

PRIF Newsletter - May 2026

Greetings from the PRIF Coordination Office! This is our monthly platform for sharing PRIF knowledge products, updates on activities and events across the Pacific region, and insights into the impactful work of our partners in the infrastructure sector. We aim to enhance awareness of PRIF initiatives and highlight essential tools, resources, and insights to support Pacific infrastructure practitioners, PIC member countries, and partners in their efforts to strengthen infrastructure development.

PRIF CO hopes the information is useful to your work and we welcome any comments and questions you may have to enquiries@theprif.org. If you are not on our distribution, please subscribe to enquiries@theprif.org.

To access previous newsletters, please click on [here](#).

Pacific Island Business Opportunities Seminar

PRIF team leans into Pacific Infrastructure Business Opportunities Seminar (PIBOS) 2026

The PRIF team was in force at the recent PIBOS in Nadi, leading sessions, participating on panels, facilitating panels, providing an information booth on PRIF's activities and products, all while the Pacific Infrastructure Pipeline (the Pipeline) was used as the backbone of several sessions.

This was the fourth PIBOS and the second time the event was held in Nadi. There was notable enthusiasm for holding the event in the region, resulting in the largest attendance to date, with over 500 participants attending across the three-day seminar. Sessions on the Pacific Quality Infrastructure Principles, country and sectoral market place, industry capacity building and professionalization were all well-attended, with PRIF team members being at the forefront of delivery of these sessions. Reflecting a clear need of the private sector articulated at the previous PIBOS in Nadi, the Pipeline developed by PRIF in conjunction with our partners under the Pacific Infrastructure Governance Committee was very well-received. This formed the backbone of the country and sectoral market sessions, and was used by many participants throughout the PIBOS. The country and sectoral sessions were of significant value to private sector participants as this provided an opportunity to directly engage with the owners of projects that will be coming to market in the short term.

The PIBOS also provided an invaluable opportunity for international and Pacific-based domestic firms to meet, create working relationships, all with the view to potentially work together on projects in the future. This is vital to lift the capacity of domestic firms to deliver a greater share of local content going forward. The PRIF team also took the opportunity to spend time with PIC Government officials, PRIF partners and the private sector participants to gain informal insight into how PRIF can continue to enhance our activities. This included a strong desire to ensure the continuation of the Pipeline, including enhancements to the scope of projects included and the depth of information contained. Initiatives to enhance local content opportunities and capacity (including through professional associations) were also common themes of discussion.



Photo: Participants attending Day 1 of the Pacific Infrastructure Business Opportunities Seminar, Nadi



Photo: PRIF Coordination Office team

Pacific Quality Infrastructure Principles: Consultation Workshop and panel discussions

Titi Tutuvanu-Schwalger, the Pacific Quality Infrastructure Principles (PQIP) Adviser, in collaboration with the Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility (PRIF) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), facilitated a workshop for government representatives attending the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Pacific Infrastructure Business Opportunities Seminar (PIBOS). The workshop focused on assessing how well national infrastructure plans align with the seven PQIPs. Participants also began developing indicators to track and measure local content participation in infrastructure projects, supporting stronger economic inclusion and benefits for Pacific communities. Representatives from DFAT and NZTE attended as observers.

Titi also participated in the PIBOS opening plenary panel, "Quality Infrastructure Delivery – Where Are We Now?" sharing insights on regional progress and ongoing challenges in the region. On the final day, Titi moderated a panel "PQIP in Action" which highlighted real-world applications of the PQIPs through the experiences of Pacific women leaders from the private sector, regional organisations, and government. The discussion showcased practical approaches, key lessons, and the growing impact of quality infrastructure in driving sustainable and inclusive development across the Pacific.



Photo: Titi Tutuvanu, Pacific Quality Infrastructure Advisor leading the PQIP country session.

