



**Australian Government**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**



# **GENDER EQUALITY PLAN FOR SOLOMON ISLANDS 2020–2022**

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# CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1. BACKGROUND	7
1.1. Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development	7
1.2. Australia's support to gender equality in the Pacific region following <i>Pacific Women</i>	8
1.3. <i>Pacific Women</i> Country Plans in Solomon Islands	8
2. CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS	12
2.1. Women's experiences in Solomon Islands	12
2.2. Root causes of gender inequality in Solomon Islands	14
2.3. Legal and policy framework for gender equality	16
2.5. Solomon Islands women and COVID-19	18
2.5. Supporting positive change toward gender equality in Solomon Islands	20
3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES	22
3.1. Objectives for this Gender Equality Plan	22
3.2. Contribution to the outcomes sought by <i>Pacific Women</i>	22
3.2. Principles of this Gender Equality Plan	25
4. PROGRAM RATIONALE	26
4.1. Rationale for activities under this Gender Equality Plan	26
4.3. Activities under this Gender Equality Plan	30
4.3. Allocation of funding under this Gender Equality Plan	31
4.4. Assumptions	32
4.4. Options considered	33

5.	IMPLEMENTATION	33
5.1.	Partnerships	33
5.2.	Management and governance arrangements	35
6.	MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING	35
7.	SUSTAINABILITY	36
8.	RISK MANAGEMENT	37
9.	CONCLUDING REMARKS	42
ANNEX 1: DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES TO BE SUPPORTED UNDER THIS GENDER EQUALITY PLAN FOR SOLOMON ISLANDS		43
ANNEX 2: ACTIVITIES UNDER THE FIRST AND SECOND <i>PACIFIC WOMEN</i> SOLOMON ISLANDS COUNTRY PLANS		47
ANNEX 3: REGIONAL <i>PACIFIC WOMEN</i> PROJECTS WITH ACTIVITIES IN SOLOMON ISLANDS		51
ANNEX 4: <i>PACIFIC WOMEN</i> PROGRAM LOGIC		56

## ACRONYMS

AUD	Australian Dollars
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
FY	Financial Year
IWDA	International Women's Development Agency
MWYCFA	Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs
NGO	Non-government organisation
<i>Pacific Women</i>	Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development
PWDSI	People with Disabilities Solomon Islands
SIWIBA	Solomon Islands Women in Business Association
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USD	United States Dollars
WRAM	Women's Rights Action Movement
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Overview

The Gender Equality Plan for Solomon Islands (Gender Equality Plan) outlines the approach and investments of the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands' Gender Equality Program for the period 2020–2022. It has been developed in close consultation with the Solomon Islands Government and partners. The Gender Equality Plan bridges the final period of Australia's Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) program and the transition to Australia's next phase of support for gender equality programming in the Pacific region.


Through a 10-year commitment announced in 2012, *Pacific Women* connects more than 170 gender equality initiatives supported by Australia and implemented by over 160 partners across 14 Pacific Island countries, including Solomon Islands. It works toward four outcomes: Women's Leadership and Decision Making; Ending Violence against Women; Economic Empowerment and Enhancing Agency. With *Pacific Women's* timeframe drawing a close at the end of 2021, Australia is looking at how to strengthen its gender equality support and respond quickly and flexibly to the emerging needs of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At a regional level, a design is underway for a new regional program. It is expected to commence in mid-2021, with a six-month transition from *Pacific Women*. Building on the strong foundations and relationships of *Pacific Women*, the new program will target support for women's health (including women's reproductive rights and growth of women's sport); women's economic security and leadership; and women's safety. Bilaterally, the Gender Equality Plan outlines Australia's gender equality program in Solomon Islands until December 2022.

The Gender Equality Plan takes into account the Australian Government's development response to the COVID-19 pandemic outlined in the Partnerships for Recovery document.<sup>1</sup> The Partnerships for Recovery strategy focuses on three core action areas, which reflect shared interests with partner governments: health security; stability; and economic recovery, underpinned by a strong emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable, especially women and girls. Women's leadership and participation is a cross-cutting theme in the Partnerships for Recovery document.

The activities supported by the Gender Equality Plan relate to specific, earmarked bilateral funding for gender equality. In addition, there are projects funded through Australia's regional gender equality budget that undertake activities in Solomon Islands; gender initiatives implemented through Australia's sector aid programs; and political, diplomatic and corporate activities undertaken by the Australian High Commission in

<sup>1</sup> Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2020). *Partnerships for Recovery; Australia's COVID-19 Development Approach*, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. [Available on the DFAT website](#).



Solomon Islands. The Australian High Commission will produce a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy which will outline its approach to gender equality and social inclusion across all activities and programs.

## Program Rationale

**Funding for successful projects implemented under *Pacific Women* will be extended.** Funding for the Family Support Centre and the Christian Care Centre – the country’s key crisis service providers – will continue, with organisational support from International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA). Supporting activities to prevent violence against women and girls and improve service provision responds to the Office of Development Effectiveness’ finding that long-term support to partners that provide holistic care for women and girls affected by violence is a key strength of Australia’s approach to ending violence against women in the region and must be continued.<sup>2</sup>

Funding will continue for World Vision’s work with faith and other community leaders and churches; and Oxfam’s work through a community-based approach. These initiatives seek to change behaviours and attitudes toward violence against women.

Funding will continue to directly support the Ministry of Women, Youth Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA), with some shift of focus to providing more technical support to the MWYCFA to realise its role to lead on gender policy and implementation across the Solomon Islands Government. This is a key recommendation from the 2016 scoping study on leadership.<sup>3</sup> Funding will also support the MWYCFA (via UN Women’s Pacific Partnership) to roll out SAFENET and the Domestic Violence Counselling Guidelines and counselling register in all provinces. These activities continue Australian investment in areas where Australia has strong relationships, partnerships and expertise and align to the priorities of the Solomon Islands Government.

An investment in the second phase of UN Women’s Market’s for Change program is planned (subject to the design for Australia’s future regional investment). The first phase of Markets for Change made markets in Honiara, Auki and Gizo safer and more inclusive, improved governance practices and increased the capacity of women vendors to earn and control income. A second phase will continue and expand this work and respond to the impact of COVID-19 on market vendors’ livelihoods.

**A new, proven leadership activity will be funded, to ensure support is being provided strategically across all *Pacific Women* outcomes and the Partnerships for Recovery strategy.** IWDA and Women’s Rights Action Movement (WRAM) have been working together in Solomon Islands to influence change in women’s voice and leadership. The partnership was instrumental in lobbying provincial governments to introduce special temporary measures, which is likely to pass into national law in the next year. Their Women’s Voice and Leadership project will amplify women’s voices in decision making forums, including responding to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>2</sup> Office of Development Effectiveness (2019). *Ending violence against women and girls: Evaluating a decade of Australia’s development assistance*. Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, p 3 and recommendation 3 on p 4. [Available on the DFAT website.](#)

<sup>3</sup> Tavola, H., Billy A., and Kama, J. (2016). *Advancing Australia’s work on leadership and decision-making “The Next Level” scoping study on women in leadership*, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, p 28.

**Activities will bolster the voice of women in decision making forums and in Australia's aid programming.** This support is designed to enable the women's movement to address more deeply the underlying contextual drivers and factors necessary to advance gender equality. In Pacific Island countries, women's organisations and movements have led the action to end violence against women and girls. For 30 years, they have largely been responsible for getting the issue onto the public agenda. The Office of Development Effectiveness asserts the need for Australian support for NGOs to continue so that they can drive change in decision making forums.<sup>4</sup>

Projects funded under the Gender Equality Plan support women's groups that are recognised change makers: Family Support Centre; Christian Care Centre; National Council of Women and Provincial Councils of Women; market vendor associations; and WRAM. Targeted core and operational funding will support two additional groups that enable and empower women's voices in public discourses: Solomon Islands Women in Business Association and People with Disabilities Solomon Islands.

In addition, a panel of Solomon Islands women will be recruited who will be available to work with all of Australia's sector aid programs in Solomon Islands, including for key design and monitoring activities, such as annual Aid Quality Checks. This will be a formal mechanism for Solomon Islands women to engage with Australia on policy issues, provide feedback on programming and identify priorities and actions for support. It is an innovative approach with the potential for the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands to be a leader in including women's voice across aid programming.

**Funding will support coordination of all of Australia's gender equality investments in Solomon Islands, through annual reflection activities and improved monitoring, evaluation and learning systems.** These monitoring, evaluation and learning activities will foster cooperative monitoring, evaluation and reflection to build a collective evidence base to build momentum for change.

**The outcomes sought by the Gender Equality Plan are taken directly from *Pacific Women's* program-level long-term outcomes.** This reflects the timing of the Gender Equality Plan falling in the final years of *Pacific Women's* 10-year timeframe whilst Australia is developing the framework and transitions to a new era of gender equality programming.



Picture 1 L–R: Pionie Boso of WRAM; Businesswoman Mary Roberts from West Guadalcanal is one of SIWIBA's newest members; Savina Nonegebatu, *Pacific Women* Advisory Board member and disability advocate. Photo credits: Tara Chetty and Shazia Usman / *Pacific Women* Support Unit; DFAT / Australian High Commission Solomon Islands; Sian Rolls / *Pacific Women* Support Unit.

<sup>4</sup> Office of Development Effectiveness (2019), see note 65 (above), p 2.

# 1. BACKGROUND

## 1.1. PACIFIC WOMEN SHAPING PACIFIC DEVELOPMENT

Through a 10-year commitment, Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) connects more than 170 gender equality initiatives supported by Australia and implemented by over 160 partners across 14 Pacific Island countries, including Solomon Islands.

*Pacific Women* is one of the largest global commitments to gender equality. It partners with governments, local and international non-government organisations (NGOs), private sector, disabled people's organisations, coalitions and others to improve the political, economic and social opportunities of Pacific women and to end violence against women and girls. Its emphasis is on partnerships and locally-driven development.

The *Pacific Women's* Support Unit provides technical, knowledge-sharing and convening support to the portfolio of partners who implement the program. It has offices in Suva, Fiji, and Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

*Pacific Women* was announced at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' meeting in August 2012. It commits up to \$320 million<sup>5</sup> over 10 years in 14 Pacific Islands Forum member countries.

*Pacific Women* advances the commitments in the 2012 Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration<sup>6</sup> and supports Australia's Pacific Step Up<sup>7</sup> and its *Partnerships for Recovery*<sup>8</sup> by working with Pacific partners to address COVID-19 impacts on women, girls and their communities.

The outcomes sought through *Pacific Women* are:

- **Ending Violence against Women:** Violence against women is reduced and survivors of violence have access to support services and to justice.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Women have expanded economic opportunities to earn an income and accumulate economic assets.
- **Leadership and Decision Making:** Women, and women's interests, are increasingly and effectively represented and visible through leadership at all levels of decision making.
- **Enhancing Agency:** 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.

Since 2012, an estimated 1.22 million Pacific Island women, men and children have been able to access services and information across 14 partner countries through initiatives supported by *Pacific Women*.

<sup>5</sup> Currency references are to Australian dollars unless otherwise stated.

<sup>6</sup> Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (2012). *Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration*. [Available on the Forum Secretariat website](#).

<sup>7</sup> For more information on the Australian Government's Pacific Step Up, see the [DFAT website](#).

<sup>8</sup> Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2020). *Partnerships for Recovery; Australia's COVID-19 Development Approach*, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. [Available on the DFAT website](#).



## 1.2. AUSTRALIA'S SUPPORT TO GENDER EQUALITY IN THE PACIFIC REGION FOLLOWING *PACIFIC WOMEN*

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the context for achieving gender equality in the Pacific region. Australia's new development policy, *Partnerships for Recovery*, recognises this and includes a strong focus on considering women and girls in Australia's response to the pandemic.

With *Pacific Women's* timeframe drawing a close at the end of 2021, Australia is looking at how to strengthen its gender equality support and respond quickly and flexibly to the emerging needs of the pandemic.

At a regional level, Australia is commencing a design process for a new program to follow on from *Pacific Women*. Building on the strong foundations and relationships of *Pacific Women*, the new program will target support for women's health (including women's reproductive rights and growth of women's sport); women's economic security and leadership; and women's safety.

Bilaterally, this Gender Equality Plan for Solomon Islands (Gender Equality Plan) outlines Australia's gender equality program in Solomon Islands until 2022. This Gender Equality Plan has been developed in close consultation with the Solomon Islands Government and partners.

## 1.3. *PACIFIC WOMEN* COUNTRY PLANS IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

Through *Pacific Women*, Australia has committed \$34.8 million over 10 years (until December 2021) to advance gender equality and support women's empowerment in Solomon Islands.

Country Plans embody the agreed bilateral investments of *Pacific Women* in each country where the program operates. They are the mechanism through which *Pacific Women* outcomes and activities are planned and agreed between Pacific Island national governments and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), following consultations.

The first Solomon Islands Gender Equality Country Plan covered the period 2013–2017 and the second Country Plan was designed to cover the period 2017–2021. A list of the activities implemented under the first and second Country Plans is in Annex 2.

This Solomon Islands Gender Equality Plan (this Gender Equality Plan) covers the period 2020–2022 and spans the end of the *Pacific Women* program and the transition to Australia's new investment in gender equality in the Pacific region, including Solomon Islands.

**The first Country Plan 2013–2017** identified a portfolio of activities in the areas of women's economic empowerment and ending violence against women. In addition, it built on Australia's partnership with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) to support institutional strengthening and worked to support the design and monitoring of Australian-funded programs to better respond to the needs of women and girls.

