



**Solomon Islands Government
Women's Development Division
Ministry of Women Youth Children and Family Affairs**

Solomon Islands Beijing +30 National Review Report

**The 2019 – 2024 National Review Report on Solomon Islands implementation of the Beijing
Declaration and Platform for Action**

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List of Acronyms

CCDRM	Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management
CDD	Children’s Development Division
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CFWA	Child and Family Welfare Act 2017
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey 2015
DVCG	Domestic Violence Counselling Guideline
EVAWG	Ending Violence Against Women and Girls
FPA	Family Protection Act 2014
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GBViE	Gender Based Violence in Emergencies
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GEWD	Gender Equality and Women’s Development
MCILI	Ministry of Commerce Industry Labour and Immigration
MDPAC	Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination
MECDM	Ministry of Environment Climate Change Disaster Management and Meteorology
MEHRD	Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development
MFAET	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade
MJLA	Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs
MoFT	Ministry of Finance and Treasury
MPGIS	Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening
MPNSCS	Ministry of Police National Security and Corrective Services
MTGPEA	Ministry of Traditional Governance Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs
MWYCFA	Ministry of Women Youth Children and Family Affairs
NAP	National Action Plan
NCP	National Children’s Policy
NDS	National Development Strategy
NSDS	National Statistics Development Strategy 2015 - 2035
NSEEWG	National Strategy on the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls

SICCI	Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce
SIG	Solomon Islands Government
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WDD	Women's Development Division
WPS	Women Peace and Security
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Introduction

The reporting period for this report is between June 2019 to May 2024.

SECTION 1 Highlights

Review Process, Achievements, Challenges and Setbacks, Promising Practices

- I. The scope of work and methodology used to collect data to inform the *Solomon Islands (SI) Beijing +30 National Review Report* included: research and literature review by the *Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* Technical Working Group (TWG); reviews conducted in the last five years to inform new and revised gender frameworks at both national and provincial levels i.e. review of the *Solomon Islands National Gender equality and Women's Development (GEWD) Policy 2016-2020*; convening of the formal implementation, coordination and reporting mechanism for the National GEWD Policy; ongoing standard reporting on gender and women's policies; a write shop where the TWG began the actual drafting of the Beijing +30 report; a validation workshop on the draft report; and then its finalising.
- II. According to the *2019 National Population and Housing Census*, women of Solomon Islands make up almost half of the population (351,560 females and 369,396 males), where the majority (72.4%) lived in rural areas compared to 27.6% in urban areas. The average number of births per woman in Solomon Islands had declined since the 2009 census (4.7 births to 3.8 births) where the average age of mothers giving birth was 32 yrs. Life expectancies at birth has improved for both females (74.2 years) and males (70 years) since the last census when it was 66.2 and 73.1 years for males and females. Women marry at a younger age than men, where average age at marriage was 26.5 and 22.8 years for males and females, respectively.
- III. There was an increase in the numbers of those that never attended school since the 2009 Census, of which females had a higher percentage (14.5%) compared to males (10.9%). Females school enrolment (48.4%) is slightly lower than males (51.6%) however, the gap has continued to narrow over the decades. There is almost equal numbers of females and males who have completed primary education, 47% and 46%, respectively. However, the number of females who attained secondary (Forms 1 to 7) was lower (27%) compared to males (30%). Similarly, there were more males (9%) than females (7%) who completed Tertiary education. Females literacy is lower than males, at 82.5% and 88.5%, respectively. Language proficiency in English, pidgin, local languages and other languages were generally higher for men (75%) than women (70.7%).