Industry Capacity Building and Professionalization in Pacific

Robert Guild, PRIF Team Leader, convened this session to promote and consult on a forthcoming TA intended to support capacity development efforts in the region. Pacific island countries anticipate a pipeline of infrastructure projects from 2025-2030 estimated at over USD 10 billion. If implemented in full, this amount implies a dramatic need for increased professional services and skilled technicians. However, feedback from the construction industry indicates critical skills shortages in these areas in all countries, causing them to import from outside the region, while participation of women and younger people in the professions and skilled trades within the region is lagging. Professional associations and accreditation councils play key roles in ensuring professionals and technicians are accredited, standards within the industry are upheld, and professionals and technicians are provided with opportunity for continuing education and recognition for furthering their knowledge as technology and the world around them changes. Participants in the session provided feedback that their top priorities were (i) active participation in accreditation, access to technical resources, (ii) advocacy with governments, and (iii) continuing professional education. The feedback will be incorporated into the final design of PRIF's technical assistance to support the development and upgrading of professional and skilled technician associations.



Photo: Oscar Olsson, Pacific Engineers Collective presenting at the session on Industry Capacity Building and Professionalization in the Pacific

Transport Roundtable Session

The moderated by Rajesh Rohatgi, Senior Transport Specialist from World Bank, Jane Romero (PRIF CO) set the scene providing an overview of transport sector trends and issues in the region. Transport sector accounts for almost one-third of infrastructure investment in the region and both short- and long-term opportunities can be accessed on the recently launched Pacific Infrastructure website which also has a contractor database to facilitate partnerships between international and local contractors. Rika Idoi shared the ADB funded ongoing and pipeline projects in various Pacific Island countries while Tiumalu Malcom Esera. Land Transport Authority, focused on the Cross Island Road project in Samoa. Dominic Kaumu (PNG Aviation) shared upcoming opportunities in developing the Port Moresby domestic and international airports. The discussion was enriched by Ofa Halatanu (McConnell Dowell) who shared people-centered success factors in delivering projects in Tonga that are applicable also in other PICs.