An independent review of the first Country Plan in March 2017 found evidence of achievements in all outcome areas. The review team found that while outcomes were modest, these were appropriate for the stage of the program and changes to the operating and resourcing context.<sup>9</sup> Achievements against objectives included:

- The capacity of the MWYCFA was strengthened.
- Violence was reduced in more than 30 communities, with evidence of positive change in targeted communities attributed to the program, including reductions in the frequency and severity of violence, attitudinal change with less acceptance of violence and more equitable gender relations. Activities to end violence against women were delivered in more than 60 communities.
- Improved gender equality in governance, infrastructure and management were improved in two target marketplaces.
- Achievements were made in gender mainstreaming, demonstrated through specific gender responsive activities across Solomon Islands health, justice, economic diplomacy and political sectors, supported by Australian programs.

**The second Country Plan 2017–2021** incorporated recommendations from the 2017 review. These included:

- Reviewing the geographic spread and urban-rural focus of investments to maximise reach, resource efficiencies and coordination opportunities, particularly at the community level.
- Providing funding and institutional strengthening support to targeted service providers for survivors of violence and reviewing the proportional spend on violence prevention activities.
- Implementing agreed recommendations from the 2016 scoping study on women's leadership and decision making<sup>10</sup> to re-balance the limited support provided to address women's leadership and agency.
- Closely monitoring the relatively new women's economic empowerment initiatives to assess whether activities are achieving intended outcomes and working collaboratively where appropriate.

The second Country Plan was not formally endorsed but it has been used by the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands as the guiding framework for gender equality activities since 2017. Activities under the second Country Plan have been implemented by the Solomon Islands Government, international and local NGOs, the Solomon Islands Resource Facility (SIRF) and other DFAT sectoral aid programs, for example, the Justice Program and the Governance Program.

Activities under the second Country Plan worked toward achieving five outcomes:

1. Women have expanded opportunities to effectively influence and lead in decision making at all levels.
2. Women in the formal and informal sectors have expanded opportunities to increase their earning potential and accumulate economic assets.

<sup>9</sup> Kernot, S., Bent, S. and Billy, A. (2017). *Independent Review of the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Solomon Islands Country Plan 2013–2017 March 2017*, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. [Available on the DFAT website.](#)

<sup>10</sup> Tavola and others (2016), see note 3 (above), p 12.

3. Social norms, attitudes and behaviours that contribute to violence against women have changed.
4. Support services for survivors of violence are strengthened.
5. The capability of MWYCFA to develop policy and deliver core functions related to gender equality and women's development is strengthened.

The spread of small activities under the second Country Plan reflects the absorptive capacity of local partners. The set of funded activities highlights the critical importance of supporting local organisations and local women in their responses to violence, of which there are few and current capacity is limited. It also reflects the fact that Solomon Islands is in an early stage of developing services and systems to respond to violence. Violence against women and children is a constraining factor to development in Solomon Islands, contributing to lack of access to education, employment and productivity, as well as higher health costs.

An evaluation team conducted a Joint Partners Review of the second Country Plan from 30 September–8 October 2019. The review team carried out consultations with 81 stakeholders in Honiara and answered six review questions, informed by a document review, interviews and focus group discussions and produced a draft evaluation report.<sup>11</sup>

The review team found that, overall, the range of investments supported by the second Country Plan were highly relevant to the needs and priorities of Solomon Islander women. Australia has supported the Solomon Islands Government to play a strengthened coordination role and develop and implement key policies that advance gender equality; and the *Pacific Women* investments have, and will continue to be, highly relevant to Solomon Islands policy implementation. They also support Australia's Pacific Step Up<sup>12</sup> and human security and economic development agendas.

The review team noted that successes under the second Country Plan were enabled by a supportive environment for mainstreaming within the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands; committed local organisations; national coordination mechanisms; and champions within civil society and the Solomon Islands Government. Progress had been constrained by a lack of resources within the Solomon Islands Government for policy implementation; limited absorptive capacity of potential partners; lack of capacity and solutions to address key drivers and barriers to gender equality; inability to pair service delivery with prevention interventions; and challenges associated with capturing results and outcomes in order for lessons to feed in to improving practice and scaling up.


The review team made a number of recommendations in its draft evaluation report. Many of these remain relevant; although some have lessened in priority since the review took place, particularly with respect to pivots in aid programming with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Where applicable, this Gender Equality Plan draws on the findings of the review.

This Gender Equality Plan has also been designed to take into account the Australian Government's development response to the COVID-19 pandemic outlined in the *Partnerships for Recovery* document.<sup>13</sup> Australia's response through the Partnerships strategy focuses on three core action areas, which reflect

<sup>11</sup> Nichols, P. and Besley, M. (2019). *Solomon Islands Pacific Women Country Plan Draft Evaluation Report*, unpublished draft.

<sup>12</sup> For more information on the Australian Government's Pacific Step Up, see the [DFAT website](#).

<sup>13</sup> Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2020), see note 1 (above).



shared interests with partner governments: health security, stability and economic recovery, underpinned by a strong emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable, especially women and girls. Women's leadership and participation is a cross-cutting theme in the *Partnerships for Recovery* document.

The *Partnerships for Recovery* document notes that the pandemic will exacerbate the inequalities and hardships faced by already vulnerable groups, particularly women and girls and people with disabilities. Rates of gender-based violence are increasing around the world as restrictions on movement are imposed, economies are closed down and unemployment rises. People with disabilities already face multiple levels of exclusion. They will be particularly vulnerable as health and other social services are disrupted. Women are also more vulnerable to economic insecurity during crises due to an increase in unpaid domestic labour. They often hold less stable jobs, rely on the informal economy for their livelihoods and may not be part of policy-making processes.

Activities funded through this Gender Equality Plan are one way that Australia will respond to the gendered elements of the COVID-19 pandemic in Solomon Islands. Support will also be provided through other relevant aid programs, such as support for sexual and reproductive health and rights activities through the Health Sector Program, support to improve access to justice for women and girls through the justice program and regional programs that support the Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association.

**This Gender Equality Plan** covers the period 2020–2022. It draws on the experiences of implementing the first two Country Plans, the relevant findings from the draft evaluation report of the 2019 Joint Partners Review, Australia's *Partnerships for Recovery* document responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2016 scoping study on women's leadership and decision making and a review of relevant background documentation.

DFAT is designing the next phase of Australia's gender equality programming in the Pacific region to follow *Pacific Women*; and is working toward a new regional program being in place in mid-2021, with six months to fully transition from *Pacific Women* to the new program.

'I think Solomon Islands women are strong women. They're courageous but also are pretty determined in what they do. So, given the opportunity to excel in whatever areas or sectors they are involved in, they will succeed.'

I would like to see women in [the] Pacific, including women with disabilities, live in a gender equitable society where they are free to exercise their rights and are free of discrimination, and are also economically empowered and enjoy life like everybody in this world.'

**Savina Nongebatu, Disability Advocate and *Pacific Women* Advisory Board member**



## 2. CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

### 2.1. WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

#### Human development

Solomon Islands ranks 153 out of 189 countries on the 2019 United Nations Human Development Index.<sup>14</sup> Encouragingly, Solomon Island's Human Development Index value increased 17.2 per cent between 2000–2018. However, this low ranking signifies an environment in which women and men have limited access to resources, experience poor health and education outcomes and face financial hardship. In some parts of the country almost one third of people live below the national poverty line.<sup>15</sup>

#### Health and life expectancy

Life expectancy for Solomon Islanders born in 2018 is 75 years for women and 71 years for men, up from 73 and 70 respectively in 2017. This is well above life expectancies in other countries in the region.<sup>16</sup>

Despite this, Solomon Islands also has one of the highest fertility rates, youngest populations and highest rates of maternal mortality.<sup>17</sup> Maternal mortality, infant and under-five mortality all significantly increased in 2019. There were 22 maternal deaths (due to complications with pregnancy or childbirth) in 2019 compared to 20 in 2018 and 16 in 2017.<sup>18</sup> With good rates of births with a skilled birth attendant (91 per cent), a key contributing factor to maternal deaths is the availability of stock medicines and equipment at health facilities to deal with complicated delivery cases. The average stock availability in health facilities in 2019 was just 24 per cent.<sup>19</sup>

Infant mortality rates are likely under-reported, but the recorded rate in 2019 was 19.4 per 1,000 live births, down from 24 in 2015; and mortality rates for children under five was 24.8 per 1,000 live births in 2019, up from 21.2 in 2015.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>14</sup> United Nations Development Programme (2019), *Human Development Index Ranking 2019*. [Available on the United Nations Development Programme website](#).

<sup>15</sup> National Statistics Office (2015). *Solomon Islands Poverty Profile based on the 2012/13 Household Income and Expenditure Survey*, Solomon Islands Government, p vii.

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Health and Medical Services (2020). *Descriptive Health Core Indicator Report Solomon Islands 2019 (16 July 2020)*, p 8.

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Medical and Health Services (2020), see note 16 (above).

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Health and Medical Services (2020). *Statistical Health Core Indicator Report Solomon Islands 2019*, p 4.

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Medical and Health Services (2020), see note 16 (above), p 2.

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Medical and Health Services (2020), see note 16 (above), p 2.

## Violence against women and girls

Much work has been done over the past decade to respond to the high rates of violence against women in Solomon Islands that were recorded in the 2009 Solomon Islands Family Health and Safety Study, which provided a comprehensive account of women's experience of family violence.<sup>21</sup> The study reported that violence against women was normalised and severe, with more than one-third of women (37 per cent) being sexually abused before the age of 15, most often by a male acquaintance.<sup>22</sup> Approximately two thirds of women aged between 15 and 49 reported having experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner.<sup>23</sup>

Since the Family Health and Safety Study was published, Solomon Islands has passed the *Family Protection Act 2014*, services for survivors have expanded and improved in quality (including in the provinces) and a range of prevention programs are working to change attitudes of individuals, families and communities about violence against women.

## Employment

Men outnumber women in participation in the formal labour force (80.3 percent and 62.4 per cent respectively) and women in Solomon Islands earn almost half that of men (USD1,569 versus USD2,467 respectively).<sup>24</sup> Whilst fewer women spent time on paid work than men, those who did averaged more daily hours of paid work than men.<sup>25</sup> Solomon Islands ranks 125 out of 152 countries in the World Bank's 2020 Women, Business and the Law Report.<sup>26</sup> This places Solomon Islands in the lowest performing quarter of economies for equality of opportunity and participation in the formal economy. It is the lowest ranking of all measured Pacific Island countries.

## Leadership and decision making

While there have been recent improvements, such as the appointment of the first female Chief Magistrate in 2017 and the appointment of the first female Solomon Islander judge in the High Court in 2019, women continue to be largely absent from state institutions. Since Solomon Islands gained independence in 1978, only six women have been elected into the National Parliament. Pointing to recent positive change, four of these are sitting in the current Parliament (eight per cent of seats).<sup>27</sup> Women have had slightly more success at local government level – five out of 39 Provincial Assembly members are women (12.8 per cent of seats),

<sup>21</sup> Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2009). *Solomon Islands Family Health and Safety Study*. [Available on the Pacific Community website](#).

<sup>22</sup> Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2009), see note 21 (above), p 87.

<sup>23</sup> Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2009), see note 21 (above), p 3.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Development Programme (2019), see note 14 (above).

<sup>25</sup> International Women's Development Agency (2020). *Gender Insights in the Solomon Islands: Findings from a two province study using the Individual Deprivation Measure, Snapshot Report June 2020*. [Available on the Individual Deprivation Measure website](#).

<sup>26</sup> World Bank (2020). *Women, Business and the Law 2020*, World Bank. [Available on the World Bank website](#).

<sup>27</sup> Pacific Women in Politics ([accessed on the Pacific Women in Politics website](#), 3 December 2020).

although there are currently no women on the 19-seat Honiara City Council.<sup>28</sup> There are also few women in senior positions in Government.<sup>29</sup>

Despite these low numbers, there is significant apparent or rhetorical support for more women in politics, from both women and men. In a 2019 study by Women's Rights Action Movement (WRAM) and International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) on perceptions of women as political leaders, 88 per cent of survey respondents believed there should be more women in the provincial assembly and the national parliament. However, this support for greater women's representation has not yet translated into practical support at the polls; only one in five respondents had ever voted for a woman candidate.<sup>30</sup> This data could suggest that some respondents know it is no longer acceptable to say in a poll that you would not vote for a woman (but this has not yet changed their voting behaviour), or it may also be a factor of external pressure placed on voters to vote for male candidates at election time, or a consequence of the small number of women running for elected positions.

## 2.2. ROOT CAUSES OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

The World Bank has identified three primary constraints to women's employment: gender differences in time use (primarily resulting from differences in care responsibilities), gender differences in access to productive inputs (particularly land and credit), and gender differences stemming from market and institutional failures.<sup>31</sup> Specifically in Solomon Islands, the Asian Development Bank has assessed that women are constrained by: domestic responsibilities; poor numeracy and literacy skills; discrimination in the workplace; health; geographic isolation; lack of access to government business services and information; lack of decision-making power; and limited access to financial services.<sup>32</sup>

Solomon Islands is a patriarchal society and gender inequality means that women are affected more by adversities than men. This is evident in all aspects of life. Women are more than twice as likely as men to have no schooling. In rural areas, only 14 per cent of women have functional literacy, compared with 21 per cent of men.<sup>33</sup> For women, access to services is further hindered by heavy workloads at home, limited funds and social norms that place varying degrees of restrictions on women's movements outside the community.

The patriarchal nature of Solomon Islands culture is supported by social norms and customary values that establish a hierarchy in which women often play a subservient role. Entrenched male dominance of state, faith-based and traditional institutions results in a situation where men often make decisions on behalf of

<sup>28</sup> Pacific Women in Politics ([accessed on the Pacific Women in Politics website](#), 3 December 2020).

<sup>29</sup> Solomon Islands Government (2013). *Solomon Islands CEDAW Combined Initial, Second and Third Periodic Report 2012*, p 42. [Available on the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs website](#).