- IV. Approximately 11% of the population reported at least a functional form of disability where seeing difficulties is the most prevalent (10.6%). There were more females (51%) than males (49%) with seeing difficulties.
- V. There were more males (53.8%) than females (46.2%) in employment (paid and unpaid work). There were more unpaid workers (55.4%) than paid workers (44.6%). In paid employment, there were two males for every one female at the national level, and in urban-rural areas. Females dominated the unpaid work (55.6% females and 44.4% males). Majority of these females (two thirds) reside in rural areas. Females are concentrated in low-skilled elementary occupations (66.4%) and out of these occupations, 61.3% are in housework. Males dominated in semi-skills jobs such as craft, trade and machine operators, and in high-skilled occupations such as professional jobs.
- VI. In the economic industry, there is close to equal employment of females and males in the agriculture, forestry and fishery industry. This industry comprised the highest number, 68.4%, of all employed persons, where the majority resides in the rural areas. There were less females unemployed (46.1%) compared to males (53.9%). There are more unemployed persons in the rural areas (57.9%) than in urban areas (43.1%).
- VII. According to the *Solomon Islands Equality Insights Rapid 2022* survey, an individual-level, multidimensional poverty measure in relation to fifteen dimensions of life, women are likely to be more severely deprived than men in the following dimensions: relationships, safety, sanitation and time use. People with disability were also more likely to experience severe deprivation in time use, water and work.
- VIII. Significant progress has been made to address the needs of women and girls living in remote and rural areas, those with disabilities and those in humanitarian settings. Mainstreaming of people with disability inclusion including women and girls with disability into policies and programs have strengthened in the past five years. Of great significance is the ratification by the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) of *the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)* in 2023 and in the same year, the *National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2022 – 2031* and the *Rehabilitation Strategic Plan 2022-2031* was also adopted.
- IX. Solomon Islands largest response and referral network of essential services for victims and survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), the SAFENET, has expanded and grown in strength since its inception in 2013. SAFENET is a good practice as it is effective, efficient, sustainable and can be easily adapted to different context. Key to SAFENET's success, includes the following: strong partnerships and its membership of both government and non-government organizations, that has developed strong relationships and partnerships to improve the coordination of services for survivors of GBV and for ensuring quality services both at national and provincial levels; establishment of coordination tools; a functional governance body; and government-led ensuring sustainability.

- X. A significant lesson learnt in responding to GBV during the COVID-19, was the use of the existing SAFENET that was already well established, and adapting it to the context of COVID-19 such as, incorporating the COVID-19 health preventions/screenings into the response and referral pathway.
- XI. While Solomon Islands have made great strides over the past five years in advancing gender equality, there is more that can be done that would require continuous and adequate support from government, development partners, the private sector, donors and especially non-traditional donors and development partners. Areas of support that are needed includes: partnership with clear long-term objectives and especially with non-traditional gender partners including development partners; financial support and sustainable and adaptable technologies to address the real life access to justice issues in the context of Solomon Islands which is a country of many islands between vast oceans i.e. outboard motor and canoe to support referrals of victims of GBV; technical assistance and capacity building opportunities especially in the areas of gender statistics, gender analysis and gender responsive budgeting; empowerment of SIG's gender focal points including the formalization of their role; south-south exchanges; scholarships for formal trainings on fields related to gender equality and social inclusion; relevant researches and surveys to inform gender policies i.e. the digital divide in the Solomon Islands; and dedicated funding support to the implementation of gender policies and legislations i.e. the Family Protection Act review recommendations.

SECTION 2: Priorities, Achievements, Challenges and Setbacks

1. *Most Important Achievements, Challenges and Setbacks*

- 1.1. Some of the most significant achievements of Solomon Islands in progressing gender equality and women's empowerment has been in the area of gender mainstreaming across government through policy developments and reforms including at the provincial levels; gender researches/surveys providing critical statistics and data to inform policy-making; the commitment to use affirmative actions to address long outstanding issues faced by women including legislative reform for women's political participation through temporary special measures; and the strengthening of the address and response to gender-based violence including emerging forms of violence.

Gender Policies

- 1.2. There has been a significant increase in the number of both gender-specific policies/strategies and sectoral policies that has been developed or has incorporated gender equality and social inclusion in their policy intent or objective and or as a strategy or action. The most recent ones since the last reporting includes:
- a) The *National Health and Strategic Plan (NHSP) 2021-2031* (the revised iteration of the *NHSP 2016-2020*) seeks to strengthen its response and address of GBV through its Strategic Objective 1 and 3;
 - b) The *National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) 2023 – 2032* (result of the review of the *NCCP 2012-2017*) has identified the need to Roll out a national climate change vulnerability, risk and adaptation assessment program that integrates Gender, Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) as a key Policy Directive and Strategy for achieving the vision, mission and objectives of the policy;
 - c) The *Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy 2024-2029* was validated 4th April 2024 in preparation for Cabinet Submission;
 - d) The *Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT) Inland Revenue Division Gender Action Plan: The Road Forward*, outlines the following six key areas of focus: Leadership Commitment, Communication, Accountability; Awareness, Learning, Engagement; Staffing and Recruitment; Career Support and Development; Flexible Workplace Practices; and Supportive and Inclusive workplace;
 - e) The *Ministry Of Mine, Energy And Rural Electrification (MMERE) Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy for Sustainable Mining in the Solomon Islands 2023 – 2033* that aims to ensure that all mining activities, at all stages of mining, from planning and exploration to operation and closure are carried out in a manner that promotes gender equality, inclusivity, and addresses the specific needs and concerns of women, marginalized groups, and local communities;
 - f) The *Ministry of Infrastructure and Development (MID) Safeguards Procedures Manual* was developed to implement the *National Transport Plan 2017–2036*. The manual has established a grievance redress mechanism that is gender-sensitive and gender-responsive including the need for a female focal point and gender analysis to be conducted in all approved infrastructure projects; and
 - g) The Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) has considered gender perspectives including social safeguards in its *Accessing Land for Tourism Investment Facilitation (ALTIF) Project* under the Solomon Islands Threshold Program, which is informed also by rural women.

