

The Scream No One Heard: Gender Equality, Relocation, and Environmental Decision-Making in Fiji

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Abstract

This case study is based on the government-sponsored relocation of Vunidogoloa Village in Vanua Levu, Fiji, a coastal community that shifted a mile inland as a response to shoreline erosion and coastal flooding. The overall goal of this case is to introduce students to the intersection of gender and climate change concerns. The themes represented here address issues associated with climate change adaptation, women's rights, and inclusive environmental decision-making processes. We place gender at the center of this analysis to illustrate the substantial role gender played in the decision to relocate Vunidogoloa Village. In this case study, students will utilize discussion and problem solving skills through three modules that compare the goals and demands of stakeholders, engage with policy reports and data analysis to inform stakeholder roleplay, and analyze the nuance of inclusive environmental decision-making models.

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Authors Note:

We are interested in tracking how this case is being used, especially across disciplines. We welcome any comments on the use of this case, suggestions to improve it, and basic information about how it was used (e.g. course title, course level, and class majors). Please contact Natalie Blanton natalie.blanton@soc.utah.edu. Thank you in advance.

Teachers Notes:

Education level: Undergraduate- introductory level, Undergraduate- upper level

Topical areas: Gender, Relocation, Sociology, Environmental Decision-Making, Climate Change Policy, Climate Change Adaptation.

Concepts students should be familiar with: Climate Change in Fiji, Environmental Justice, Women's Rights, Climate Change Adaptation, Sex, Gender

Case Type/Method: Discussion and problem solving

Lesson Length: 1-2 hours allotted for each module. There are 3 modules total.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this case, students should be able to:

1. Describe how environmental risks impact women and men differently depending on how social relations shape rights and responsibilities in production and decision-making
2. Compare and contrast perspectives of diverse stakeholders according to
3. Illustrate how global, national, and local views of gender equality differ or compare
4. Describe how climate change exposes existing gender inequalities
5. Develop an action plan solutions-based approach to equitable (in regards to gender) climate change adaptation
6. Describe the complexities associated with equitable climate change adaptation projects

Modules

- 1. Stakeholder Analysis - Expert Groups**
- 2. Jigsaw Clusters**
- 3. Make a Plan/Reflection**

Key Message

This case study is based on the government-sponsored relocation of Vunidogoloa Village in Vanua Levu, Fiji, a coastal community that shifted their village a mile inland as a response to shoreline erosion and coastal flooding. The overall goal of this case is to introduce students to the gender considerations regarding community-based relocation efforts in Fiji. The themes represented here address issues associated with gender equality, gender and climate change adaptation, and the importance of women's representation in environmental decision-making processes. We place gender at the center of this analysis to illustrate the substantial role gender has played in the relocation of the Vunidogoloa Village, including how cultural expectations associated with gender shaped the way in which women participated in the decision to relocate to Vunidogoloa.

Pre-Class Homework / Assigned Readings

Assign as pre-class homework for the whole class, as well as stakeholder readings (see stakeholder notes below for additional details; copies of each stakeholder reading is available in the Student Handouts PDF):

Case Study Examination

- Piggott-McKellar, Annah, Karen McNamara, and Patrick Nunn. 2019. “Climate Change Forced These Fijian Communities to Move – and with 80 More at Risk, Here’s What They Learned.” *The Conversation* (<https://theconversation.com/climate-change-forced-these-fijian-communities-to-move-and-with-80-more-at-risk-heres-what-they-learned-116178>)
- McLeod, Elizabeth et al. 2018. “Raising the Voices of Pacific Island Women to Inform Climate Adaptation Policies.” *Marine Policy* 93:178-185
- Ministry of Economy, Republic of Fiji. 2018. *Planned Relocation Guidelines: A Framework to Undertake Climate Change Related Relocation*. (<https://cop23.com.fj/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/CC-PRG-BOOKLET-22-1.pdf>)