<sup>30</sup> Batalibasi, C., Bero, L., Boso, P., Kingmele, A., Maetala, R., Makini, D., Wickham, F., Baker, K., Mulder, S. and Walker, G (2019). *Public Perceptions of Women as Political Leaders: Views of Women's Leadership and Temporary Special Measures in Solomon Islands*. Women's Rights Action Movement and International Women's Development Agency. [Available on the International Women's Development Agency website](#).

<sup>31</sup> World Bank, *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development*, World Bank, p 198. [Available on the World Bank website](#).

<sup>32</sup> Asian Development Bank (2015). *Solomon Islands Country Gender Assessment*, Asian Development Bank, p xv. [Available on the Asian Development Bank website](#), p 48.

<sup>33</sup> Asian Development Bank (2015), note 32 (above).

women.<sup>34</sup> Even in matrilineal parts of Solomon Islands where women hold the rights to land, women can be excluded from decisions regarding land and resource management.<sup>35</sup> Women therefore have limited agency and constrained opportunities to change the power dynamics.

Churches are a central part of social and family life in Solomon Islands, with 98.5 per cent of Solomon Islanders identifying as Christian.<sup>36</sup> Each of the five major denominations (Anglican Church of Melanesia, Catholic Church, United Church, South Seas Evangelical Church and Seventh Day Adventist Church) have strong networks of women's groups. In some cases, women have increased their influence in church structures. For example, the United Church and the Christian Fellowship Church have quotas for women in decision-making positions in the church hierarchy (30 per cent and 50 per cent respectively).<sup>37</sup> However attempts by the Mother's Union (the largest church women's group, attached to the Anglican Church of Melanesia) to increase the number of women in decision-making positions are being met with resistance, particularly regarding high-ranking positions.<sup>38</sup>

Whilst church doctrine can more generally prevent increased participation by women,<sup>39</sup> some churches are taking steps to actively incorporate gender equality in church teachings. An example is the appointment of an ordained woman minister as a lecturer at the United Church in Solomon Island's Theological School to teach gender equality theology.<sup>40</sup>

At the community level, some taboos about the place of women in society have faded and women are participating in traditionally male domains such as leadership and industry. For instance, taboos about the menstrual cycle are now much less prevalent. However, by-laws developed by chiefs and community leaders may perpetuate and reinforce negative gender roles (for example, community by-laws might place restrictions on women's clothing).<sup>41</sup> Such reinforcement of negative gender roles is arguably unconstitutional<sup>42</sup> and, perhaps more importantly, it represents a form of control over women that places unrealistic and inappropriate expectations on their behaviour. Ultimately this can be harmful – male perpetrators of violence reported that one of the biggest triggers for their behaviour is women 'not living up to' gendered norms.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (2017). Country Plan for Solomon Islands 2017–2021, unpublished, p 5.

<sup>35</sup> Tavola and others (2016), see note 10 (above), p 12.

<sup>36</sup> Solomon Islands National Statistical Office (undated). *Population and Housing Census National Report*, Solomon Islands Government, p 81. [Available on the Solomon Islands Bureau of Statistics website.](#)

<sup>37</sup> Tavola and others (2016), see note 10 (above), p 11.

<sup>38</sup> Tavola and others (2016), see note 10 (above), p 11; Kernot and others, see note 9 (above), p 5.

<sup>39</sup> Tavola and others (2016), see note 10 (above), p 11.

<sup>40</sup> Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (2019). *Annual Progress Report 2017–2018*, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, p 33. [Available on the Pacific Women website.](#)

<sup>41</sup> Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (2017), see note 34 (above), p 5.

<sup>42</sup> Chapter 2 of the Solomon Islands Constitution recognises fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual regardless of race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, including detailed provisions relating to protection from discrimination in Section 15.

<sup>43</sup> Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2009), see note 21 (above), p 11.



## 2.3. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The Solomon Islands Government has demonstrated a commitment to promoting equality for women and men through legal frameworks and initiatives at the national and international levels.

- Solomon Islands ratified the **Convention on the Elimination of all forms Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** and its optional protocol in 2002.
- Solomon Islands agreed to the **Millennium Development Goals** and, in 2015, reiterated its commitment to global aspirations by endorsing the **Sustainable Development Goals**, which establish goals and indicators pertaining to gender equality.
- Solomon Islands endorsed the **Beijing Platform for Action** and the **Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality** (2018–2030) and the **Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration** in 2012. While these agreements are not legally binding, they serve to formalise commitments, establishing a contract between states and their citizens.

Through the MWYCFA, the Solomon Islands Government has developed national policies to meet its international commitments:<sup>44</sup>

- **The National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy 2016–2020.**
- **The National Policy to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls 2016–2020.**
- **A National Strategy for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls (2016–2020).**

In addition, the Solomon Islands Government launched its **Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2017–2020** in May 2017. It was the first such national action plan in the Pacific region.

These policies are underpinned by the Ministry of Development, Planning and Aid Coordination's **National Development Strategy 2016–2035**. Some sectors have developed their own gender equality plans and strategies, such as the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force's Gender Equality Strategy, the Justice Sector Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy and work undertaken by the Ministry of Public Service to develop a gender equality and social inclusion policy for the public service.

In 2017, a consortium of women's NGOs led by WRAM prepared a follow-up report on progress toward implementing the recommendations made by the CEDAW Committee when Solomon Islands presented its combined initial, second and third periodic report in 2014. The NGOs assessed that:

'The Solomon Islands Government has progressed in terms of legislative and policy reform; however, there is a need for continued efforts to ensure access to and equal participation by women in plans and programmes for legislative and institutional change. Solomon Islands will benefit from continued efforts to ensure that

<sup>44</sup> These Solomon Islands government policies are available for download on the [Ministry for Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs website](#) and the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade website](#).

the human rights and gender approach is entrenched in services to protect women from discrimination based on sex and gender, and information dissemination.<sup>45</sup>

The NGOs' point about the need to continue with information dissemination is an important one. At most formal meetings and consultations, participation of women is low. Information is therefore more often available to men, who may not share this information outside their circles, especially with women.

The Solomon Islands Constitution provides guarantees of equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex. However, it also safeguards customary law and traditional decision making. This can create legal contradictions and barriers to achieving gender equality.

The *Family Protection Act 2014* commenced in 2016. It provides new and significant mechanisms to protect women and girls who experience domestic violence. The Act criminalises domestic violence and introduces protection measures through police safety notices and court-issued protection orders.

A 2019 study commissioned by the Solomon Islands Government with support from the Australian aid program interviewed 10 per cent of women who had used family protection services since the Act commenced.<sup>46</sup> Whilst it documents many challenges women face in accessing services, it also includes important, positive findings on women's feelings of safety. The study found that when women did receive protection through police safety notices, they reported seeing a change in the behaviour of the violent person or being safely separated from that person.<sup>47</sup>

A review of the first three years of implementation of the Act is currently underway, with a report and recommendations expected at the end of 2020.

Customary marriage is recognised by law and the legal age of marriage for both girls and boys under the *Islander Marriage Act* is 15 years with parental consent (18 years without parental consent). These legal frameworks can perpetuate harmful traditional practices, including marriage of very young girls and allowing some people to use bride price as an excuse to perpetuate violence against women. In Solomon Islands, 21 per cent of girls are married before their eighteenth birthday and six per cent, illegally, before the age of 15.<sup>48</sup> The *Islanders Divorce Act* contains fault-based divorce provisions. These can economically disadvantage women who lack control in family decision making. Fault-based divorce often requires public disclosure of abuse or adultery and makes women vulnerable to shame and stigma, undermining their ability to leave a marriage.

Employment legislation provides little coverage for women working in the private and informal sectors. There is no sexual harassment legislation, with the exception of general orders in the revised *Public Service Act* and a draft sexual harassment policy that covers the public service. Whilst there are no constitutional provisions for special measures to redress gender inequality, the *Political Parties Integrity Act 2014* stipulates

<sup>45</sup> Women's Rights Action Movement and others (2017). *2017 Follow up Report to CEDAW A response to Solomon Island's progress in addressing the four (4) recommendations from the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*. [Available on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights website](#).

<sup>46</sup> Ride, A. and Soaki, P. (2019). *Women's Experiences of Family Violence Services in Solomon Islands*. Australian Aid/Solomon Islands Government.

<sup>47</sup> Ride and Soaki (2019), see note 46 (above), p 31.

<sup>48</sup> These statistics show the percentage of women 20–24 years old who were first married or in union before they were 18 and 15 years old respectively: see Anderson, K., Barnes, R., Raoof, A. and Hamilton, C. (2017). *Situation Analysis of Children in the Pacific*, UNICEF. [Available on the UNICEF website](#).

that 10 per cent of the total number of candidates fielded by each party must be women. The Act also provides for grants to parties when a woman candidate from that party is elected.

Two of nine provincial governments endorsed the introduction of temporary special measures in 2019. These provincial governments have petitioned national parliament to include a temporary special measures clause in the *Provincial Government Act 1997*. In 2020, three additional provincial government assemblies endorsed temporary special measures, auguring well for the National Parliament to enshrine temporary special measures at the local level in law. This momentum for the introduction of temporary special measures have been driven by the MWYCFA in partnership with WRAM and UN Women.

The Justice Sector Gender Equality Strategy is due to be submitted to Cabinet soon. It includes a priority objective of ‘ensuring equality within our laws,’ directed at removing discriminatory provisions in existing laws and ensuring that the development of new laws takes account gender impacts. This could present entry points for women’s groups for dialogue with relevant justice and policy officials on the issues outlined above.

## 2.5. SOLOMON ISLANDS WOMEN AND COVID-19



Picture 2 Family Support Centre COVID-19 communications materials

Solomon Islands remained COVID-free until early October 2020 and as at 18 November 2020 has only 16 confirmed cases and no community transmission.<sup>49</sup> Nonetheless, the pandemic has had significant impact on life in Solomon Islands. Reflecting a broader pattern during crises, the pandemic has exacerbated existing gender inequalities. Women and girls have faced even higher rates of violence, sexual abuse and control from their husbands, partners and families. Women have been expected to undertake even more unpaid domestic work, have been less able to access essential health services and have felt the economic effects of the pandemic more severely.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> ABC news live blog (16 August 2020). *Which countries have zero cases of coronavirus and is it because they aimed for elimination?* [Available on the Australian Broadcasting Commission website.](#)

<sup>50</sup> Pacific Women Support Unit (2020). *Thematic Brief | Gender and COVID-19 in the Pacific: Emerging gendered impacts and recommendations for response.* [Available on the Pacific Women website.](#)

Following the World Health Organisation's declaration that COVID-19 was a pandemic in March 2020, the Central Bank of Solomon Islands downgraded its 2020 growth outlook to minus five per cent. In his foreword to the 2019 Central Bank's Annual Report, the Governor of the Bank described the outlook for the domestic economy as 'bleak'.<sup>51</sup>

A rapid appraisal conducted by WorldFish from 25 April–28 May 2020 showed that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused restrictions on people's movement, gatherings, education and business activities. There has also been an influx of people moving out of the capital Honiara to the provinces.<sup>52</sup> Rural villages have reported reduced cash flow and food shortages. Food trade is affected by the lack of cash in circulation, leading to reduced marketing of foods and a rise in bartering of fish for other foods. There is also growing strain on food systems, experienced differently by women and men.<sup>53</sup> The initial experiences of the State of Emergency and lockdowns presented operational challenges for domestic violence service providers and demonstrated constraints to the provision of protection measures in a lockdown context for people experiencing sexual and gender-based violence.

Even with low, controlled numbers of COVID-19 cases, gender gaps in literacy and access to information and information technology affect equitable access to public health information for women and girls. Women are also disproportionately experiencing deprivations in basic sanitation and have additional sanitation and hygiene requirements during menstruation and in relation to caring for small children. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, women will be further distanced from decision-making processes by measures that centralise decision making during and after the State of Emergency, unless specific steps are taken to hear from diverse women and support informed, inclusive provincial and national responses.<sup>54</sup>

At the virtual meeting of Pacific Women Leaders on 4 June 2020, co-convenors then Samoan Deputy Prime Minister Fiame Naomi Mata'afa and Australian Foreign Minister and Minister for Women Marise Payne, focused on finding ways to work collaboratively in developing responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Former Deputy Prime Minister Mata'afa said, 'We should find ways which not only build resilience in our communities and help to continue economic growth but do so in a manner which also enhances the well-being of women and girls.' Foreign Minister Payne noted, 'Pacific women leading the region's response is vital to ensuring women and girls interests are at the forefront of government and community responses.'<sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Central Bank of Solomon Islands (2020). *2019 Annual Report*, p 1.

<sup>52</sup> Since the rapid assessment was completed in May 2020, there has been movement back and forth from provinces. Many people who had relocated to the provinces, returned to Honiara; but then went again to the provinces when Solomon Islands recorded its first cases of COVID-19.

<sup>53</sup> Eriksson, H., Ride, A., Boso, D., Sukulu, M., Batalofo, M., Siota, F. and Gomese, C. (2020). *Changes and adaptations in village food systems in Solomon Islands: A rapid appraisal during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic*. WorldFish, p 1.

<sup>54</sup> International Women's Development Agency (2020), see note 25 (above), pp 90–92.

<sup>55</sup> Joint Statement by the co-convenors of a meeting of Pacific Women Leaders, Australian Foreign Minister and Minister for Women Marise Payne, and Samoan Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Natural Resources and the Environment Fiame Naomi Mata'afa (2020). [Available on the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website](#).