- 1.3. Seven (7) out of the ten (10) Provinces of Solomon Islands including Honiara City Council (HCC) has adopted gender and women's specific policies. These Provinces are Malaita, Western, Guadalcanal, Temotu, Choiseul, Central and HCC.
- 1.4. The above policies provide a very strong and positive enabling environment across whole of government and at all levels for the advancement of gender equality in Solomon Islands.

Women and Girls with Disability

- 1.5. Significant strides to promote the rights of persons with disabilities including those of women and girls with disabilities include the ratification of the *CRPD* in 2023 and the launching of the Solomon Islands *National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2022 – 2031* and the *Rehabilitation Strategic Plan 2022-2031*.

Gender Data and Statistics

- 1.6. To strengthen the availability of gender statistics and poverty data in Solomon Islands and support action on the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the Ministry of Women Youth Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) supported by International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) conducted an initial *Equality Insights Study* (formerly known as the *Individual Deprivation Measure Study*) in Guadalcanal and Central Islands Province in 2020 and a nation-wide *Equality Insights Rapid Study* in 2022. The Study provides insights into the multidimensional deprivation and the issues that outline poverty and inequality under the following dimensions: food, water, shelter, health, education, energy, sanitation, relationships, clothing, family planning, environment, voice, time use and work.
- 1.7. The completion and launching of the *Solomon Islands 2019 National Population and Housing Census National Report* provides important updated sex and disaggregated data to inform policy making and programming.
- 1.8. Other significant researches that provides critical gender data and statistics include the '*Costing the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence and the Resources Required to Address it*' study that provides critical evidence to support the gender responsive budgeting efforts of the SIG; and the '*Leadership Matters Benchmarking Women in Business Leadership in The Pacific*' report by the Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI) that establishes a baseline for women's representation in senior business leadership that will ensure the development and implementation of evidence-based policy and practices to increase women's leadership in business and in all aspects of society.

Affirmative Action/Temporary Special Measures

- 1.9. The Solomon Islands Government is committed to the adoption and application of affirmative action as a key strategy for addressing long historical disadvantages to women particularly the continuous lack of women in positions of influence, decision-making and

governance. This commitment was established through the historical endorsement of the MWYCFA *Affirmative Action Strategy (AAS)- Accelerating Women’s Prospects and Pathway to Leadership, Decision Making and Governance 2022 – 2027*, which will enable acceleration of substantive equality between men and women.

- 1.10. The endorsement of a proposed amendment to the *Provincial Government Act (PGA) 1997* in December 2023, is a significant milestone for the Solomon Islands in its efforts to address the historical low representation and participation of women in politics at the Provincial Assembly levels.

Gender Based Violence Services

- 1.11. Some of the most significant achievements for Solomon Islands is in its efforts to address GBV, these include:

- a) the SAFENET, a response and referral network of government, non-Government and CSOs who provides essential services for victims and survivors of GBV, is now rolled out to nine (9) of the ten (10) Provinces of Solomon Islands. This is a key effort by government to ensure access to GBV services for those in rural and remote areas;
- b) the establishment of a Domestic Violence Counselling Registry with eight (8) registered domestic violence counsellors through the implementation of the *Solomon Islands Domestic Violence Counselling Guideline (DVCG)* launched in 2020;
- c) increased capacities of the SAFENET members to address emerging forms of violence particularly trafficking in person and technology-facilitated-gender based violence; and
- d) the establishment of the GBV in Emergencies Subcommittee under the National Protection Sector Committee has strengthened Solomon Islands response to GBV during times of emergencies.

- 1.12. Key factors that have enabled these successes includes: strengthened coordination among stakeholders in the gender space particularly through the convening of the Gender Equality and Women’s Development (GEWD) National Stakeholders Taskforce (NST), a coordination mechanism established under the overarching *National GEWD Policy*; positive relationships established between government and civil society organizations; increasing support by development partners focused on gender and women programs; ongoing advocacy programs that promote the importance of gender equality for achieving the *Sustainable Development Goals* particularly by NGOs, INGOs and CSOs; relevant researches to inform policy making and programming; and political will and leadership by relevant government ministries championing the promotion of women and girls.