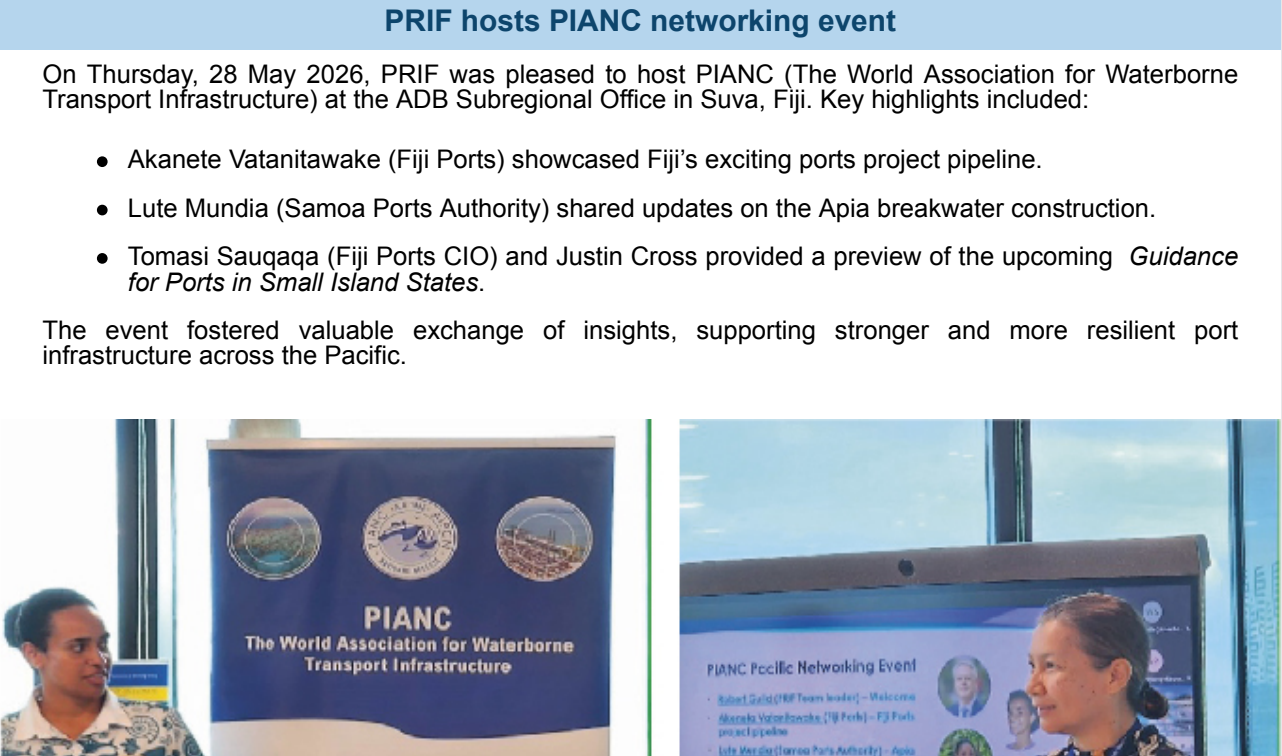


Photo: Pacific Infrastructure Business Opportunities Seminar, panelists of the transport roundtable

Samoa Codes of Environmental and Social Practice

PRIF attended the stakeholder consultation for Samoa's updated Codes of Environmental and Social Practice (COESP), developed jointly by the World Bank and the Government of Samoa through the Ministry of Works, Transport, and Infrastructure (MWTI). The updated codes more closely align Samoa's development standards with those of its development partners and provide clearer guidance on legislative requirements, ensuring that proposed developments follow good industry practices for environmental and social risk management.

The consultation was held on 27 May at the MWTI conference room, with participation from government and private sector practitioners. Discussions reflected broad support for the COESP, while also highlighting key challenges, including the cost of implementation and the need for capacity-building support across both government and the private sector.

In 2024, PRIF supported MWTI—working with its Planning and Urban Management Agency—to develop a capacity development plan aimed at strengthening Samoa's environmental and social management systems. This plan will play an important role in coordinating efforts to address capacity gaps in implementing the COESP. Ultimately, the COESP aims to ensure high-quality infrastructure outcomes that benefit both people and the environment.



Photo: Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure workshop participants, Apia, Samoa

Driving Infrastructure Coordination

Urban Development working group

The PRIF Urban Development Working Group (UDWG) meeting was held virtually on 3 May and chaired by Aimee Hampel Milagrosa (ADB), with participation from ADB, the World Bank, and MFAT. The meeting began with welcome remarks and introductions, followed by a presentation of key findings from the March 2026 member survey.

The survey confirmed strong support for a structured and practical engagement format, with a preference for quarterly 60-minute meetings. Partners expressed interest in practitioner-led knowledge sharing across all stages of the project cycle, including opportunities for co-financing and collaboration. There was also strong demand for applied, country-focused discussions on priority areas such as urban service delivery, infrastructure resilience, housing, and the linkages between urban and economic growth.

At the meeting, ADB presented on the Pacific Urban Planners' Network, highlighting its role in strengthening regional capacity, facilitating peer learning, and promoting more consistent urban planning practices across Pacific countries. The presentation generated constructive discussion on how the network could complement the work of the UDWG, including opportunities to engage more directly with government planners and practitioners.

In discussing next steps, participants supported aligning future UDWG sessions with the survey findings, including inviting partners to present ongoing initiatives and exploring the inclusion of country representatives in selected discussions. The group also agreed to develop a forward pipeline of presentations to sustain engagement and deepen collaboration across the urban development portfolio.

6th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers' Meeting, Moresb, PNG

The 6th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers' Meeting (PRETMM6) held on 4-8 May 2026 in Port Moresby concluded with the Manubada Call to Action to translate policy commitments to scaled implementation to address the region's high reliance on imported fossil fuels and urgent maritime connectivity needs.

Ministers adopted the Pacific One-Maritime Framework (POMF) 2026–2050 to secure sustainable shipping, the Regional Strategy for Pacific Women in Maritime 2026–2031, and FESRIP 2.0 (Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in the Pacific) to accelerate renewable energy delivery. PRIF provided support in the development of POMF and FESRIP.

PRIF participated in the "Partners Dialogue with Ministers" regular, structured information-sharing and coordination amongst partners to avoid duplication, encourage co-financing and better sequence investments in support of agreed regional frameworks. PRIF will continue to work with the Pacific Community (SPC), which was tasked to map partner initiatives and funding flows to eliminate duplication and improve accountability.