## 2.5. SUPPORTING POSITIVE CHANGE TOWARD GENDER EQUALITY IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

Partnering with the Solomon Islands Government and NGOs, activities implemented by Australia through *Pacific Women* under the first two Country Plans have been highly relevant to the needs and priorities of Solomon Islander women.<sup>56</sup>

Australia is one of the donors working to improve gender equality in Solomon Islands. However, it is one of the few donors supporting prevention and responses activities to end violence against women – and through *Pacific Women* has been effective in strengthening coordinated service delivery for women experiencing family and sexual violence, including efforts at the provincial level.<sup>57</sup>

It is important to identify where Australia's gender equality program investments can have the most impact by understanding what other work is being supported by a range of actors to advance women's empowerment. Australia has established a clear place in funding and advocating for prevention of violence against women and girls; and funding services for survivors of family and sexual violence. This is an area in which the program should continue to provide significant levels of support.<sup>58</sup>

Even in this context, room exists for Australia's gender equality program to build up its work to support women's leadership and decision making, economic empowerment and agency, which will in turn magnify the impact of the program's work to end violence against women.<sup>59</sup> *Pacific Women's* design recognises the interconnected nature of women's disempowerment in the Pacific, noting concurrent change across the program's four outcomes is required to support Pacific Island countries to implement the 2012 Pacific Leader's Gender Equality Declaration.

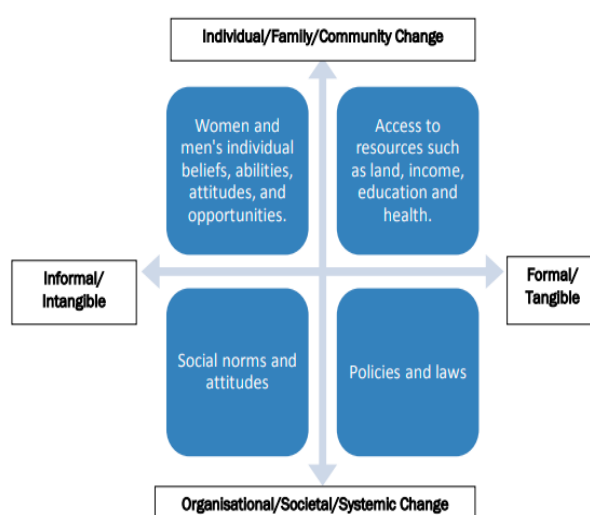


Figure 1 What needs to change (after Rao and Keller)

<sup>56</sup> Nichols and Besley (2019), see note 11 (above), p 3.

<sup>57</sup> Nichols and Besley (2019), see note 11 (above), p 23.

<sup>58</sup> Nichols and Besley (2019), see note 11 (above), p 18.

<sup>59</sup> Nichols and Besley (2019), see note 11 (above), p 23.

In addition, the Rao and Kelleher change matrix (shown in Figure 1 and adopted in the Pacific Women program design)<sup>60</sup> suggests that to be effective, action needs to be taken across the four dimensions of individual / systemic – informal / formal institutions.

The portfolio of activities under the second Country Plan operated largely in the individual and formal realm, ensuring that women and girls have greater access to and control over resources. Some work focused on beliefs, attitudes and values; and less on laws, policies and resource allocation. Only incidental attention was given to changing the underlying cultural norms and practices that determine gender inequality.<sup>61</sup>

There is an opportunity under this Gender Equality Plan to further amplify women's voices and expand work that seeks to change beliefs, attitudes and values; laws, policies and resource allocation; and underlying cultural norms and practices that determine gender inequality. This holistic approach can work to stimulate the contextual drivers and factors necessary to advance gender equality.<sup>62</sup>

The recommendations of the 2017 *Pacific Women Roadmap* reinforce findings from a range of reviews that call for a multi-pronged approach to gender equality programming.<sup>63</sup> Interventions bring about change by developing the skills and agency of individuals, contributing to institutional reform and challenging social norms. They need to work across government, private sector, faith-based organisations, customary institutions and civil society.

A range of regional projects funded by Australia contribute to change in Solomon Islands. Regionally funded *Pacific Women* projects that have operated in Solomon Islands since the beginning of the program are listed in Annex 3.

Further, initiatives supported through the gender equality program are only one aspect of the work undertaken by the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands to progress gender equality. Australia mainstreams gender equality across its aid program, including through the law and justice, police, health and education, rural development, infrastructure, economic growth and governance programs. If readers do not see an expected gender equality activity in this Gender Equality Plan, it may be because funding for that activity is provided through one of Australia's sector programs. These programs have dedicated gender equality components and are mutually reinforcing with the objectives under this Gender Equality Plan. In addition, the Australian High Commission contributes to gender equality outcomes through political, diplomatic and corporate activities.

In developing this Gender Equality Plan, consideration has been given to all these various ways in which Australia advances gender equality in Solomon Islands to identify the most appropriate use of Australia's bilateral gender equality program funding between 2020–2022.

<sup>60</sup> Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2014). *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Design Document*, p 104. [Available on the Pacific Women website.](#)

<sup>61</sup> Nichols and Besley (2019), see note 11 (above), p 22.

<sup>62</sup> Nichols and Besley (2019), see note 11 (above), pp 22–23.

<sup>63</sup> Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (2017). *Pacific Women Roadmap*, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. [Available on the Pacific Women website.](#)

### 3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

#### 3.1. OBJECTIVES FOR THIS GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

Through the activities of this Solomon Islands Gender Equality Plan 2020–2022, the Australian Government seeks to:

- **Collaborate** with Solomon Islands government and civil society partners to progress work that will contribute to *Pacific Women's* outcomes of Ending Violence against Women, Leadership and Decision Making, Economic Empowerment and Enhancing Agency.
- **Consolidate** Australia's investment in gender equality by funding targeted activities that build on successful initiatives to date.
- **Coordinate** gender efforts across Australia's aid program in Solomon Islands by encouraging regular reflection, learning and sharing.
- **Consult** on an ongoing basis with Solomon Islands women on Australian Government aid policy and programming.
- **Contribute** to the Solomon Islands COVID-19 Development Response Plan and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls in Solomon Islands.
- **Convert** and transition from the *Pacific Women* program to Australia's new investment in gender equality in the Pacific region.

#### 3.2. CONTRIBUTION TO THE OUTCOMES SOUGHT BY *PACIFIC WOMEN*

Figure 2 shows the long-term outcomes sought by *Pacific Women* in Years 8–10 of the program's lifespan. Annex 4 contains the *Pacific Women* program logic, which shows details of the short-term, intermediate-term and long-term outcomes of *Pacific Women*.

Because this Gender Equality Plan falls in the final years of *Pacific Women's* 10-year timeframe, the outcomes sought by this Gender Equality Plan are taken directly from *Pacific Women's* program-level long-term outcomes.<sup>64</sup>

Activities under this Gender Equality Plan work toward achieving long-term outcomes under all four of *Pacific Women's* outcomes, as outlined below, while Australia develops the framework and transitions to a new era of gender equality programming.

<sup>64</sup> Note that the new design for Australia's investment in gender equality in the Pacific is underway with the new regional program expected to commence mid-2021, with a six-month transition from *Pacific Women*.

YEARS 8 - 10 Long Term Outcomes
<p>Community, local and national decision making reflects the needs and interests of women and girls</p> <p>Women elected to local and national level governments have the skills to fulfil their roles</p> <p>Women hold senior positions in the public and private sector and have the skills to fulfil their roles</p> <p>Community and public and private sector attitudes and perceptions support women and girls' inclusion in leadership and decision making processes</p>
<p>Family and community members share the burden of work to enable women's participation in economic activities</p> <p>Women have increased decision making in relation to their income and assets</p> <p>More women are employed in the public and private sectors and are running small businesses</p> <p>National policies and regulations for safe working conditions for women are operating effectively</p>
<p>Family and community tolerance for violence against women is reduced</p> <p>Legislative reforms that protect women and children's human rights are operating effectively and duty bearers are upholding their responsibilities</p> <p>Contextually relevant prevention services are more widely available across the region and women and children are reporting violence when it occurs and accessing services</p>
<p>Public and private institutions are upholding the rights of women and girls</p> <p>Collective action (at the community, local and national level) has resulted in social and legislative change in relation to gender equality</p> <p>Women and girls are utilising their strengthened agency for positive change in gender equality</p>

Figure 2 Pacific Women long-term outcomes





## Ending Violence against Women

- Supporting World Vision's faith-based approach and Oxfam's community-based approach to prevent violence against women contributes to reducing family and community tolerance for violence against women.
- Providing core funding and operational support to the Christian Care Centre and the Family Support Centre and advocating for a permanent building for the Family Support Centre makes contextually relevant prevention services more widely available.
- Funding the roll out of SAFENET and counselling guidelines across the provinces through UN Women's Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women creates more ways for women and children to report violence and access services; and empowers duty bearers to uphold their responsibilities.

## Economic Empowerment

- Contributing to the work of UN Women's Markets for Change project increases women's decision making in relation to their income and assets and promotes safe working conditions for women in markets.
- Supporting women's economic empowerment during the COVID-19 pandemic allows women to have increased decision making in relation to their income and assets to reduce inequalities that can be exacerbated during a time of crisis.
- Providing core funding and operational support enables the Solomon Islands Women in Business Association to continue to influence national policies and regulations; and provide training, mentoring and business resources to women running small businesses.

## Leadership and Decision Making

- Supporting WRAM's Women's Voice and Leadership program creates opportunities for women to participate in community, local and national decision making so that decisions reflect the needs and interests of women and girls; and gives elected women the skills they need to fulfil their roles.

## Enhancing Agency

- Funding the MWYCFA to lead gender mainstreaming and policy implementation across government and drive other initiatives holds public institutions accountable for upholding the rights of women and girls.
- Providing core and operational funding for women's groups that are working to enable and empower women's voices in public discourse (including young women and women with disabilities) supports collective action to lead to social and legislative change in relation to gender equality.

- Establishing a panel of Solomon Island women to provide input and feedback on DFAT sector programs in Solomon Islands guides public and private institutions to uphold the rights of women and girls.

## 3.2. PRINCIPLES OF THIS GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

Australia continues to engage on gender equality issues in Solomon Islands on the principles established under the second Country Plan:

- **Respect for local partners and the local context**, taking into account the diverse nature of Solomon Islands and the value of supporting the Solomon Islands Government, provincial governments and NGOs.
- **Inclusivity**, recognising women's rights and seeking to reach marginalised women and girls and those in remote locations.
- **Building on and strengthening existing programs, networks and organisations wherever possible**, using a strengths-based approach to empower beneficiaries and support ownership and sustainability.
- **A long-term view of investing in women**, adopting the approach that locally appropriate strategies, delivery mechanisms and partnerships can create lasting change.
- **Leveraging *Pacific Women's* convening power to develop regional partnerships and maximise coordination, collaboration and sharing of lessons**, between governments, civil society, private sector, research institutes, donors and multi-lateral institutions.
- **A 'do no harm' approach**, ensuring that investments and activities are informed by a comprehensive understanding of context and the potential risks for women and girls.
- **Recognition of the inter-relationship of women's economic empowerment, ending violence against women and women's leadership and decision making**, seeking to maximise synergies.
- **Support for innovation and learning**, through trialing of new approaches and partnerships, and through attention to monitoring, evaluation and sharing of lessons.
- **A focus on those areas where Australia is well-positioned to make a positive contribution to gender equality in Solomon Islands, seeking to maximise efficiency and effectiveness through appropriate delivery mechanisms and programming options.**

## 4. PROGRAM RATIONALE

### 4.1. RATIONALE FOR ACTIVITIES UNDER THIS GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

**Program rationale 1: Funding for successful projects under the first and second Country Plans will be extended.**

- Responding to Violence against Women: IWDA with the Family Support Centre and the Christian Care Centre
- Channels of Hope – Phase 3: World Vision
- Safe Families – Phase 2: Oxfam
- Supporting the MWYCFA: MWYCFA
- Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls: UN Women with the MWYCFA, Family Support Centre and Malaita Care Centre
- Markets for Change – Phase 2: UN Women

Funding for the Family Support Centre and the Christian Care Centre – the country’s key crisis service providers – will continue with organisational support from IWDA. Supporting these types of activities to prevent violence against women and girls and improve service provision for survivors responds to the (former) Office of Development Effectiveness’ finding that long-term support to partners that provide holistic care for women and girls affected by violence is a key strength of Australia’s approach to ending violence against women and girls in the region and must be continued.<sup>65</sup>

Funding will continue for World Vision’s work with faith and other community leaders and churches; and Oxfam’s work through a community-based approach. These initiatives seek to change behaviours and attitudes toward violence against women, and under this Gender Equality Plan, opportunities to support more men’s groups that are advocating for women’s empowerment will be explored. The (former) Office of Development Effectiveness explains the importance of investing in prevention activities this way:

‘For long-term sustainable change, stopping violence before it starts through population-level change is required, because a criminal justice-based response alone cannot address a problem of this size and scope. Australia’s significant investment in services and justice for survivors will not be effective in [ending violence against women and girls] without a parallel investment in strong, quality prevention work.’<sup>66</sup>

Funding will continue to directly support the MWYCFA, with some shift of focus to providing more technical support to the MWYCFA to realise its role to lead on gender policy and implementation across the Solomon

<sup>65</sup> Office of Development Effectiveness (2019). *Ending violence against women and girls: Evaluating a decade of Australia’s development assistance*. Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, p 3 and recommendation 3 on p 4.

<sup>66</sup> Office of Development Effectiveness (2019), see note 65 (above), p 3.

Islands Government. This acknowledges the maturity of the Ministry and the scale of work that its officers implement. It is a key recommendation from the 2016 scoping study on leadership.<sup>67</sup>

Three of the MWYCFA's national policies draw to a close during the period of this Gender Equality Plan. Australia will support the MWYCFA to review the policies if asked. There may also be opportunities to convert the findings from the Gender Insights research into national surveys. Gender Insights is a gender-sensitive measure of poverty conducted in Solomon Islands through a partnership between the MWYCFA and International Women's Development Agency and funded by Australia.<sup>68</sup>

Australia will also work with MWYCFA to identify any activities for funding support arising from the review of the Family Protection Act (to be concluded at the end of 2020). It is important to note here that activities under the Family Protection Act fall under the responsibility of multiple Solomon Islands Government ministries and agencies. Australia's support to Family Protection Act review recommendations are likely to occur across a number of additional Australian Aid sector programs, including law and justice and health.