1.13. Despite these achievements key historical challenges remains in advancing gender quality in Solomon Islands such as, inadequate resources including financial and technical especially at the provincial levels; competing priorities; unprecedented shocks and disasters both natural and man-made; geographical challenges; entrenched disadvantageous social norms and practices; and the continuous lack of women in positions of decision making and governance.

2. *Top Five Priorities for Accelerating Progress for Women and Girls Through Laws, Policies and/or Programmes*

Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice

- 2.1. An assessment of Solomon Islands legislative compliance to CEDAW in 2006 revealed that of the 113 CEDAW indicators used, Solomon Islands achieved full compliance with 23 indicators, partial compliance with 33 indicators and no compliance in relation to the remaining 57 indicators. While some progress has been made since, a good number of laws that directly and indirectly impact on women are outdated and contains discriminatory provisions in itself and or its effect.
- 2.2. Significant legislative development and reviews that promotes the principle of equality and non-discrimination recently adopted are the *Constitution (Amendment) (Dual Citizenship) Act 2018* and the *Education Act 2023*.
- 2.3. Review of both the Islanders' Marriage Act (Cap 171) and the Islanders' Divorce Act (Cap 170) has started in 2019 and a Consultation Paper on the review was launched in 2022. Consultation on this project is ongoing.
- 2.4. Work has begun on the review of labour and employment related legislations including the *Labour Act (CAP 73) 1982*, to ensure compliance with the International Labour Standards (ILS)' and address labour market challenges.

Eliminating Violence against Women and Girls

- 2.5. The high prevalence rate of violence against women and girls (VAWG) is one of the biggest development challenges in Solomon Islands. A recent study conducted in the Solomon Islands between 2021-2022, shows that VAWG drains government's revenue in health costs; time lost from productive work; policing; social services provision; and court costs. Indirect costs to the Government and society includes: damage to the mental health of women and children; loss of human resource potential over generations; loss of family integrity and safety nets; increases in mortality and suicide; and creation of community divisions.

- 2.6. The study estimates that the direct out of pocket expenditures amounted to USD 536,801 including USD 272,151 for survivors' access to health services, USD 82,866 for police, USD 102,466 for NGOs/Women's Organizations and USD 79,317 for legal/judicial services.
- 2.7. In Solomon Islands, 72,672 women experienced violence in the past five years with 59,664 of those women participating in the formal sector work force. Annual productivity loss of women in the formal sector due to intimate partner violence (IPV) is estimated to be USD 15,09 million (amounts to almost 1% of the country's GDP and the equivalent of 1,415,997 lost workdays). These figures do not take into consideration the informal sector, whose composition is disproportionately female. It can be assumed that the annual productivity loss is higher.
- 2.8. The cost of a minimum package of essential services for IPV survivors in Solomon Islands over a three-year period was estimated to be USD 2,787,112. The highest costs were for the implementation of an inclusive safe house at (USD 695,074, years 1-3), followed by the cost for setting up services for children at (USD 749,724, years 1-3).

Access to Health Care, including Sexual and Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights

- 2.9. A review of policy and legislation on Sexual and Reproductive Health and GBV in Solomon Islands in 2022, found evidence of progress but also gaps and areas that needs improvement in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Key gaps include: the lack of a standalone SRHR policy and strategy; related policies and strategies that are outdated; and limited consideration of people with disability (PWD) in SRHR frameworks.
- 2.10. The *National Population Policy 2016-2026*, the *Role Delineation Policy 2014* (plans are underway for its review) and the *National GEWD Policy 2021-2027* establishes strong commitments to address SRHR in the absence of a standalone policy framework.

Political Participation and Representation

- 2.11. Women continue to be underrepresented at all levels of political decision-making, in Parliament, Provincial Assemblies and in the HCC. Since Solomon Islands gained Independence in 1978, only 81 women have ever been voted into the Solomon Islands National Parliament including the current three (3) female Parliamentarians, only 8 women in about 45 years; and since the establishment of Provincial Assemblies in 1981, only 17 women has ever been voted in Provincial Assemblies, only 17 women in about 42 years, including the current 4 female Member of Provincial Assemblies (MPA's). This issue is critical because women are not contributing to their full potential in key decision-making platforms and the country is missing a critical perspective to complement that of men, negatively impacting on the country's development.

