exists in some form or other in various Pacific communities, the 'new' initiative eclipsed this system taking centre stage as a dominant mode of exchange and also utilising virtual space as the arena for digital exchange, rather than face to face negotiations. Interested buyers and sellers would publicise their intents online to which people would respond with deals being settled virtually and the actual exchange of goods taking place face to face. Some examples of these forms of exchange are outlined below in the 8 May article in the Guardian:

> Two piglets for a pre-loved kayak, a taxi fare in exchange for fresh produce, hot cross buns for online tutoring, an old carpet for a professional photography session, vegetable seedlings for homemade pies, and offers to have backyards cleaned for prayers. These are just a few examples of the hundreds of barter trades that are taking place across Fiji since a Facebook page 'Barter for Better Fiji' was created a few weeks ago in response to sharp falls in employment due to coronavirus. The page now has more than 100,000 members, in a country of just under 900,000 people (Tora 2020:1).

The use of new virtual technology and a modern range of goods has transformed the *veisa*, based on small-scale communal exchange, into a mass exchange system facilitated by modern digital infrastructure. Rather than just calling this 'barter exchange' – which would confuse it with traditional exchange systems such as *veisa* – I propose to call it adapted virtual barter exchange (AVBE).

AVBE has a number of advantages. Firstly, it can be used transculturally without much ethical or normative restriction. All ethnic groups have adopted AVBE in Fiji as a common cultural norm in these times of economic difficulties and uncertainties. Secondly, because of AVBE's reliance on social media for community connection, the process of negotiation and exchange can be instant across geographical boundaries. In a population with high mobile phone coverage such as Fiji, the AVBE system can spread quickly encompassing a large group of people within a very short time. Thirdly, direct financial input is minimal, in fact in many cases, there is none, which augurs well for traditional subsistence-based communities such as those in the Pacific. Fourthly, AVBE is inclusive and equitable in terms of the power of the traders, gender and socioeconomic status. The system unpacks and reconfigures the unequal and often exploitative class divide and gender division of labour – characteristic of the capitalist system. Each trader has the power to negotiate, determine the value of goods and services exchanged and the right to engage in the actual exchange. The value of goods is determined by their social function as seen by both parties rather than actual 'market' value. Lastly, AVBE is underpinned by the moral virtues of trust and social solidarity – using communal capital rather than finance as the basis for building networks, communication and exchange.

By following the trading and discussions online, it is quite apparent that in some ways the AVBE has created a strong trans-ethnic, class and system bond which has nurtured a powerful social solidarity connection between people within communities. Through months of evolution and innovation, the AVBE has become more than just an economic activity – expanding and deepening – to become an economic and social system of production, exchange, networking and cultural transformation.

Apart from AVBE, other forms of SSE activities have mushroomed in response to COVD-19, which – to name a few – include:

- the 'green thumb' model for local farming;
- rise beyond the reef economic empowerment for women in rural communities;
- incubator and seed funding for start-ups by those losing their source of income;
- smart farms Fiji;
- Pacific Blue farming; and
- alternative communities trade (UNDP 2020b).

Land is an important part of the social and solidarity economy because of its socio-cultural and economic value. It has become a sought after entity – not as a form of real estate capital – but as a key aspect of community livelihood. Communally owned land in most Pacific communities has acted as a social safety net during times of economic difficulties, enabling ordinary people to access and utilise land for farming. Had land been privately owned, as some neoliberal economists have been advocating for a long time in the Pacific (Duncan 2014), this would have been a very different story.

Community-driven innovations such as AVBE are the basis of the emerging SSE which provides an efficient social safety net for thousands of Pacific peoples across the world's largest ocean. SSE is based on the utilisation of local communal capital to expand the depth and reach of the social safety net. The significance of aspects of communal capital such as kinship based social networks, reciprocal goods exchange, collective labour, group rights, cultural connections, common ethical principles and shared intellectual property are important human factors which drive and sustain the AVBE as an example of SSE.