Funding will also support the MWYCFA (via UN Women's *Pacific Partnership*) to roll out SAFENET and the Domestic Violence Counselling Guidelines and register in all provinces. These activities continue Australian investment in areas where Australia has strong relationships, partnerships and expertise and align to the priorities of the Solomon Islands Government.

An investment in the second phase of UN Women's Markets for Change program is also planned (subject to the design for Australia's future regional investment in gender equality). The first phase of Markets for Change brought about change in Honiara, Auki and Gizo markets, making them safer and more inclusive, improving governance practices and increasing the capacity of women vendors to earn and control their income. The project's mid-term review in 2018 found that Markets for Change's design is highly relevant to women market vendors, partner government (including the Solomon Islands Government) and donors; and is overall effective in achieving its four outcomes.<sup>69</sup> Supporting a second phase will enable this work to continue and expand. There are opportunities to respond to the current impact of COVID-19 on market vendors' livelihoods through the Markets for Change project.

## **Program rationale 2: A new, proven leadership activity will be introduced to this Gender Equality Plan, to ensure support is being provided strategically across all four Pacific Women outcomes.**

### **■ Women's Voice and Leadership: IWDA and WRAM**

The 2016 leadership scoping study identified the need to support community level training in leadership and decision making.<sup>70</sup> Foundational work by local NGO WRAM and through the United Nations Development

<sup>67</sup> Tavola and others (2016), see note 10 (above), p 28.

<sup>68</sup> International Women's Development Agency (2020), see note 25 (above).

<sup>69</sup> Fleming, F. and Tabualev, M. (2018). *UN Women Markets for Change Midterm Review Report*. Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

<sup>70</sup> Tavola and others (2016), see note 10 (above), p 29.

Programme's Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in Solomon Islands Project (funded under the second Country Plan) offers opportunities on which to build.

IWDA and WRAM have been working together in Solomon Islands to influence change in women's voice and leadership. The partnership was instrumental in lobbying provincial governments to introduce special temporary measures, which is likely to pass into national law in the next year. The Women's Voice and Leadership project continues its work to amplify women's voices in decision making forums. The project also specifically works to respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls.

### **Program rationale 3: This Gender Equality Plan will include activities to bolster the voice of women (including young women,<sup>71</sup> women with disabilities and women in business) in decision making forums and in DFAT aid programming.**

- Supporting Solomon Islands women's groups as part of other projects under this Gender Equality Plan: Family Support Centre and Christian Care Centre (Responding to Violence against Women project), National Council of Women and Provincial Councils of Women (Pacific Partnership to End Violence against Women and Safe Families); market vendor associations (Markets for Change); WRAM (Women's Voice and Leadership)
- Supporting the Solomon Islands women's movement: SIWIBA and PWDSI
- Consultation Panel of Solomon Island women for DFAT sector programs: Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit

This support is designed to enable the women's movement to address more deeply the underlying contextual drivers and factors necessary to advance gender equality. It responds to lessons learned both in Solomon Islands<sup>72</sup> and across the rest of the Pacific.<sup>73</sup> In Pacific Island countries, women's organisations and women's rights movements have led the action to end violence against women and girls. For 30 years, they have largely been responsible for getting the issue onto the public agenda. The (former) Office of Development Effectiveness asserts the need for Australian support for NGOs to continue so that they can drive change in decision making forums.<sup>74</sup>

A number of projects under this Gender Equality Plan support women's groups that are recognised as making change in their chosen fields. These include the Family Support Centre and the Christian Care Centre (Responding to Violence against Women), the National Council of Women and Provincial Councils of Women (Pacific Partnership to End Violence against Women and Safe Families); market vendor associations (Markets for Change); and WRAM (Women's Voice and Leadership).

Of these organisations, it is important to note that the National Council of Women is the umbrella body for women in Solomon Islands. UN Women and Oxfam will continue to work with the National Council of

<sup>71</sup> Complementing the organisations and projects listed here is Australia's regional investment in gender equality through the Pacific Girl program, which works with the Solomon Islands Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) to amplify the voices of adolescent girls.

<sup>72</sup> Nichols and Besley (2019), see note 11 (above), p 23.

<sup>73</sup> Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (2014), see note 60 (above), pp 3–4.

<sup>74</sup> Office of Development Effectiveness (2019), see note 65 (above), p 2.



Women as part of their projects funded under this Gender Equality Plan, including to strengthen the National Council of Women's governance and organisational structure. There may also be opportunities for IWDA and WRAM to partner with the National Council of Women through their new Women's Voice and Leadership project.

Pending review of proposals, further targeted funding under this Gender Equality Plan will support two additional groups that enable and empower women's voices in public discourses and which are at an appropriate stage to receive core and operational funding: SIWIBA (women's economic empowerment) and PWDSI (women and girls with disabilities).

Providing support and operational funding was strongly recommended in the draft evaluation report of the 2019 Joint Partner Review<sup>75</sup> and will support Australia's gender equality programming to expand from the individual / formal quadrant toward systemic and organisational changes under the Rao and Keller model (see Figure 1 What needs to change (after Rao and Keller)).

The draft evaluation report of the Joint Partner Review identified an opportunity for Solomon Islands women's voices to be more strongly reflected across Australia's aid program in Solomon Islands. To increase women's agency and voice in program decision making and review, the reviewers recommended developing formal mechanisms for Solomon Islander women to engage with Australia on policy issues, provide feedback to the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands on programming and to identify priorities and actions for support.<sup>76</sup> The Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit will assist with recruiting a panel of Solomon Islands women who will be available to provide input and feedback to all sector programs, including for key DFAT design and monitoring activities, such as the annual Aid Quality Check.

At the whole-of-program level, the *Pacific Women* Advisory Board provides advice on the strategic direction of *Pacific Women* with two Solomon Islands women current members. The consultation panel of Solomon Islands women will offer a country level opportunity for women's voices to be involved in Australian aid programming. This is an innovative approach with the potential for the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands to become a leader in including women's voice across aid programming.

#### Program rationale 4: Funding will support coordination of Australia's gender equality investments in Solomon Islands, through annual reflection activities and improved monitoring, evaluation and learning systems.

- Annual country reflection workshop: Gender Equality Team with the Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit and *Pacific Women* Support Unit as needed
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning visits with implementing partners: Gender Equality Team and Support Unit
- Annual short-term technical assistance to support country-level reporting: Consultant

<sup>75</sup> Nicholas and Besley (2019), see note 11 (above), recommendation 2.

<sup>76</sup> Nichols and Besley (2019), see note 11 (above), p 36.

These monitoring, evaluation and learning activities will foster cooperative monitoring, evaluation and reflection to build a collective evidence base to build momentum for change. The approach is based on a successful model used in other countries where *Pacific Women* operates, including Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Further detail about the approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning under this Gender Equality Plan is in Section 6.

### 4.3. ACTIVITIES UNDER THIS GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

The Table in Annex 1 sets out the proposed activities to support the objectives of this Gender Equality Plan. This Gender Equality Plan implements Solomon Islands Government and Australian Government policy priorities for gender equality. The activities reflect the three priorities of the Australian Government's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy<sup>77</sup> and the Pacific Step Up;<sup>78</sup> and align with policy priority outcomes 2, 3 and 4 under the Solomon Islands Government's National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy 2016–2020.<sup>79</sup>

The activities supported by this Gender Equality Plan relate to specific, earmarked bilateral funding for gender equality. In addition to the activities below, there are projects funded through Australia's regional gender-equality budget which undertake activities in Solomon Islands (see Annex 3), gender initiatives implemented through Australia's sector aid programs and political, diplomatic and corporate activities undertaken by the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands. These have been taken into account when determining what activities should be funded bilaterally under this Gender Equality Plan.



Picture 3 Raising awareness about violence against women and children in Honiara. Photo credit: Jen Wiggins / DFAT.

<sup>77</sup> Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2016). *Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy*, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. [Available on the DFAT website](#). This is currently being revised as a new international gender equality engagement strategy.

<sup>78</sup> Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, see note 12 (above).

<sup>79</sup> Solomon Islands Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (2016). *National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy 2016–2020*. [Available on the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs website](#).

## 4.3. ALLOCATION OF FUNDING UNDER THIS GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

Investments under this Gender Equality Plan will continue to support projects working toward the *Pacific Women* outcome of Ending Violence against Women more heavily than the other three outcomes. As shown in Figure 3, over the life of this Gender Equality Plan:<sup>80</sup>

- 67.2 per cent of funding will support activities toward **Ending Violence against Women**.
- 9.6 per cent of funding will support activities toward **Leadership and Decision Making**.
- 8.8 per cent of funding will support activities toward **Enhancing Agency**.
- 6.9 per cent of funding will support activities toward **Economic Empowerment**.
- 7.5 per cent of funding will support **monitoring, evaluation and learning**.

The bulk of the funding under this Gender Equality Plan is allocated to activities towards Ending Violence against Women. This includes both preventing violence and providing services for survivors when violence does occur. This emphasis ensures Australia will continue its support to this critical work, as one of the few donors in Solomon Islands concentrating on this aspect of women's empowerment. It also recognises that violence is also a barrier to women's progress to achieving the other outcomes: until women live free from violence, they cannot participate fully in social, economic and political life.

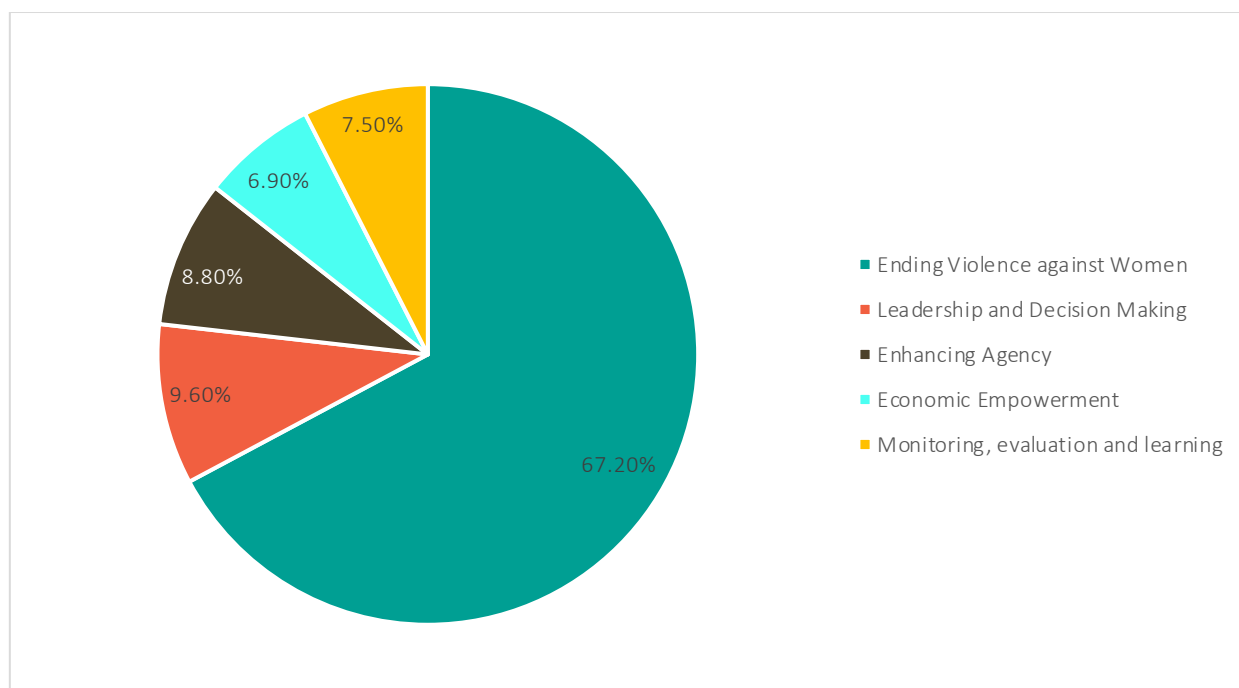


Figure 3 Allocation of funding under the Solomon Islands Gender Equality Plan 2020–2022

<sup>80</sup> In addition to the \$4 million budgeted for each of FY 2020–2021 and 2021–2022, these calculations take into account the \$3 million funding from *Pacific Women* to UN Women's Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls, contributed in FY 2019–2020 but for planned activities until 2022.

## 4.4. ASSUMPTIONS

Assumptions underpinning the approach and activities chosen for this Gender Equality Plan are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Assumptions underpinning this Gender Equality Plan

Ending Violence against Women	Economic Empowerment	Leadership and Decision Making	Enhancing Agency	Other
<p>Family and sexual violence can be prevented through a range of mechanisms.</p> <p>Access to quality support services can be strengthened, including in provincial locations.</p> <p>Communities want to address high rates of violence against women.</p> <p>Duty bearers can be motivated and resourced to implement the relevant laws.</p> <p>Social norms, attitudes and behaviours can be changed in order to prevent family violence and support survivors.</p>	<p>Women can achieve increased access to income generating, business and employment opportunities, including during times of crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Women who have access to and control over resources, markets and jobs will have increased incomes, assets and life choices.</p> <p>Increased incomes and control over income will increase women's long-term economic security.</p> <p>Norms and attitudes toward women having economic opportunities can be changed.</p>	<p>Women want to undertake leadership roles, including in small community settings.</p> <p>Women in leadership roles can achieve improved development outcomes for women and families.</p> <p>Norms and attitudes toward women's role in leadership and decision making can be changed.</p>	<p>The enabling environment can be strengthened to better support women's agency.</p> <p>Working through MWYCFA and the women's movement is an effective way to leverage change.</p> <p>Coalitions and advocacy groups are able to influence and demand gender responsive policies, legislation and services.</p> <p>The Solomon Islands Government is willing to implement gender responsive policies, legislation and services.</p>	<p>Change toward one outcome will not reduce positive change in other outcomes.</p> <p><i>Pacific Women</i> has the ability to leverage from other programs in order to contribute to gender equality.</p> <p>A focus on local context and socio-political analysis will lead to more effective program outcomes.</p> <p>Relevant research and knowledge can be documented, shared and will inform programs, policies and strategies.</p>

## 4.4. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Gender Equality Team at the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands considered a range of possible projects when discussing options with the government and non-government stakeholders.