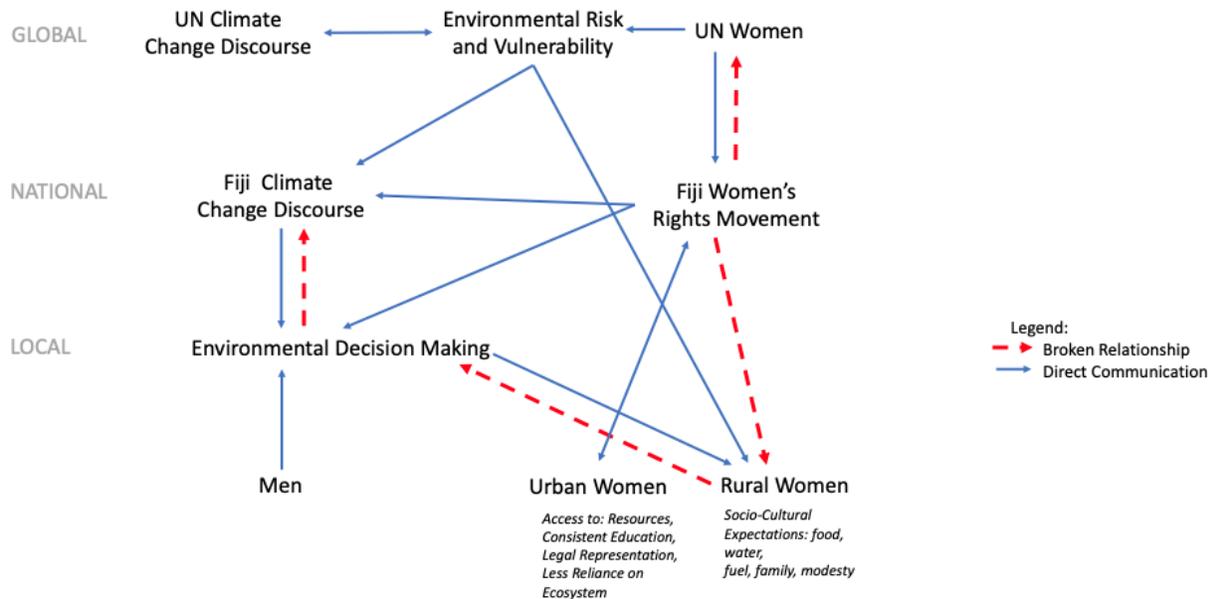
Stakeholder readings:

- In the class period before you teach this model, we suggest you assign students evenly to different stakeholder groups creating a signup sheet, or assigning students’ numbers that correspond to stakeholder group (see Student Handouts PDF).
- If there are large groups, there will be multiple students per stakeholder group. In other words, two students for a stakeholder group.

Lesson Plan

Work through the powerpoint presentation, “Fiji Case Study Presentation,” which can be found in the supplementary materials file Utilize notes and captions if slides are unclear. As you go through the presentation, watch the media clips, make sure students can identify Fiji on a map, familiarize students with the how climate change effects Fiji, and introduce students to the importance of gender equality considerations in climate change adaptation strategies. Introduce students to the “Concept Map” on slide 30. Pay special attention to the direction of the arrows and connections denoting which ones are “broken relationships” or areas of poor communication.

Concept Map:



Module 1: Intro and Stakeholders Analysis/Experts Discussion

Timeframe: If students have been given the materials before class to explore for their specific role this activity should only take 30 minutes. If they need time to read their stakeholder role's information, this will take ~50 minutes.

Introduce students to the Case Study, familiarize them with the key concepts indicated in the case study, then explore and show media from supplemental materials to better paint the picture of climate change, risks, and adaptation in a Fijian context. Explain that this is Module 1 of a 3 part, real time, climate change adaptation solution-seeking activity.

Once the scene has been set, count students off by 5's in order to ensure unique collaboration. Group the 1's together, 2's, 3's 4's, 5s. and distribute them throughout the classroom or workspace. They will remain sequestered with these groups for the remainder of the Module.

Ask the students: "What are Stakeholders?"

Assign each focus group their stakeholder role, asking them to familiarize themselves with their goals and position. Have at least 1 group for each stakeholder role. For larger classes, it is normal to have multiple people represent a stakeholder group.

Each group represents one of the 5 identified stakeholders—taking on their perspective, students will outline the questions provided for the stakeholder group and design a decision-making process for how relocation should take place that aligns with the respective mission of each group.

Stakeholder Groups:

1. UN Women (International Level Discourse)
2. Fiji Women's Rights Movement (National Level)
3. Fijian National Government (National level, but aligns with the international level through the UN Climate Change)
4. Village Women (Local)
5. Village Leadership (Men) (Local)

Once students are settled into their stakeholder group, disperse the supplemental materials (see Supplementary Materials PDF). Allow them time to read through and assume the role of the stakeholder before they start discussing the following questions (*Note: this could also be assigned before class so that students come prepared with their stakeholder group identified and studied).