¹ 1 has served 3 terms, 2 have served 2 terms each

2.12. Two significant steps taken by the SIG to address this issue is through the endorsement of the *MWYCFA AAS 2022 – 2027*. It is a first of its kind for Solomon Islands that aims to accelerate the substantive equality between men and women. Key focus areas are on legislative reforms to enhance women’s rights and opportunity to political participation; gender parity in recruitment promotions and safe workplace; education and training opportunities for women in employment; promoting women in business and financial inclusion; building women’s movement and resource mobilization; and research and gender data. The Strategy is applicable to all women in Solomon Islands; women in rural and urban areas, women living in remote and vulnerable areas, young women, older women, women with disability and special needs, women in business and women business owners, female politicians and public servants, women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and women in productive and resource sector, professional women, and women in the informal sector; and by endorsing the proposed amendment to the *PGA 1997* for the adoption of temporary special measures (TSM) to increase the representation and participation of women in Provincial Assemblies.

Women’s Entrepreneurship and Women’s Enterprises

2.13. The ‘*Leadership Matters Benchmarking Women in Business Leadership in The Pacific*’ report by PSDI shows that women are underrepresented as business owners in the Solomon Islands (23%) and are largely in the sector of entertainment and catering (63%); more than half of Solomon Islands boards have no women directors with only two boards with more than 30% women directors; women are underrepresented in senior management particularly as CEOs (1 out of 15 or 7%); women are underrepresented on boards in all organization types in Solomon Islands; and women are more represented in leadership in media and communications, agriculture and fisheries, and utilities than in other sectors in Solomon Islands.

2.14. Promoting women’s entrepreneurship and enterprise will continue to be a priority of the SIG. A key strategic focus area of the *National Strategy on the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls (NSEEWG) 2020-2023* is ‘Enterprise development and support and improved employment opportunities. The current review of the NSEEWG will be informed by the findings of the report by PSDI.

3. *Actions taken to Prevent Discrimination and Promote the Rights of Marginalized Groups*

Women and Girls living in Remote and Rural Areas

Example 1: Women’s Savings Clubs

3.1. Approximately eight hundred (800) savings clubs have been established across the country. In 2020 there were 21,441 people as active savings group members, half of the 43,000-

member target by the Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI)². By 2023, the MWYCFA has established approximately 300 women's savings clubs across 7 Provinces. Program is gaining popularity and as a result, ministry continues to receive requests from rural communities to conduct establishment trainings.

- 3.2. The Women's Savings Clubs is a key platform for rural and remote women to acquire and enhance their knowledge and skills on various topics and particularly to benefit from financial literacy, small business and life skills trainings. The knowledge and skills acquired will then support women's aspirations to advance from the informal to formal sector.
- 3.3. The Women's Savings Clubs success stories include: women being able to pay for their children's school fees; women further investing their savings into income generating activities such as investing in small businesses like running canteens, baking, a home fuel depot, poultry farming, selling clothes and village/home stays; a member of a rural women saving club in one of the provinces is now a major supplier of poultry egg in the province; a rural women's saving club in one of the provinces paid for their community's land court case; and more rural women are joining the Solomon Islands National Provident Fund YouSave program.

Women and Girls with Disabilities

Example 2: Disability Women Empowerment Association Solomon Islands

- 3.4. The Disability Women Empowerment Association of Solomon Islands (DWEASI) was registered as a legal entity in 2022 comprising of women and girls with disabilities in the Solomon Islands. The Association was setup to promote and protect the rights of women and girls with disabilities in all areas of life and to advocate for inclusive-base approaches. The core values of the Association are inclusiveness, respect, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability. The DWEASI is governed by a Constitution. The DWEASI is a strong advocator for ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) with disabilities by actively participating and conducting activities during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign against GBV. The DWEASI also conducts income-generating projects for their members and are currently into honey production.
- 3.5. In 2023, 6 members of the DWEASI led the 16 Days of Activism Campaign in 6 rural communities in the Western Province under the theme *Empowering Women and Girls with disabilities through capacity building, active participation, Innovation, Self-Reliance, Motivation, and Partnership towards gender equality and social inclusion*. Their awareness focused on EVAWG particularly on violence perpetrated on persons with disabilities (PWDs) especially women, girls, and children. The other topics included disability rights, definition of disability and barriers, inclusion, brief on the CRPD and a personal testimony by a DWEA Staff. Community leaders stated that the program has taught them to be respectful of all

² Solomon Islands National Financial Inclusion strategy 3 (2021- 2025)

family members, and the testimony of a DWEA staff member (a young woman with a disability) will help motivate young people with disabilities to attend school and strive to be anything they want to be, regardless of disability. A total of about 175 people were reached with their awareness program. Approximately 250 people attended the International Day of Persons with Disabilities celebrations which was also part of the DWEASI 16 Days program.