- Activities were proposed in the 2019 review of the second Country Plan. Some remain relevant, but others were found to no longer be a priority, or activities were better placed for successful implementation by being implemented through sector aid programs.
- Attention was given to the current context of responding to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Australian Government's *Partnerships for Recovery* places a particular focus on supporting the most vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic, including support and advocacy for initiatives to enhance gender equality and address violence against women and girls.<sup>81</sup>
- Other activities were proposed during consultations and brainstorming sessions to meet the objectives of the Gender Equality Plan.

The final activities chosen reflect the objectives to consolidate support provided through Australia's gender equality program, promote coordination and learning across Australian gender equality investments and ensure collaboration and consultation with Solomon Islands women and the women's movement.

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION

### 5.1. PARTNERSHIPS

This Gender Equality Plan seeks to streamline implementation arrangements, whilst still working with a range of government and non-government partners. Pacific Women is a Pacific-led and women-led program, represented by the implementing partners below.

This Gender Equality Plan calls for the establishment of a Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit (an in-country hub of technical, management and grants expertise). The Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit will be managed under the Solomon Islands Resource Facility, which is the Australian High Commission's management facility for bilateral aid programming in Solomon Islands. Arrangements can also draw on the skills and expertise of the Pacific Women Support Unit (up until the end of 2021), international NGOs and UN agencies.

In each case, a management modality has been chosen to maximise efficiency whilst also strengthening the capacity of national institutions. The range of implementing partners recognises that investments in women's empowerment and gender equality are more effective when they take a coordinated approach, working at multiple levels with multiple actors and across all sectors. This approach contributes to increased coordination and shared learning.<sup>82</sup> Modalities for delivery of activities have been based on value for money, competence and ability to deliver results for women. These are set out in Table 2.

<sup>81</sup> Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2020), see note 8 (above), p 11.

<sup>82</sup> Office of Development Effectiveness (2019), see note 65 (above), p 2.



Table 2 Partnerships and management modalities under the Gender Equality Plan

Implementing partners	Type of partner	Funding mechanism	Investment / Nature of support
MWYCFA	National Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MOU with the MWYCFA.</li> <li>Technical Support</li> <li>Funding managed through Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional strengthening.</li> <li>Gender equality policy and implementation across government.</li> <li>Earmarked activities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>World Vision</li> <li>Oxfam</li> </ul>	International NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant with each international NGO.</li> <li>Program managed by the Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Channels of Hope – Phase 3.</li> <li>Safe Families – Phase 2.</li> </ul>
UN Women	UN agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant to UN Women.</li> <li>Program managed by the Gender Equality Team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women.</li> <li>Markets for Change.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Support Centre</li> <li>Christian Care Centre</li> </ul>	Solomon Islands NGOs	Funding via grant with IWDA (international NGO).	Responding to Violence Against Women: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional strengthening.</li> <li>Earmarked activities.</li> <li>Building costs.</li> </ul>
WRAM	Solomon Islands NGO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding via grant with IWDA (international NGO).</li> </ul>	Women's Voice and Leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional strengthening.</li> <li>Earmarked activities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SIWIBA</li> <li>PWDSI</li> </ul>	Solomon Islands NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant to each Solomon Islands NGO.</li> <li>Program managed by the Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core and operational costs.</li> <li>Institutional strengthening.</li> </ul>
Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit (recruiting individual Solomon Islands women)	Managing contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Panel recruited by the Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit.</li> <li>Funding for individual inputs via the Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit.</li> </ul>	Panel of Solomon Islands women to provide input and feedback on Post's sector program.
Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit (recruiting monitoring, evaluation and learning consultants)	Managing contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultants recruited by the Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit.</li> <li>Funding for consultant inputs via the Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for an annual reflection workshop.</li> <li>Support for annual monitoring, evaluation and learning activities.</li> </ul>

## 5.2. MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands will manage this Gender Equality Plan. The Gender Equality Team will be responsible for day-to-day coordination and management, with the Australian High Commissioner to Solomon Islands holding ultimate responsibility. As at September 2020, the Gender Equality Team (all locally engaged staff) comprises a Senior Gender Adviser, a Senior Program Manager and a Program Manager. The team works under the guidance of the Counsellor, Human Development.

As described in this document, the Gender Equality Team can draw on the support of the Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit housed within Solomon Islands Resource Facility. The Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit will provide the program with logistical, technical and administrative support. This includes supporting DFAT by managing grants; recruiting and managing consultants; providing sharing, learning and capacity building opportunities; and coordinating events. Using a managing contractor for those types of tasks is an efficient, targeted and tested way to manage grants whilst freeing the Gender Equality Team to work on relationships and operate at the strategic level, including supporting the Australian High Commission's sector programs. The Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit model is designed to be part of the existing Solomon Islands Resource Facility, not a standalone function, to maximise efficiency and promote value for money.

## 6. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Monitoring, evaluation and learning from the second Country Plan was aligned with the gender component of the performance assessment framework under Australia's Aid Investment Plan Solomon Islands 2015–16 to 2018–19. This approach focused on assessing the performance of individual partners. Less information has been available about whole-of-program impact and a variety of methods have been developed by partners to measure behaviour change. The lack of country level data has created challenges for the Australian Government and its partners to demonstrate impact.

To meet a range of information and assessment needs, the *Pacific Women* design document suggested developing different but connected monitoring, evaluation and learning systems. A *Pacific Women* program monitoring, evaluation and learning framework was designed. It is an overarching document that provides guidance to Country Plan monitoring. Country level monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks then provide guidance to Pacific Women implementing partners to develop their monitoring and evaluation plans. This process is designed to be mutually reinforcing, with partner monitoring and evaluation plans expected to inform the refinement of Country Plan monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks, which would in turn inform the refinement of the program's monitoring, evaluation and learning framework.

As a priority action, the *Pacific Women* Support Unit will support the Gender Equality Team to develop a Solomon Islands Gender Equality Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. This will assist the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands with collecting, analysing and reporting on country-level achievements and challenges. The framework will also support implementing partners to develop and implement project-level monitoring, evaluation and learning systems. By linking these with *Pacific Women's* program-level monitoring, evaluation and learning framework, there will be more comprehensive and detailed information

for the Australian Government, Solomon Islands Government and non-government stakeholders to understand the impact of activities supported through Australia's gender equality program funding.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning will also be supported through the introduction of annual reflection workshops. These workshops, successfully used in other Pacific Women country programs, will enable partners to have important, facilitated discussions on key issues affecting progress and identify successes and key gaps within the sector. They will be an annual opportunity for implementing partners of projects funded both bilaterally and regionally by Australia in Solomon Islands and other stakeholders, including those working to implement gender equality outcomes in Solomon Islands Post's sector programs, to share and reflect on the work they are doing. It will support program improvement and build collaboration.

Two initiatives under the Country Plan will also support reporting. First, this Gender Equality Plan budget includes funding for a short-term monitoring, evaluation and learning adviser to assist the Gender Equality Team throughout the year. Secondly, the Gender Equality Team and DFAT sector programs will be able to draw on the voices and expertise of Solomon Islands women to provide input and feedback at relevant stages of programming and reporting. This can include during the annual DFAT Aid Quality Check process. This will be the first time such a panel has been trialled, with the opportunity for the Australian High Commission in Solomon Islands to be a leader in inclusive design, programming and reporting.

## 7. SUSTAINABILITY

*Pacific Women* seeks to stimulate gender transformative change: for individual women; in relations between men and women; and within systems and structures that enable and confirm gender equality. This type of change takes time.

This Gender Equality Plan commences in the final period of the *Pacific Women* program and will be implemented during the transition to Australia's next phase of support for gender equality programming. Activities and implementation strategies have been selected with consideration for sustainability; their ability to be continued by partners, with support from the Australian High Commission, after the term of the *Pacific Women* program; and the continuing benefits for women beyond the life of *Pacific Women*:

- Activities have a strong focus on strengthening the role of government and the civil society sector focused on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Activities support strengthened collaboration between local and international NGOs and government to monitor, evaluate and learn from gender equality initiatives.
- The implementation arrangements will move much of the program management responsibility away from the Australian High Commission's Gender Equality Team, to a Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit (to be established). This will give the Gender Equality Team more time to work on political engagement, public diplomacy, relationship management and policy dialogue; and to advance and promote gender equality policy throughout Australia's aid program and foreign policy work.

- By early 2021, the Australian Government will be designing the next phase of its support for gender equality in the Pacific region. It is expected that 2021 will be a year of consultation and transition for the current Pacific Women Support Unit. The establishment of a Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit will occur with this in mind.

## 8. RISK MANAGEMENT

The *Pacific Women* design document acknowledges the high level of risk associated with working in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment. It identifies risks for the Australian Government, the Solomon Islands Government, implementing partners and, ultimately, for the women and girls of Solomon Islands.<sup>83</sup>

However, the design document also emphasises the risks associated with inaction. Failure to act almost certainly brings 'further suffering and waste of development potential.'<sup>84</sup>

Recognising that *Pacific Women* has been implemented since 2012, the program can build on current achievements and the enabling environment which has already been established to reduce risk.

Table 4 lists identified risks for this Gender Equality Plan, with strategies to manage those risks. Risks can occur at all levels, from political commitment from the Solomon Islands and Australian governments, to the capacity of national partners. Long-held gendered power dynamics in Solomon Islands will also challenge work to empower women.

Table 3 Likelihood and Consequence rating for risks for this Gender Equality Plan

Risk	Consequence	Consequence	Consequence	Consequence	Consequence
Likelihood	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Almost Certain	Moderate	Moderate	High	Very High	Very High
Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Very High
Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
Rare	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High

<sup>83</sup> Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2014), see note 60 (above), pp 61–63.

<sup>84</sup> Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2014), see note 60 (above), p 63.

Table 4 Risks and mitigation strategies for this Gender Equality Plan

Key risks	Existing controls	Mitigation strategies
Political will and influence	Before mitigation: Possible   Severe   HIGH RISK	After mitigation: Unlikely   Severe   HIGH RISK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solomon Islands Government reduces its commitment to gender equality.</li> <li>Australian Government reduces its commitment to gender equality in the Pacific. Change for women is slow and benefits are not immediately evident, resulting in a loss of commitment from stakeholders.</li> <li>Australia's relationship with national partners deteriorates, resulting in a loss of effectiveness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solomon Islands Government has made a commitment to implement international agreements to empower women and has developed a legal and policy framework that demonstrates a commitment to gender equality, providing a level of protection for women and girls.</li> <li>Australia has bipartisan support for gender equality and empowerment of women in the Pacific.</li> <li>Australia has declared its commitment to <i>Pacific Women</i> and to a new gender-equality program to follow <i>Pacific Women</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian High Commission staff regularly engage with government through participation in workshops and events. They use these opportunities to develop constructive relationships.</li> <li>The Gender Equality Team meets regularly with all implementing partners.</li> <li>Australia consistently advocates for and demonstrates the value of gender equality and women's empowerment through political dialogue at all levels.</li> <li>Australia's aid program supports gender mainstreaming and institutional strengthening of relevant Solomon Islands Ministries to support legal and policy reform and implementation.</li> <li>The Gender Equality Team supports momentum through adherence to and advocacy for DFAT's gender policies and initiatives.</li> </ul> <p>Through this Gender Equality Plan, Australia supports passionate government and NGO drivers of change who have demonstrated persistence in progressing gender equality in Solomon Islands.</p>
Mindsets and cultural perspectives	Before mitigation: Likely   Severe   VERY HIGH RISK	After mitigation: Possible   Severe   HIGH RISK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes in gendered power dynamics in Solomon Islands results in a backlash against women. This can disempower women and increase violence against women.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solomon Islands Government demonstrates leadership to bring about changes to gender power dynamics through its legal and policy framework.</li> <li>Women's groups are active and are slowly bolstering the agency of women, increasing their ability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through this Gender Equality Plan and its sectoral programs, Australia supports awareness programs to challenge negative social norms and attitudes, increase understanding of and support for gender equity.</li> <li>Australia takes a 'do no harm'</li> </ul>



Key risks	Existing controls	Mitigation strategies
	<p>to withstand negative consequences of change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australia demonstrates its ongoing commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women through regional and national policy, advocacy and aid interventions.</li> </ul>	<p>approach in selecting and implementing programs to support women's empowerment.</p>
<b>Civil society organisation coordination / collaboration</b>	<b>Before mitigation: Possible   Major   HIGH RISK</b>	<b>After mitigation: Unlikely   Major   MODERATE RISK</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competition, elitism, nepotism and lack of partnership between civil society organisations undermine individual and collective efforts for gender equality and women's empowerment.</li> <li>NGOs that do not receive Australian funding are critical of Australia's approach.</li> <li>The relevant coalitions are unable to develop or deliver strategies that create change.</li> <li>Civil society partners are unable to deliver contractual requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal and policy requirements require coalitions to be actively inclusive (for example, SAFENET and governance arrangements under the <i>Family Protection Act 2014</i>).</li> <li>Australia supports local partners in Solomon Islands primarily through funding agreements with international NGOs, managing contractors and multi-lateral institutions. These organisations are tasked with supporting local partners to deliver activities.</li> <li>Partners that receive direct funding from Australia have a track record of performance and undergo due diligence checks.</li> <li>Australia provides funding to NGOs through a range of mechanisms beyond its gender equality program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By introducing an annual reflection workshop, this Gender Equality Plan creates a space for civil society organisations to share practice, lessons learned and foster opportunities for collaborations, including in preparation for, responding to and recovering from crises.</li> <li>The Gender Equality Team plays a role in facilitating communication between groups, including through the revitalised Gender Donor Working Group.</li> <li>The Gender Equality Team identifies, monitors and where appropriate, participates in activities of relevant coalitions.</li> <li>Australia consistently advocates for and demonstrates the value of different complementary approaches to gender equality and women's empowerment.</li> <li>The management arrangements of this Gender Equality Plan are designed to empower NGO collaboration, support capacity and reduce fiduciary risk.</li> <li>Australian High Commission staff regularly engage with NGOs through participation in workshops and events. They use these opportunities to develop constructive relationships.</li> <li>The Gender Equality Team meets regularly with all implementing</li> </ul>

