



# Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Federated States of Micronesia Country Plan Summary

## Background

Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) was announced by the Australian Government at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' meeting in August 2012. It commits up to \$320 million over 10 years in 14 Pacific Islands Forum member countries. The program aims to improve opportunities for the political, economic and social advancement of Pacific women. *Pacific Women* will support countries to meet the commitments they made in the 2012 Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration. The outcomes sought by *Pacific Women* are:

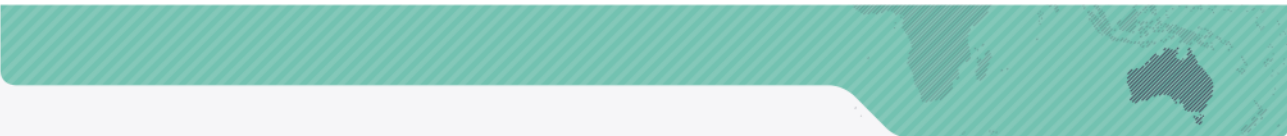
- Women, and women's interests, are increasingly and effectively represented and visible through leadership at all levels of decision making.
- Women have expanded economic opportunities to earn an income and accumulate economic assets.
- Violence against women is reduced and survivors of violence have access to support services and to justice.
- Women in the Pacific will have a stronger sense of their own agency, supported by a changing legal and social environment and through increased access to the services they need.

*Pacific Women* is managed by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and works with a wide range of implementing partners, including the 14 partner governments, multilateral organisations, international and national non-government organisations, civil society organisations and the private sector.

The *Pacific Women* Support Unit provides technical and administrative services to assist in the management of the *Pacific Women* program, including planning, delivery and monitoring of activities, research and communications. The Support Unit is based in Suva, Fiji, with a sub-office in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

## Federated States of Micronesia

The four states of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) span nearly 2,700 km of ocean. FSM has embarked on the process of developing an overarching national policy to move gender equality forward.



Efforts have been made in the past few years to ensure equal access to education and health care services and to improve public infrastructure and government services, with significant impact on the quality of life of women and men in all states. However, challenges remain to ensure women and girls are safe from violence, can fulfil leadership roles and fully access economic opportunities. Progress is being made with the support of vibrant women's organisations across all states.

## **Pacific Women Country Plan**

Through *Pacific Women*, the Australian Government will spend **\$1.4 million over 10 years** (2012–2022) on initiatives supporting women and girl's empowerment in FSM.

Country Plans are the mechanism through which *Pacific Women* outcomes and activities are planned and agreed between DFAT and counterpart governments, following extensive document review and national consultations. They provide detail on what will be funded and how these funding decisions are made. The first *Pacific Women* Country Plan for FSM covers 2015–2019. With a view to complement existing local activities that contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment, the Country Plan provides expanded opportunities for women entrepreneurs and supports work that will improve support services to women who have experienced violence.

In addition to *Pacific Women*, DFAT c to gender equality in FSM through mainstreaming gender outcomes in the aid program, as well as through political, diplomatic and corporate activities.

## **Rationale for activities in the Country Plan**

FSM is in the early stages of introducing a legislative framework for gender equality including developing a draft bill to support temporary special measures for women in parliament. It has a National Strategic Plan on Gender Development and Human Rights in place and a National Gender Policy. The Pohnpei State *Family Protection Act* was passed in November 2017 and Kosrae State *Family Protection Act* was passed in 2014. Chuuk and Yap States have yet to pass family protection legislation.

### **(a) Increasing women's leadership and decision making**

Women have been consistently absent or grossly under-represented at the legislative and executive levels of government. There has never been a woman elected to the FSM National Congress. In the public service, some women have achieved seniority and are able to influence the situation for women. There are no legal barriers to women's representation in government but there are social barriers. A feature of traditional matrilineal societies is for women to have a main role in decision making but for the speaker of the family to be male, usually an uncle or brother.

### **(b) Increasing economic opportunities for women**

Economic activities in FSM consist primarily of subsistence farming and fishing. FSM's economy remains underdeveloped and heavily dependent on the public sector. The labour force participation rate for women in FSM was only 48.4 per cent as of 2010, compared with 66.1 per cent for men.<sup>1</sup> The number of women wage and salary earners is less than half that of men. Not only are women less represented in the paid workforce, they are concentrated at the lower levels of the hierarchy with comparatively lower pay. While there is considerable variation across the states, a 2012 gender stocktake reported that employment levels of men surpassed women in all fields of work.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Division of Statistics, FSM Office of Statistics, *Summary Analysis of Key Indicators from the FSM 2010 Census of Population and Housing*. [http://prism.spc.int/images/census\\_reports/FSM\\_2010\\_Census\\_Indicators\\_Final.pdf](http://prism.spc.int/images/census_reports/FSM_2010_Census_Indicators_Final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Secretariat of the Pacific Community, *Stocktake of the Gender Mainstreaming Capacity of Pacific Islands Governments – Federated States of Micronesia* (2012).