Women and Girls in Humanitarian Settings

Example 3: National Protection Committee

3.6. The National Protection Sector Committee (NPC) established under the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) played a key role in ensuring protection perspectives of those most vulnerable were incorporated into the two years of preparedness for COVID 19 in 2020 to 2021 and response in 2022. The key target populace of the NPC were women, girls, children, people with disabilities, elderly, pregnant mothers, other vulnerable and marginalize groups in the country. An example of a key activity by the NPC is the distribution of women and girls' hygiene kits, disability kits, children's kit and boys and men's hygiene kits. The support was mainly from the members of the National Disaster Operation Centre (NDOC) Protection Sector Committees - UNFPA, UN Women, UNICEF, DFAT (Donor partner), ADB, Australia Humanitarian Program (AHP) partners and the Solomon Islands Government.

4. *Effects of Different Crisis*

COVID-19 and other Pandemics

4.1. Solomon Islands was forced to deal with the complex confluence of COVID-19 and a natural disaster, Tropical Cyclone (TC) Harold. It was not long after the pandemic was declared in March 2020, that Cyclone Harold hit Solomon Islands in April 2020. The declaration of the pandemic activated strict prevention measures including lockdowns, restricted movements, closed borders, schools and closure of public spaces such as the markets, the repatriation of people from Honiara back to their home villages. This resulted in people losing their jobs and incomes; increased stress over their economic hardships; limited or no access to livelihoods; basic goods and services; food insecurity and malnutrition; and higher risks to GBV³. While these restrictions were for the prevention of COVID-19 transmission, it exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and risks for those already experiencing inequalities. Women, girls and people with disabilities in the Solomon Islands were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and TC Harold⁴. The *Gender, Disability and*

³ Gender, Disability and Inclusion Analysis for COVID-19 and Tropical Cyclone Harold, Solomon Islands by Live and Learn Solomon Islands and CARE, June 2020 (updated November 2020)

⁴ Ibid

Inclusion Analysis of COVID-19 and Tropical Cyclone Harold outlined the following key findings:

- a. Family violence has reportedly increased since COVID-19, in a country which already had one of the highest rates of family and sexual violence in the world.
 - b. Livelihoods are particularly vulnerable to shocks due to semi-subsistence lifestyles and a high reliance on the informal sector for income.
 - c. The pandemic is having devastating impacts on local open-air produce and handicraft markets, with many markets closed, prices dropping, and reports of produce left to waste.
 - d. COVID-19 has led to a sharp drop in commodities exports (including logging and fisheries) and tourism, resulting in widespread job and income losses.
 - e. Hygiene information is being widely received, though the resulting behaviour change it is often temporary, with infrastructure gaps a constraint to sustainable changes in handwashing behaviour.
 - f. Women (as primary care givers and with significant domestic responsibilities) have an increased workload.
 - g. Pre-crisis patterns of representation, participation and decision-making are reflected in forums and processes for decision making about COVID-19 at household and community level.
- 4.2. COVID-19 saw a lot of economic hardships and increase in global poverty⁵. The Equality Insights Rapid Survey in 2022 provided important data on specific groups including women and girls, people with disability and those living in poverty and to inform COVID-19 recovery efforts where resources are most needed. The Survey is discussed in other parts of this report.

5. *Priorities for accelerating Progress for women and girls through laws, policies and/or programmes*

Eliminating Violence against Women and Girls

- 5.1. Eliminating violence against women and girls will continue to be a high priority for Solomon Islands. The *National Policy to Eliminate Violence against Women and Girls (EVAWG) 2021-2027* provides the mandate for the SIG to continue prioritising EVAWG. Priorities for the next five years will be on the prevention aspect of EVAWG through the development of an EVAWG Prevention Strategy; implementation of the *Family Protection Act 2014* specifically the rollout of the Domestic Violence Counselling registry and Authorised Justices to the Provinces; increased attention to perpetrator accountability and rehabilitation by working

⁵ World Bank. FAQs: Global Poverty Line Update. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/brief/global-poverty-line-faq>. (2015)

closely with the Correctional Services Solomon Islands (CSSI); and strengthening of the coordination, implementation and reporting of the Policy.

Political Participation and Representation

5.2. Women's political participation and representation will continue to be a high priority for Solomon Islands, being the least progressed gender issue. The mandate for this agenda is provided for by the *National GEWD Policy 2021-2027* and the *Affirmative Action Strategy (AAS) 2022-2027*. The focus will be to continue the implementation of the legislative reform to incorporate TSM in relevant legislation to guarantee seats for women in Provincial Assemblies and therefore increase women's political participation and representation at Provincial levels.

Unpaid Care and Domestic Work / Work-Family Conciliation

5.3. The *Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2015*, the *2019 National Population and Housing Census* and the *Equality Insights Rapid Survey 2022* provides strong evidence related to women's overrepresentation in the unpaid care and domestic work. Unpaid care work is the biggest barrier to women's economic empowerment, having repercussions for women's financial security and economic opportunities more broadly⁶⁷.