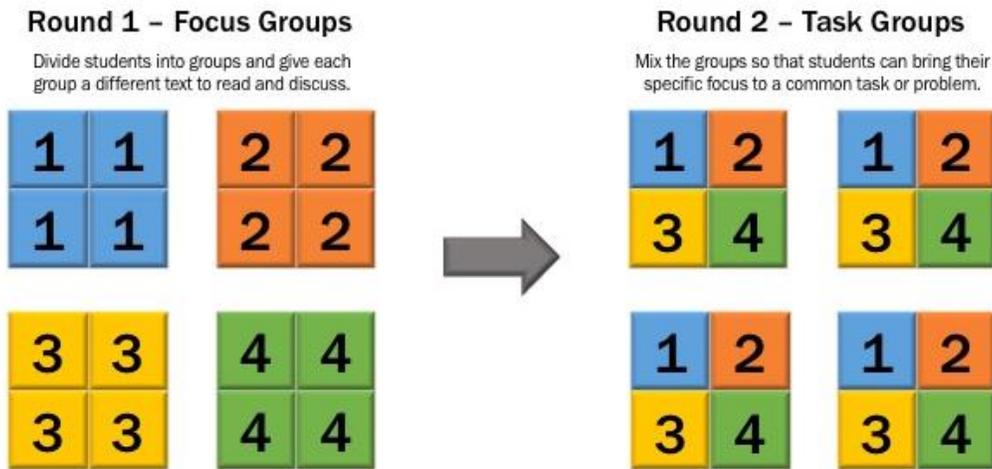
As a stakeholder group, students will discuss the questions provided in the assignment, record their answers, and thought processes, **individually**, as you will be split apart as a group in the next Module.

Note: Instructors can gather these answers from students at the conclusion of Module 1 to record participation/assess understanding and engagement. Though, they may want to be re-distributed back to students for help with the following Module(s).

Questions for Stakeholders:

1. What is the mission of your stakeholding group?
2. What does equality look like for your group?
3. Who holds you accountable?
4. How do you implement your mission?
5. What is your ideal relocation plan? Why? How?
6. Based on the concept map, how does your stakeholding group mend those broken feedback loop relationships?

In order to better explain our “Expert” (Focus Groups - Round 1 aligns with Module 1) and “Jigsaw” efforts (Task Groups, Round 2 = Module 2), see diagram below or visit [this site](#).



Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching

Jigsaw developed by Aronson (1978)

Module 2: Jigsaw Clusters

Timeline: This discussion should take ~30 minutes, another 15 minutes for a write-up period is optional.

Recalibrate stakeholder groups so that each jigsaw cluster has at least 1 member of each stakeholder group (see diagram above). Each individual stakeholder presents their expertise and plan for relocation to the other representatives. After each stakeholder has presented their position and plan, dialogue about plans to address relocation needs. Ensure each stakeholder position is represented.

Questions to consider:

1. How do you ensure that each stakeholder's goals are being met?
2. What would a holistic approach to adaptation look like?
3. How do you come to a consensus and enforce relocation successfully?
4. What does success mean in this case?
5. Where is accountability coming from?
6. Do other stakeholders need to be involved to enforce accountability?

As a diverse group of stakeholders, devise a relocation plan together. Be sure each of those questions to consider are included in your comprehensive plan. Write up a document to be submitted for your participation points/assignment for Module 2.

As a group, write a one-page overview of your Climate Change Relocation strategy ensuring that each stakeholders' demands are being met, and calling for more information where it is needed.

Module 3: Make a Plan/Reflection

*This module is **optional**, and depends on the Instructor's goals for the Case Study -- if there is time to come back together as a class and process the previous modules, this can be done*

verbally/as a class discussion. If there is time for a full 3rd module (~30 minutes), this is how student participation will be gauged and assessed.

Based on information gleaned from jigsaw clusters dialogues, students will create their own climate change adaptation recommendations. Alternatively, this can be utilized as homework for the students to complete individually.

Homework: Reflection Essay / Assessment Assignment
(see *Post-Class Assignment in Supplementary Materials PDF*)

Students write a one-page write-up outlining the development of their decision-making model. In their write up they should address the following questions:

1. How did you develop your decision-making model in your stakeholder group? What were the areas of agreement and contention? How did you resolve areas of contention?
2. Did your stakeholder group interpretation of an inclusive decision-making model shift when you broke up into your jigsaw group? If so, how? What were the areas of agreement and contention? How did you resolve areas of contention?
3. What information do you wish you had access to prior to breaking up in the jigsaw group? How would have access to this information shifted your approach to inclusivity?
4. What are the benefits of inclusion?