PRIF hosts PIANC networking event

On Thursday, 28 May 2026, PRIF was pleased to host PIANC (The World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure) at the ADB Subregional Office in Suva, Fiji. Key highlights included:

- Akanete Vatanitawake (Fiji Ports) showcased Fiji's exciting ports project pipeline.
- Lute Mundia (Samoa Ports Authority) shared updates on the Apia breakwater construction.
- Lute Sauqqa (Fiji Ports CIO) and Justin Cross provided of the upcoming *Guidance for Ports in Small Island States*.

The event fostered valuable exchange of insights, supporting stronger and more resilient port infrastructure across the Pacific.

Photo: PIANC members attending the PIANC networking event hosted by ADB SPSO office

Knowledge Products and Outreach

Nature-Based Placemaking for Healing in Pacific Island Communities Post-disaster

The recently published *Nature in Cities: Nurturing Cities* highlights the importance of nature as fundamental infrastructure for sustainable urban living—rather than an aesthetic afterthought often overlooked in post-disaster rebuilding. Drawing on the case of Ohonua, 'Eua, Tonga—an island devastated by the 2022 volcanic eruption-induced tsunami—the book illustrates how nature can play a central role in recovery (Mabon, 2019). When given a voice in planning processes, natural systems can support long-term place resilience and enhance ecosystem services in post-disaster contexts.

Building insights from the Placemaking Sandbox travelling studio led by students from the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne, and supported by local students, the initiative brought together the 'Ohonua community to reimagine a healthier, happier way of living. The process explored how nature-based approaches can strengthen resilience, support local ecologies, and reduce community vulnerability in 'Eua. Community members shared ideas and perspectives on fostering a stronger sense of belonging as a pathway to reducing vulnerability. Overall, the exercise highlights valuable insights into the role of nature-driven placemaking in "building back better" in small island contexts.

Download the chapter [here](#).

Photo: Ohonua community and students from the University of Melbourne in 'Ohonua conducting placemaking visits.

Tonga receives National Awards for Planning Excellence from the Planning Institute of Australia

On Wednesday, 20 May, the Planning Institute of Australia announced the winners of the 2026 National Awards for Planning Excellence—one of its flagship events. More than 400 planners, community leaders, and industry representatives gathered in Canberra to celebrate the value of good planning and recognize the projects and people shaping the future of Australian communities. The awards highlight outstanding ideas, leadership, and partnerships, showcasing the positive impact that quality planning can have on everyday lives.

While the event is Australia-based, the 'Eua placemaking project—submitted by the University of Melbourne through the Victorian State Awards—has gained significant recognition. In 2025, the 'Ohonua, 'Eua project received a Planning Excellence Award at the state level. Building on this success, the 'Ohonua Resilience Project was also honored at the 2026 National Awards for Planning Excellence. This national recognition reflects the strong partnership between the University of Melbourne and the 'Ohonua community in 'Eua, Tonga, following the devastating impacts of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption and subsequent tsunami, which severely affected the coastal settlement. The project is a powerful example of how participatory design approaches can shape nature-centred public spaces and support communities to build forward better.

Importantly, it demonstrates how nature-based placemaking can contribute to community healing and resilience, while also highlighting the economic, social, and cultural benefits of working with nature. The community has since built on these learnings and is beginning to apply placemaking principles in practice.

The PRIF Coordination Office was pleased to facilitate dialogue between the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning and Pacific partners to identify a Pacific Island country collaborator and help shape nature-centred community engagement.

Photo: Ohonua community and the University of Melbourne students' discussion on nature-based placemaking.

Launch of the National Building Code guidance note series

At the recent PRIF Community of Practice webinar on Pacific National Building Code (NBC) Technical Guidance Notes and the Vanuatu NBC, discussions focused on how PRIF is supporting the strengthening of NBCs across the region—from development through to implementation and enforcement. The event also marked the launch of the NBC guidance note series, outlined below.

You can watch the NBC webinar [here](#).

- [On-Site Waste Management Systems and Rainwater Harvesting Systems](#)
- [Strategies for Promoting Building Code Awareness and Compliance](#)
- [Building Acts, Regulations and Standards](#)
- [Fire Safety Components of Building Codes](#)
- [Electrical Standards in the Pacific](#)

How to apply building code provisions and standards for water, sanitation, and hygiene for households