Conclusion: Rethinking human security

One of the most durable lessons COVID-19 has taught Pacific communities is the need to look inwards, utilise existing communal capital and develop community based resilience in response to threats to their human security. The pandemic has literally decimated the core of the market

economy such as tourism in many PICs which has impacted dramatically on people's wellbeing forcing people to think about alternative systems of exchange, production and means of livelihood.

This paper has provided a snapshot of how human security of Pacific communities has been impacted by the pandemic and how communities have resorted to mitigating strategies rooted in their sociocultural systems of adaptation and building resilience. Over the years, Pacific communities have engaged with the market economy and their traditional SSE in a syncretic manner, and have been selective in using aspects of both systems to suit their purposes in a dynamic and conscious way. This has developed a sense of resilience which has enabled Pacific communities to adapt to dramatic transformation brought about by natural disasters and human induced crises. When COVID-19 struck, many of these communities were in a position to mobilise their communal capital to respond to the socio-economic impacts of the health calamity. An example of this was the organisation of the AVBE which combined both traditional concepts of reciprocity and the capitalist strategy of virtual marketing and networking. The result is a multipurpose and functional system, which combines both economic redistribution and social solidarity, underpinned by the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion. An important component of SSE is land utilisation to provide for family food security. Land – often defined as a commodity in the capitalist discourse – is now seen as a safety net for community wellbeing. Other projects associated with land and the SSE have mushroomed across the PICs as communities become conscious of the need to utilise their communal cultural capital in a world where commercial capital can no longer provide for their basic needs.

These dynamic developments and creative initiatives have made us rethink human security. The conventional view is that external intervention in the form of humanitarian aid, social protection programs and expert strategic thinking are required to address the situation of 'vulnerable' communities such as those in PICs. This dependency approach has been brought into question by COVID-19 which has provided conditions for rethinking the significance of SSE as a basis for addressing basic human security issues such as poverty, unemployment, hunger and lack of income. Harnessing the power of communal capital – such as the interconnecting synergies between reciprocal systems of trade, kinship networks, collective labour and skills, social and spiritual relationship to land and environment and connection with the ancestral and wider cosmology – provide a lifeline to the PICs' longterm human security issues. Even if the market economy does not deliver the goods, the SSE will still form the basis of people's livelihoods – in bad and good times.

References

Carrier, J 2018, 'Moral economy: What's in a name'? *Anthropological Theory* 8(1), 18–35.

Duncan, R 2014, Reflections on constraints to growth in Pacific Island countries, *Devpolicy Blog*, 26 June, https://devpolicy.org/reflections-on-constraints-to-growth-in-pacific-island-countries-20140626/, accessed 26 October 2020

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) 2020, Addressing COVID-19's impacts and structural crisis in the Pacific, http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1279154/icode/, accessed 26 October 2020

International Labour Organization (ILO) 2009, Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), https://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/WCMS_546299/lang--en/index.htm, accessed 26 October 2020

International Labour Organization (ILO) 2020, Social protection responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in developing countries, *Social Protection Spotlight ILO Brief*, May, Geneva, International Labour Organization, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---soc_sec/documents/publication/wcms_744612.pdf, accessed 2 September 2020

International Labour Organization (ILO) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) 2020, Tackling the COVID-19 youth employment crisis in Asia and the Pacific, https://www.ilo.org/asia/publications/WCMS_753369/lang--en/index.htm, accessed 26 October 2020

Jolly, R and D Ray 2006, *The Human Security Framework and National Human Development Reports: A review of experiences and current debates, NHDR Occasional Paper 5*, Human Development Report Office, UNDP, New York, http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/NHDR_Human_Security_GN.pdf, accessed 28 August 2020

Laville, J-L 2010, 'The solidarity economy: An international movement', *RCCS Annual Review*, 2, 3–41, http://journals.openedition.org/rccsar/202; DOI:10.4000/rccsar.202, accessed 2 September 2020

Lindsay, H 2020, 'What will COVID-19 mean for the Pacific?' https://www.unicef.org.nz/stories/what-will-covid-19-mean-for-the-pacific, accessed 31 October 2020

Martinez SC, AM Pachon, J Martin and V Moreno 2019, 'Solidarity economy, social enterprise, and innovation discourses: Understanding hybrid forms in postcolonial Colombia', *Soc. Sci*. 8, 205, doi:10.3390/socsci8070205.

