

Pacific Governors' Statement IDA19 Replenishment

The Pacific is a region full of diversity, from cultures to population sizes, distance, and economic outlook. Yet one factor we all share is our increasing vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. In the last two years alone, volcanic eruptions in Vanuatu required the evacuation of thousands of people; a 7.5 magnitude earthquake—and its aftershocks—killed 200 people in Papua New Guinea; and Tropical Cyclone Gita affected an estimated 80 percent of Tonga's population, causing damages equal to 38 percent of its Gross Domestic Product. To manage these risks, we are investing significantly in mitigation and resilience activities, for which the support of donors through IDA18 has been crucial.

The IDA18 scale-up for the Pacific has been far-reaching. It has allowed Pacific Island countries to strengthen the resilience of our infrastructure and public services, as well as key sectors such as agriculture and the blue economy, on which so many of our citizens rely. The strength of our macro-economic resilience is also vital for us to respond to, and recover from, natural disasters. IDA18 has been pivotal for many countries in responding to natural disasters, particularly through IDA's Crisis Response Window and through new and innovative tools such as Cat-DDOs, which have been utilized by Samoa and will soon be approved for Vanuatu and Tuvalu. In the Pacific, we share a strong sense of regionalism, and access to the IDA Regional Window has opened up new avenues for economies of scale and regional integration, with significantly improved aviation and ICT infrastructure. We have also demonstrated that we have the capacity to absorb IDA18 resources efficiently and effectively.

As we look ahead, a financially strong IDA19 is more important than ever. As a region, we have made great strides, but there is still enormous progress to be made. Addressing climate and other drivers of fragility will continue to be key. We also recognize the importance of human capital and remain committed to further investments in the health, education, and skills of our citizens. We are committed to accelerating progress towards the 2030 Development Agenda, and IDA is critical to help our countries achieve this. We have set a strong foundation for IDA19. We are optimistic for the future and committed to working with the World Bank Group to improve the lives of our people.

We appreciate that the IDA19 financing and policy package builds on IDA18's support to Small States, which include a number of small Pacific islands. Through proposed changes to some IDA windows—particularly the Regional and Crisis Response Windows—the ambitious IDA19 program will enhance support to our efforts to strengthen regional integration initiatives, achieve economies of scale, harmonize policies, strengthen crisis preparedness and resilience, and adapt to the impact of climate change.

A robust IDA19 replenishment is therefore essential. We would like to express our strong support for IDA19's renewed ambition around the special themes of Jobs and Economic Transformation, Gender and Development, Climate Change, Fragility, Conflict and Violence and Governance and Institutions, while seeking opportunities and addressing challenges on debt, disability, human capital, and technology. These special themes and IDA19 goals are well aligned with our priorities.

We urge IDA Donors to at least maintain their contributions flat in real terms in local currency and aim for an additional increase to support the \$82b mid-high scenario, which received a lot of Partner support at the Addis Ababa meeting in June 2019.