Key risks	Existing controls	Mitigation strategies
		<p>partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Gender Equality Team fosters a constructive relationship with MWYCFA to facilitate Solomon Islands Government advocacy for Australia's gender equality programming.</li> </ul>
<b>Program management</b>	<b>Before mitigation: Possible   Major   HIGH RISK</b>	<b>After mitigation: Unlikely   Major   MODERATE RISK</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australia fails to adopt a social political approach resulting in inappropriate or ineffective activities.</li> <li>Australia reduces resources for gender equality funding and staffing.</li> <li>Lack of coordination within the Australian High Commission results in siloing of investments.</li> <li>Risks or delays occur as a result of the <i>Pacific Women</i> program ending and a new program being designed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFAT requires that investments are informed by and demonstrate an understanding of context and political drivers</li> <li>DFAT undertakes regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting of investments to assess progress.</li> <li>Australia has declared its commitment to <i>Pacific Women</i> and to a new gender-equality program to follow <i>Pacific Women</i>. The design process is underway.</li> <li>Annual Aid Quality Checks trigger dialogue and action on gender equality across the aid program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Pacific Women's</i> program design and this Gender Equality Plan are informed by an in-depth analysis of context and extensive stakeholder consultations.</li> <li>This Gender Equality Plan is delivered through a range of funding mechanisms that increase efficiency for the Gender Equality Team.</li> <li>The annual reflection workshop introduced under this Gender Equality Plan brings sector staff and partners together to foster opportunities for collaborations.</li> <li>The Gender Equality Team includes three locally engaged staff with gender expertise, reducing staffing costs.</li> <li>The Australian High Commission conducts regular training in gender equality for all staff, reducing reliance on gender equality staff for mainstreaming.</li> <li>The Australian High Commission has a Gender Equality Working Group that facilitates coordination of gender activities across the aid program.</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusion</b>	<b>Before mitigation: Possible   Moderate   HIGH RISK</b>	<b>After mitigation: Unlikely   Moderate   MODERATE RISK</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australia's gender equality programming has limited reach and fails to be inclusive of women marginalised by location, disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFAT engages at multiple levels to increase the reach of interventions – from national level policy and legislative reform through to community level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through this Gender Equality Plan, Australia funds targeted investments for young women, supports activities that work across all nine Solomon Islands</li> </ul>

Key risks	Existing controls	Mitigation strategies
and other factors.	<p>activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DFAT works with implementing partners that have a track record of reaching and connecting with communities in remote locations.</li> <li>Investment budgets reflect the high cost of reaching remote locations in Solomon Islands.</li> <li>DFAT's policy and reporting framework recognises disability and social inclusion.</li> </ul>	<p>provinces and requires consideration for partners working to support women and girls with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Gender Equality Team encourages implementing partners to engage with relevant bodies such as People With Disabilities Solomon Islands to inform their policies and planning.</li> <li>A Gender Equality Plan monitoring, evaluation and learning framework will be developed., it will include indicators on reach and social inclusion.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>Before mitigation: Almost Certain   Major   VERY HIGH RISK</b>	<b>After mitigation: Possible   Major   HIGH RISK</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural disasters, outbreaks of disease, political instability or other external factors interrupt delivery or exacerbate logistical challenges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solomon Islands Government has systems and procedures for responding to natural disasters and outbreaks of disease, helping to mitigate impacts.</li> <li>Australia and other development partners have demonstrated their willingness to assist Solomon Islands in emergency situations. This includes through the Partnerships for Recovery relating to COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This Gender Equality Plan has been finalised after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and includes activities to respond to that particular environmental factor.</li> <li>Activities are designed taking into account Solomon Islands' geographical and environmental context. This recognises the immense challenges associated with delivering development programs in Solomon Islands.</li> <li>The Gender Equality Team works with implementing partners to ensure that programs and deadlines adapt to changing circumstances.</li> </ul>

## 9. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The long-term, intergenerational nature of societal change toward achieving gender equality is well documented. The commitments to gender equality by the Solomon Islands and Australian Governments, including through *Pacific Women*, offer partners the timeframe they need to support change over a longer term and across a broader range of adaptive approaches. This last period of the *Pacific Women* program is an opportunity to build on what has been learned to date, share lessons and impact, and continue to support the momentum toward gender equality in Solomon Islands.

Australia's gender programming seeks to give Solomon Islands women – regardless of income, ethnicity, disability, age or geography – the opportunity to participate fully, freely and safely in political, economic and social life. Women themselves know what will help to make this vision so, and their voices can be found throughout the design of the activities in this Gender Equality Plan.



Picture 4 The YWCA celebrates International Women's Day. Photo credit: Jeremy Miller

## ANNEX 1: DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES TO BE SUPPORTED UNDER THIS GENDER EQUALITY PLAN FOR SOLOMON ISLANDS

All financial figures are in Australian dollars. Total funding for each financial year (2020-2021 and 2021-2022) is \$4,271,500, totalling \$8,543,000.

### Outcome: Ending Violence against Women (prevention)

- FY 2020–2021: \$1,776,500
- FY 2021–2022: \$1,776,500

Activity	Partner	Activity description	Proposed budget FY 2020–2021	Proposed budget FY 2021–2022	Estimated timeframe
Channels of Hope – Phase 3	World Vision	Working with churches and community leaders to positively transform people's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours regarding gender relations to reduce violence against women.	\$776,500	\$776,500	2018–2022
Let's make our families safe (Safe Families) – Phase 2	Oxfam	Supporting existing and new community level action to prevent violence from happening in the home. Helping to establish coalitions between the civil society groups, services providers, churches and government agencies that are working to prevent family violence.	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	2019–2022

### Outcome: Ending Violence against Women (services)

- FY 2020–2021: \$600,000
- FY 2021–2022: \$600,000

Activity	Partner	Activity description	Proposed budget FY 2020–2021	Proposed budget FY 2021–2022	Estimated timeframe
Responding to Violence against Women	Family Support Centre and Christian Care Centre with IWDA	Providing core funding, technical support and capacity building to the Christian Care Centre and Family Support Centre, two key organisations providing emergency shelter, first aid, counselling and legal advice services to survivors of violence. This includes funding to explore options (including through property construction, purchase or long-term rental) for ensuring that the Family Support Centre has permanent location in Honiara to provide services to survivors of violence.	\$600,000	\$600,000	2017–2022



#### Outcome: Economic Empowerment

- FY 2020–2021: \$400,000
- FY 2021–2022: \$400,000

Activity	Partner	Activity description	Proposed budget FY 2020–2021	Proposed budget FY 2021–2022	Estimated timeframe
Markets for Change – Phase 2 <sup>85</sup>	UN Women	Improving market governance, management, infrastructure and access to financial services to increase women's economic empowerment. Ensuring markets are more sustainable, accessible and safe for women vendors in Honiara, Auki, Gizo and Munda in Solomon Islands. Activities include a response to the impact of COVID-19 on market vendors.	\$400,000	\$400,000	2020–2022

#### Outcome: Leadership and Decision Making

- FY 2020–2021: \$550,000
- FY 2021–2022: \$550,000

Activity	Partner	Activity description	Proposed budget FY 2020–2021	Proposed budget FY 2021–2022	Estimated timeframe
Women's Voice and Leadership	WRAM and IWDA	Enhancing women's voice and leadership through capacity strengthening of individual women; advocacy; movement building and organisational capacity strengthening; and research, evidence and learning.	\$550,000	\$550,000	2021–2022

<sup>85</sup> Note that Australia's future regional funding support to UN Women's Markets for Change following *Pacific Women* is subject to a design process.

## Outcome: Enhancing Agency

- FY 2020–2021: \$510,000
- FY 2021–2022: \$510,000

Activity	Partner	Activity description	Proposed budget FY 2020–2021	Proposed budget FY 2021–2022	Estimated timeframe
Supporting the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA)	MWYCFA	Supporting the MWYCFA with its role of working across the Solomon Islands Government on gender equality policy and implementation, including research, policy development and gendered impacts of COVID-19 and activities arising from the review of the <i>Family Protection Act 2014</i> . This includes through technical support and support for coordinator positions and flexibility to fund activities identified throughout the year.	\$400,000	\$400,000	2020–2022
Supporting the Solomon Islands women's movement (pending review of proposals)	Solomon Islands Women in Business Association (SIWIBA) and People with Disabilities Solomon Islands (PWDSI)	Core support is provided to the Family Support Centre, Christian Care Centre, National Council of Women, Provincial Councils of Women, market vendor associations and WRAM through specific projects under the Country Plan. In addition, funding to SIWIBA and PWDSI ensures that <i>Pacific Women</i> is supporting a suite of women's groups that enable and empower women's voices in public discourses across all <i>Pacific Women's</i> portfolio of activities.	\$60,000 (SIWIBA) \$40,000 (PWDSI)	\$60,000 (SIWIBA) \$40,000 (PWDSI)	2020–2022
Consultation Panel of Solomon Island women for DFAT sector programs	Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit	Establishing a panel of Solomon Islands women who provide input and feedback on DFAT sector programs, including designs, monitoring and evaluation processes, Aid Quality Check meetings and specific pieces of analysis.	\$10,000	\$10,000	2020–2021

## Program support, monitoring, evaluation and learning

- FY 2020–2021: \$435,000
- FY 2021–2022: \$435,000

Activity	Partner	Activity description	Proposed budget FY 2020–2021	Proposed budget FY 2021–2022	Estimated timeframe
Solomon Islands Gender Equality Support Unit	SIRF	Supporting grant management, procurement of services and logistics under this Gender Equality Plan. Hosting an annual county reflection workshop for all partners funded by Australia's gender equality program operating in Solomon Islands (bilateral and regional), gender equality partners from DFAT's sector programs and other stakeholders. Providing a forum to share learnings and understand monitoring and evaluation practices for gender equality investments in Solomon Islands. Providing remote, short-term monitoring, evaluation and learning assistance to support country-level reporting. Re-starting a quarterly meeting of donors supporting gender equality activities in Solomon Islands to ensure coordinated approaches to support MWYCFA and NGOs.	\$390,000	\$390,000	2020–2021
Monitoring, evaluation and learning visits with implementing partners	Gender Equality Team	Enabling the Gender Equality Team to travel to visit <i>Pacific Women</i> projects for monitoring, evaluation and learning purposes.	\$45,000	\$45,000	2020–2022

## ANNEX 2: ACTIVITIES UNDER THE FIRST AND SECOND PACIFIC WOMEN SOLOMON ISLANDS COUNTRY PLANS

### Outcome: Leadership and Decision Making

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Emerging Leaders Training (Australia Pacific Technical Coalition)	Provided training to develop the competency of individuals working as emerging leaders in a range of contexts, with an emphasis on developing effective relationships in the workplace and managing operational plans.	\$159,303 (2018)
Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in Solomon Islands (SECSIP) Phase II (UNDP)	Funded dedicated activities to support women candidates in the 2019 National elections.	\$460,000 (2018)
Leadership Skills for Women (Australia Pacific Technical Coalition)	Provided leadership and management training to female mid-level Solomon Islands managers to enhance their leadership, decision making and management skills, for women working in civil society organisations in Malaita Province, Western Province and Honiara.	\$245,000 (2017–2018)

### Outcome: Leadership and Decision Making

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Empowering Women in Smart Business (Waka Mere) (International Finance Corporation)	Engaged with the private sector to address gender inequalities in the labour market. Improved business performance and employment outcomes by creating more gender-responsive workplaces for women in the private sector.	\$2,445,074 (2016–2019)
Innovative Approaches to Increasing Women's Access to Markets (World Bank Group)	Researched the constraints to, and effective measures for, increasing women's participation and productivity in agricultural value chains.	\$200,100 (2016–2018)

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Do No Harm: Understanding the Relationship between Women's Economic Empowerment and Violence against Women in Melanesia (Australian National University and IWDA)	Researched how to support women's economic advancement without increasing their exposure to violence in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Developed guidelines for women's economic empowerment programs.	\$170,532 (2016–2018) <sup>86</sup>
Markets for Change (UN Women)	Improving market governance, management, infrastructure and access to financial services to increase women's economic empowerment. Ensuring markets are more sustainable, accessible and safe for women vendors in Honiara, Auki and Gizo in Solomon Islands.	\$1,280,946 <sup>87</sup> (2014–2019)
Support to Solomon Islands Women in Business Association (Solomon Islands Women in Business Association)	Supported the Solomon Islands Women in Business Association, as the key representative organisation for women in formal and informal business, to promote, develop and empower women's participation in the private sector.	\$719,552 (2014–2018)

#### Outcome: Ending Violence against Women

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls – Solomon Islands (UN Women)	Funding for key projects under the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women including SAFENET Network (Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs)	\$3,000,000 (2019–2022) <sup>88</sup>
Community Channels of Hope Phase 3 (World Vision Solomon Islands)	Working with churches and community leaders to positively transform people's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours regarding gender relations to reduce violence against women.	\$3,106,000 (2018–2022)

<sup>86</sup> This project was supported by the regional program (2013–2016) (\$8,239), Solomon Islands bilateral program (2016–2018) (\$170,532) and PNG bilateral program (2014–2019) (\$362,619).