5.4. While there are pockets of work here and there to address this issue much more needs to be done, especially in ensuring legislations and policies that will provide the enabling environment for addressing women's unpaid care and domestic work. Significant opportunities for Solomon Islands are the current review of legislations related to labour and employment and the review of the *NSEEWG 2020-2023*.

Gender-responsive Budgeting

5.5. A gender responsive budgeting initiative is underway as part of the Government of Solomon Islands reform program to strengthen public financial management for fiscal resilience, including development and approval of new budget regulations under the *Public Financial Management Act (2013)*. The initiative will involve piloting Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) in identified government ministries. The pilot is being led by the MoFT and MWYCFA with technical assistance by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). This will continue to be a priority for MOFT and MWYCFA in the next five years.

Changing Discriminatory Social Norms and Gender Stereotypes

⁶ Oxfam and Strongim Bisnis, *Community Perception of Gender Norms and Economic Opportunity in Rural Solomon Islands study, 2018*

⁷ MWYCFA *National Strategy for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls*

- 5.6. Changing discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes underpins all the gender equality and women’s empowerment programs and activities, however this continues to be a challenge in the absence of a clear strategic direction and communication framework on how to address this issue and a monitoring framework to monitor its impact. This will continue to be a priority for the MWYCFA through the development of a proposed EVAWG Prevention Strategy.

Section Three: Progress across the 12 Critical Areas of Concern

Inclusive Development, Shared Prosperity and Decent Work

6. *Actions to advance Gender Equality in the World of Work*

Measures to Prevent Sexual Harassment, Including in the Workplace

Example 1: Public Service Sexual Harassment Survey

- 6.1. The *Public Service Bill 2022* criminalises sexual harassment in *Clause 130 (2) and (3)*. It is an offence for an employee to subject a person to sexual harassment. Maximum penalty: 5000 penalty units, imprisonment for 6 months, or both. (3) In this clause “sexual harassment” means subjecting a person to unwanted conduct (oral, written, physical or otherwise) that is, or would be taken by a reasonable person to be, of a sexual nature. Plans are underway for the adoption of the Bill.
- 6.2. The *Solomon Islands Public Service Code of Conduct* is set up to achieve and maintain a high standard of conduct and work performance to ensure that individuals, and the public service as a whole, are beyond reproach including the protection of Public Servants from sexual harassment in the workplace. The Code of Conduct defines Sexual Harassment as ‘any unwelcome or unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated’. Under the Code of Conduct’s respect for people principle, staff are expected to be “Actively contributing to a harassment free workplace”. Section 2.5 of the *Public Service Code of Conduct* states that ‘We all have a responsibility to ensure that our workplace is free from harassment, including sexual harassment, by ensuring that our own behaviour is not offensive, intimidating, humiliating, threatening or inappropriate’.
- 6.3. The *Solomon Islands Public Service Transformation Strategy (2017-2021) Thrust 6* and the *draft Ministry of Public Service (MPS) GESI Policy* reiterates the commitment by MPS to address sexual harassment in the Public Service. The MPS commissioned a *Prevalence Study*

on Harassment in the Public Service in 2019 which was conducted between late 2021 to early 2022.

- 6.4. Preparation is underway by the MPS to develop an Anti-Harassment Policy based on the findings of the Prevalence Study on Harassment in the Public Service. The Anti-Harassment Policy will uphold the principles and standards of gender equality and social inclusion, human rights, non-discrimination and the core principles and core values of the public service.

Improved Financial Inclusion and Access to Credit, including for Self-employed Women

Example 2: Women's Financial Inclusion Policies

- 6.5. Achieving financial inclusion for women is guided by the *Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI) National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025 (NFIS 3)* and the *National Women's Financial Inclusion Policy 2016-2023*. Key aims of these frameworks are to achieve gender parity in active users of financial accounts and to increase and improve access points to financial services.
- 6.6. A review of the *NFIS 2* to inform the *NFIS 3*, in March 2020, showed the following key progresses: Access points to financial services reached 825 registering a 0.48 percent growth from 2016; active users of financial accounts reached 283,954 of which 133,046 were held by women, achieving 94.7 percent and 88.7 percent of the respective targets; financial literacy programs covered 74,094 participants, primarily women and youth; while formal credit users reached 28,890, achieving 64.2 percent of the target; and Savings groups counted 21,441 active members, or just half of the 43,000-member target.