### **(c) Reducing violence against women and expanding support services**

The FSM Family Health and Safety Study found that one in three ever-partnered women in FSM has experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner at least once in their lifetime.<sup>3</sup> One quarter of partnered women had experienced violence by a partner in the 12 months preceding the study. This figure was the highest among women aged 15–24 (34.7 per cent). Approximately 14 per cent of all respondents experienced sexual abuse in childhood.

Domestic violence counselling services in FSM are limited but some churches provide counselling to their members and the public. Some churches provide emergency refuge for women and children at risk on a case-by-case basis.

<sup>3</sup> Federated States of Micronesia Department of Health and Social Affairs, *Federated States of Micronesia Family Health and Safety Study* (2014).

**Table 1: Bilateral Activities**

PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET
<b>Outcome: Economic Empowerment</b>		
Pacific Women Growing Business (The Pacific Community)	Enabling women to start and scale up their businesses by providing business skills and development opportunities is the focus of this project. The Pacific Community has partnered with the College of Micronesia to increase the quantity and range of entrepreneurship and business development training available. A Business Development Counsellor is supporting the coordination and mentoring support provided through the project.	\$154,800 (2017–2019)
<b>Outcome: Ending Violence against Women</b>		
Family Protection Adviser (Government of FSM, Department of Health and Social Affairs)	The Family Protection Adviser is based within the Department of Health and Social Affairs and works closely with FSM government and key stakeholders, including statutory agencies, non-government organisations (NGOs), the Pacific Community to support the strengthening of referral pathways and services for victims of violence.	\$468,028.00 (2017–2019)
Eliminating Violence against Women in Pohnpei and Chuuk Federated States of Micronesia (Consultant)	This activity included fieldwork to develop an assessment of ending violence against women services and gaps in services that includes three sections including an FSM national report, Pohnpei State report and Chuuk State report. The reports include an in-depth description of the context and situation of ending violence against women in FSM and a series of recommendations to government, civil society organisations and development partners to action.	\$88,044 (2017–2018)
<b>Outcome: Enhancing Agency</b>		
Supporting CEDAW shadow reporting (FSM non-government organisations)	Funding was provided to present their shadow report to the 66th session of the CEDAW Convention in February 2017.	\$3,677.00 (2017)

**Table 2: Regional Programs with Activities in FSM**

PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET <sup>4</sup>
<b>Outcome: Economic Empowerment</b>		
Building prosperity for women producers, processors and women owned businesses through organic value chains (Pacific Community POETCom)	Identifying and supporting organic value chains that benefit women as producers, suppliers, processors and entrepreneurs, while also enhancing their capacity for inter-regional organic trade within the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and Kiribati.	\$3,884,100 (2018–2022)
<b>Outcome: Leadership and Decision Making</b>		
Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships Project (Australian International and Community Relations Office, Department of the House of Representatives)	Supported building the capacity of Pacific women parliamentarians and their staff to ensure gender equality issues are better addressed in parliament.	\$2,850,037 (2013–2018)
<b>Outcome: Ending Violence against Women</b>		
Support to the Pacific Community Regional Rights Resource Team (Pacific Community)	Focusing on supporting work on ending violence against women, human rights and good governance, RRRT works with Pacific island governments and civil society organisations by providing technical assistance, training and advocating for women and girls to have increased access to justice for domestic violence and to promote and protect human rights commitments.	\$5,750,000 (2015–2020)
UNICEF Pacific Child Protection Program (UNICEF)	Supporting governments in 14 Pacific Island countries to strengthen the protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation.	\$7,000,000.00 (2014–2018)
<b>Outcome: Enhancing Agency</b>		
Gender Adviser for the North Pacific (Pacific Community)	The Adviser supports the work of SPC's Gender, Culture and Youth Programme, and through DFAT's Post in Pohnpei, supports the implementation and monitoring of <i>Pacific Women</i> activities in the North Pacific.	\$391,740.00 (2015–2018)
Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (Pacific Community)	Conduct stocktakes and support for the strengthening of government capacity to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into policies, legislation and programs and improve the collection and analysis of data to better track outcomes.	\$3,941,712 (2013–2018)

<sup>4</sup> This allocation is not for FSM alone but for all multiple countries under *Pacific Women*.