<sup>87</sup> This project was supported by the regional program (\$11,289,510), Solomon Islands bilateral program (\$1,280,946), Fiji bilateral program (\$4,200,000) and Vanuatu bilateral program (\$3,429,077).

<sup>88</sup> This specific project was fully funded by the Solomon Islands bilateral program; other activities undertaken in Solomon Islands through UN Women's Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls are funded through the regional program – see Annex 3 for more details.



Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Responding to violence against women in Solomon Islands (IWDA)	Providing core funding, technical support and capacity building to the Christian Care Centre and Family Support Centre, two key organisations providing emergency shelter, first aid, counselling and legal advice services to survivors of violence.	\$2,950,000 (2017–2020)
Red Cardim Vaelens (Live & Learn Solomon Islands)	Worked with selected sports clubs in Honiara and Auki to address gender-based violence through sports.	\$557,810 (2015–2017)
Youth alcohol and violence reduction against women and children (Save the Children)	Worked with young people to address causes of gender-based violence.	\$800,000 (2015–2017)
Let's Make our Families Safe (Oxfam Solomon Islands)	Supporting existing and new community level action to prevent violence from happening in the home. Helping to establish coalitions between the civil society groups, services providers, churches and government agencies that are working to prevent family violence.	\$3,000,000 (2019–2022)
Let's Make our Families Safe (Solomon Islands National Council of Women, Vois Blong Mere, International Women's Development Agency, Pacific Leadership Program, Oxfam Australia, IOD PARC)	Supported existing and new community level action to prevent violence from happening in the home. Helped to establish coalitions between the civil society groups, services providers, churches and government agencies that are working to prevent family violence.	\$5,536,137 (2014–2018)
Channels of Hope for Gender (World Vision Solomon Islands)	Worked with churches and community leaders to positively transform people's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours regarding gender relations to reduce violence against women in 30 communities across two provinces.	\$2,880,000 (2013–2018)
Christian Care Centre (Christian Care Centre)	Supported a workshop to develop a five-year strategic plan.	\$8,575 (2013)

## Outcome: Enhancing Agency

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Gender Equality Program Support (Solomon Islands Resource Facility)	Supporting the Women's Development Division in the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs to progress outcomes in accordance with its Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy, Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls Policy and the National Action Plan in Women, Peace and Security.	\$1,837,558 (2016–2020)
Social Development Adviser (Consultant)	Provided technical assistance through a Social Development Adviser who worked with DFAT staff to improve gender considerations in planning, programming, monitoring and learning of all Australian-funded aid programs in Solomon Islands.	\$200,000 (2014)
Recognising shared interests of Australia and Solomon Islands in the advancement of gender equality (Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs)	Strengthened the capacity of Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs to progress priority outcomes in accordance with its Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy, the Ending Violence Against Women Policy and the Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan.	\$450,827 (2013–2016)

## ANNEX 3: REGIONAL *PACIFIC WOMEN* PROJECTS WITH ACTIVITIES IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

Unless stated, budget allocations listed here for regional projects are not for Solomon Islands alone but for multiple countries under *Pacific Women*.

### Outcome: Leadership and Decision Making

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Strengthening Diverse Women's Leadership in Humanitarian Action (Shifting the Power Coalition: ActionAid Australia, femLINKpacific, Pacific Disability Forum, Nazareth Centre, Transcend Oceania, Talitha Project, YWCA PNG, YWCA Samoa, Vanuatu Young Women for Change, Vois Blong Mere, ActionAid Vanuatu)	Ensuring diverse Pacific women's voices provide leadership in disaster planning and response through a coalition approach. Supporting diverse women leaders to engage in disaster coordination mechanisms and influence decision making. Documenting needs and capacities in crises. Establishing platforms to strengthen diverse Pacific women's voices to influence policy and decision making.	\$895,000 (2018–2021)
Support for Women's Groups and Coalitions (Pacific Leadership Program)	Supported adaptive leadership training for women leaders and coalition members supported them to develop new skills and perspectives to progress initiatives, build a support base and overcome barriers to change. Contributed to research in Samoa and Solomon Islands and a CEDAW campaign in Tonga.	\$433,963 (2015–2017)

### Outcome: Economic Empowerment

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Empowering Women in Smart Business (Waka Mere) (International Finance Corporation)	Engaged with the private sector to address gender inequalities in the labour market. Improved business performance and employment outcomes by creating more gender-responsive workplaces for women in the private sector.	\$2,445,074 (2016–2019)
Innovative Approaches to Increasing Women's Access to Markets (World Bank Group)	Researched the constraints to, and effective measures for, increasing women's participation and productivity in agricultural value chains.	\$200,100 (2016–2018)

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Do No Harm: Understanding the Relationship between Women's Economic Empowerment and Violence against Women in Melanesia (Australian National University and IWDA)	Researched how to support women's economic advancement without increasing their exposure to violence in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Developed guidelines for women's economic empowerment programs.	\$170,532 (2016–2018) <sup>89</sup>
Markets for Change (UN Women)	Improving market governance, management, infrastructure and access to financial services to increase women's economic empowerment. Ensuring markets are more sustainable, accessible and safe for women vendors in Honiara, Auki and Gizo in Solomon Islands.	\$1,280,946 <sup>90</sup> (2014–2019)
Support to Solomon Islands Women in Business Association (Solomon Islands Women in Business Association)	Supported the Solomon Islands Women in Business Association, as the key representative organisation for women in formal and informal business, to promote, develop and empower women's participation in the private sector.	\$719,552 (2014–2018)

#### Outcome: Ending Violence against Women

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships (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)

<sup>89</sup> This project was supported by the regional program (2013–2016) (\$8,239), Solomon Islands bilateral program (2016–2018) (\$170,532) and Papua New Guinea bilateral program (2014–2019) (\$362,619).

<sup>90</sup> This project was supported by the regional program (\$11,289,510), Solomon Islands bilateral program (\$1,280,946), Fiji bilateral program (\$4,200,000) and Vanuatu bilateral program (\$3,429,077).

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (UN Women)	Promoting gender equality and reducing violence against women and girls across communities and nations in the Pacific, while producing promising practices. Focusing on three essential intervention areas: formal and informal education; contextualised, community-based prevention approaches; and civil society organisations' capacity to engage with national and regional institutions and authorities.	\$7,627,948 (2018–2022) <sup>91</sup>
Gender Equality Theology – Institutional Transformation (GET-IT) (UnitingWorld)	Supporting institutional transformation within churches and participating organisations by challenging and shifting traditional gender theologies, then reviewing church policies to align them with new gender equality theologies. Establishing procedures and response mechanisms for situations of violence that respect the rights of women and that act in accordance with protection laws.	\$1,895,451 (2018–2021)
Fiji Women's Crisis Centre Programs to Eliminate Violence against Women in Fiji and the Pacific (Fiji Women's Crisis Centre)	Funding the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre's regional activities, including: the Regional Training Program; the Male Advocates Program; and the Pacific Women's Network Against Violence Against Women.	\$2,250,000 (2016–2021)
Support to the Pacific Community Regional Rights Resource Team (The Pacific Community (SPC))	Supporting work on ending violence against women, human rights and good governance with Pacific Island governments and civil society organisations. Providing technical assistance and training. 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)
Partnering Women for Change (Uniting World)	Supported work with churches to ensure that women, girls and people living with disabilities have increased safety and well-being in their homes, communities and churches.	\$370,000 (2015–2018)
UNICEF Pacific Child Protection Program (UNICEF)	Phase one (completed) worked across 14 Pacific Island Countries to strengthening protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation. Phase two focusing on Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu and has three components: strengthening child protection laws, policies and implementation plans; strengthening services; and promoting social behaviour change.	\$7,000,000 (2014–2018) \$5,000,000 (2019–2022)

<sup>91</sup> This is the full allocation for the project's work across multiple countries, which includes activities in Solomon Islands. An additional project with UN Women's Pacific partnership to End Violence Against Women that is fully funded by the Solomon Islands bilateral program is also listed in Annex 2.







Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Pacific Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Women)	Supported civil society organisations and governments to prevent violence and provide services for survivors of violence, including for counselling, paralegal aid, shelter and referral services. Strengthened the capacity of organisations working to end violence against women through training in advocacy, law reform, women's human rights, community education and counselling services.	\$1,500,000 (2014–2017)

### Outcome: Enhancing Agency

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Pacific Girl  In Solomon Islands, Pacific Girl supports Girls Rise Up! (Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of Solomon Islands in partnership with CARE International)	<i>Pacific Women's</i> dedicated program to support adolescent girls. Working with Pacific-based organisations to support change in the social norms that underpin gender inequality and perpetuate discrimination against adolescent girls aged 10–19 years in the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.  In Solomon Islands, Girls Rise Up! is developing the confidence, skills and knowledge of at-risk girls and establishing supportive peer networks in Solomon Islands. Educating service providers to better support the target groups of girls, including girls with disabilities, sex workers and girls living on the street.	\$4,500,000 (2018–2022) (full program)  Including: \$588,855 (2019–2022) (Girls Rise Up!)
Last Taboo: Research on managing menstruation in the Pacific (Burnet Institute, Water Aid, the International Women's Development Agency)	Researched barriers to women's and girls' effective menstrual management and potential impacts on their participation in education and income generation in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.	\$500,000 (2016–2017)
Partnerships for Health and Rights: Working for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for all in the Pacific (International Planned Parenthood Federation)	Supporting the expansion of access to sexual and reproductive health services in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu and, from phase two, Papua New Guinea.	\$3,000,000 (2015–2022)
Gender Equality and Climate Change in the Pacific (The Protection and Pacific (ProPa) Network)	Raised awareness of the nexus between gender equality and climate change. Generated more informed decision making in this space to ensure women's voices influence decision making, and that climate agreements are implemented in a gender-responsive way in the Pacific.	\$500,000 (2015–2017)

Project name and partner	Description	Budget (AUD) and timeframe
Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (The Pacific Community (SPC))	Phase one (completed) conducted stock takes of Pacific Island governments' capacity to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into policies, legislation and programs and strengthened the collection and analysis of data to better track outcomes. Phase two is supporting Pacific Island countries to adopt evidence-informed policies and legislation that promote gender equality and women's human rights.	\$3,941,712 (2013–2018) \$5,494,203 (2019–2023)

## ANNEX 4: PACIFIC WOMEN PROGRAM LOGIC

PROGRAM LOGIC		
YEARS 1-3 Short Term Outcomes	YEARS 4-7 Intermediate Outcomes	YEARS 8-10 Long Term Outcomes
 <p>There are increasing enabling spaces for women and girls to participate and practice decision making skills (1)</p> <p>Community and public and private sector knowledge about gender equality has increased (3)</p>	<p>More women and girls are visible and influence decision making at community, local and national levels (2) (6)</p> <p>More women stand for or apply for leadership positions (4) (6)</p> <p>Public and private institutions have developed policies, practices and programs that support and enable women to move into leadership roles (5)</p>	<p>Community, local and national decision making reflects the needs and interests of women and girls</p> <p>Women elected to local and national level governments have the skills to fulfil their roles</p> <p>Women hold senior positions in the public and private sector and have the skills to fulfil their roles</p> <p>Community and public and private sector attitudes and perceptions support women and girls' inclusion in leadership and decision making processes</p>
 <p>Family, community, public and private sector knowledge about the benefits of women's economic empowerment has increased (7)</p> <p>Women are provided with opportunities to participate in formal and informal economic activities or business entrepreneurship opportunities (9)</p> <p>Public and private sector identify the need for policies and legislation that mandate safe working conditions for women (11)</p>	<p>Family, community, public and private sector attitudes and perceptions support women's economic empowerment (8)</p> <p>Women have developed increased knowledge, skills and confidence to successfully undertake formal and informal economic activities (10)</p> <p>Private and public sector have developed policies, practices and programs that support and enable women's economic empowerment (12)</p>	<p>Family and community members share the burden of work to enable women's participation in economic activities</p> <p>Women have increased decision making in relation to their income and assets</p> <p>More women are employed in the public and private sectors and are running small businesses</p> <p>National policies and regulations for safe working conditions for women are operating effectively</p>
 <p>Pacific women, their partners, families and communities understand the causes of violence against women (13)</p> <p>Legislative reforms that protect women and children's human rights have been enacted and have commenced implementation (15)</p> <p>Women and children can access contextually relevant support and justice services to assist them to respond to and deal with violence (17)</p>	<p>Pacific women, their partners, families and communities mobilise and take action to address violence against women (14)</p> <p>Duty bearers support and implement legislative reforms that protect women and children's human rights (16)</p> <p>Contextually relevant prevention and justice services continue to expand and result in more women and children reporting violence and accessing services (18)</p>	<p>Family and community tolerance for violence against women is reduced</p> <p>Legislative reforms that protect women and children's human rights are operating effectively and duty bearers are upholding their responsibilities</p> <p>Contextually relevant prevention services are more widely available across the region and women and children are reporting violence when it occurs and accessing services</p>
 <p>Public and private institutions have increased knowledge and capacity to develop gender equality policies, practices and programs (19)</p> <p>Collective action (at the community, local and national level) is strengthened to advocate for gender equality (21)</p> <p>Women and girls have access to information about their rights and responsibilities (23)</p>	<p>Public and private institutions are implementing policies, practices and programs that support gender equality (21)</p> <p>Collective action (at the community local and national level) is effectively advocating for social and legislative change in relation to gender equality (23)</p> <p>Women and girls have more knowledge, skills and confidence to claim their rights and access resources (25)</p>	<p>Public and private institutions are upholding the rights of women and girls</p> <p>Collective action (at the community, local and national level) has resulted in social and legislative change in relation to gender equality</p> <p>Women and girls are utilising their strengthened agency for positive change in gender equality</p>

\*The numbers in the brackets represent the program logic outcome assumptions