OECD 2020, 'The COVID-19 crisis and state ownership in the economy: Issues and policy considerations,' 25 June, https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/the-covid-19-crisis-and-state-ownership-in-the-economy-issues-and-policy-considerations-ce417c46/, accessed 31 October 2020

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) 2018, *Boe Declaration*, Pacific Islands Forum, Suva, https://www.forumsec.org/2018/09/05/boe-declaration-on-regional-security/, accessed 16 September 2020

Peterson, N and J Taylor 2003, 'The modernising of the indigenous domestic moral economy', *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 4(1–2), 105–122, DOI: 10.1080/14442210310001706407

Rafaelli, P 2017, 'Social and solidarity economy in a neoliberal context: Transformative or palliative? The case of an Argentinean Worker Cooperative', *Journal of Entrepreneurial and Organizational Diversity* 5, 33–53.

Ratuva, S 2004, 'Reconceptualizing contemporary Pacific Islands States: Towards a syncretic approach', *The New Pacific Review* 2(1), 246–262.

Ratuva, S 2014, 'Failed states or resilient subaltern communities: Pacific Indigenous social protection system in a neoliberal World,' *Pacific Journalism Review* 20(2), 39–57.

The Guardian 2020, Coronavirus in the Pacific: Weekly briefing, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/22/coronavirus-in-the-pacific-weekly-briefing, accessed 31 October 2020

Tora, T 2020, 'Two piglets for a kayak: Fiji returns to barter system as Covid-19 hits economy', *The Gardian*, 8 May, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/08/two-piglets-for-a-kayak-fiji-returns-to-barter-system-as-covid-19-hits-economy, accessed 31 October 2020

UNESCO 2020, Education: From disruption to recovery, https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse, accessed 31 October 2020

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2020a, *The Social and Economic Impact of COVID-19*, UNDP, Bangkok.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2020b, Local COVID-19 response projects in Fiji and Vanuatu to benefit from UNDP's support, 1 June, https://www.pacific.undp.org/content/pacific/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2020/local-covid-19-response-projects-in-fiji-and-vanuatu-to-benefit-from-undp-support.html, accessed 31 October 2020

UNTFSSE 2017, Social and solidarity economy as a means to implement the SDGs: Partnerships to bridge the financing gap, https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/ UN-Inter-Agency-Task-Force-on-Social-and-Solidarity-Economy-submission_May2017.pdf, accessed 31 October 2020

Williams, L 2020, Facebook barter page grows cash-free trade in Fiji and beyond, 2 May, https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/415644/facebook-barter-page-grows-cash-free-trade-in-fiji-and-beyond, accessed 31 October 2020

World Bank 2020a, World Bank Commits to Papua New Guinea's Fight Against COVID-19, 14 April, https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/04/14/world-bank-commits-to-papua-new-guineas-fight-against-covid-19, accessed 31 October 2020

World Bank 2020b, COVID-19: World Bank Boost for Fiji's Health Sector, 25 June, https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/06/25/covid-19-coronavirus-world-bank-boost-for-fijis-health-sector, accessed 31 October 2020

World Health Organization (WHO) 2020a, COVID-19 Pacific Islands Situation Report, https://www.who.int/ westernpacific/ emergencies/covid-19/situation-reports and at: https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiMTQwZmJmZjctMjkwMC00MThkLWI5NDgtNmQ3OGUwNDc4ZWE3IiwidCI6IjBmOWUzNWRiLTU0NGYtNGY2MC1iZGNjLTVlYTQxNmU2ZGM3MCIsImMiOjh9, accessed 31 October 2020

WHO 2020b, COVID-19 Joint Incident Management Team Health Sector Preparedness & Response, https://www.who.int/docs/ default-source/wpro---documents/dps/outbreaks-and-emergencies/covid-19/covid-19-external-situation-report-30.pdf, accessed 19 February 2020.