Devised Mechanisms for Women's Equal Participation in Economic Decision-making bodies

Example 3: Senior Executive Women in Leadership Training

- 6.7. In 2022, the Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI) Program by Asian Development Bank (ADB), developed a four-day Solomon Islands Senior Executive Women in Leadership training program to help support a pool of businesswomen and professional women to effectively participate in decision-making levels whether it be in business, organisations or on boards or committees.
- 6.8. A third cohort of women leaders and aspiring leaders completed the four-day training in September 2023. The training program was delivered through a partnership between the Institute of Solomon Islands Accountants (ISIA), the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) and the Solomon Islands Women in Business Association (SIWIBA). In the first cohort there were 23 women, 14 in the second and 17 in the third cohort.
- 6.9. Solomon Islands will engage in the global accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection once it is better informed about it.

7. *Actions to Reduce and/or Redistribute Unpaid Care and Domestic Work*

Included Unpaid Care and Domestic Work in National Statistics and Accounting

Example 1: 2019 National Population and Housing Census

- 7.1. The *2019 National Population and Housing Census* defines employment as paid-work and unpaid work. Paid-work is defined as *'persons employed in occupations who receive monetary cash compensation in the form of a wage, salary...or profit/income for their labour'*. Unpaid work is defined as work *'where monetary cash payment is not necessarily obligated, in practice or by legislation, among those involved in the exchange of goods and services...'*. Unpaid workers engage in housework, caring for sick or elderly, caring for children, assisting in family gardens or fishing for subsistence use, sale or barter, or volunteering in community work etc.
- 7.2. The *2019 Census* shows that females dominate the unpaid work (55.6% females and 44.4% males) are concentrated in low-skilled elementary occupations (66.4%) of which a substantive number is in housework (61.3%).

Example 2: Equality Insights Rapid Survey 2022

- 7.3. The Solomon Islands Equality Insights Rapid Survey 2022 Study is essentially an alternative gender-sensitive multidimensional poverty measurement that provides insights into the levels of deprivation that women, men and specific groups' experience under 15 dimensions. One of the measured dimensions is Time use by women, men and specific groups. This examined the gendered nature of time particularly the dual burden of caring for dependents while doing paid work and the financial, social, and physical consequences of time poverty. Finding regarding time use is also necessary to the progress of SDG Target 5.4: Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.
- 7.4. Key findings of the Time Use Dimension show that women were more like to experience severe deprivation (46%) than men (39%); more men (23%) were scored as Gat enaf (having enough) time compared with women (17%); the age group most likely to be severely deprived was 30 - 59 years (46%); those with disability were more likely to experience severe deprivation (47%) than those without disability (41%); and those living in rural areas (83%) were more likely to meet the threshold for any deprivation than those in urban areas (77%).
- 7.5. During paid work, more women (79%) than men (54%) assume caring responsibilities for children and young people; and 70 % of women and 55 % of men had assumed caring responsibilities for people older than 15 years, people with disability, or older people.

- 7.6. Regarding unpaid work within the home, 89% of women assumed caregiving duties for children and young people under 15 years of age compared with 54% of men; and caregiving responsibilities for individuals aged 15 or older, people with disability, or older persons were also assumed mainly by women (77%) in the sample compared to 52% men.
- 7.7. Respondents with disability were also engaged in more caregiving responsibilities for children and other adults during both paid and unpaid work activities when compared to those without disability.
- 7.8. Women are more likely to engage in dual-labour (79%) compared to men (59%); more men than women in the sample were unable to engage in paid work (45% compared 41% women).
- 7.9. Almost half of respondents reported a loss or reduction in medical care due to a lack of time (51%), with women accounting for 56% of those impacted. This issue was particularly prevalent among respondents with disability (56% with disability compared to 50% without disability) and people living in rural areas (54% rural compared to 47% urban).

Promoted Decent Work for Paid Care Workers, including Migrant Workers

Example 3: Aged Care Training

- 7.10. In 2024, a second cohort of seventeen (17) Solomon Islander women obtained their Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) accredited Aged Care Preparation Skill Set qualification in preparation to work in Aged Care Support under Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) program, in Australia. These trainings are a cooperation between Australia and the Solomon Islands Government.
- 7.11. Solomon Islands will engage in the Global Alliance for Care once it is better informed about it.

8. *Actions taken to reduce the Gender Digital Divide*

- 8.1. Solomon Islands was among one of first four countries to Pilot the UN Inclusive Digital Economy Scorecard (IDES) – a tool to help countries understand their digital status and monitor better their access to digital economy and technology. The Solomon Islands IDES score has continuously improved from 39% in 2020, 41% in 2021 to 43% in 2022.

Introduced or Strengthened Programs to Increase the Digital Literacy and skills of Women and Girls

Example 1: APTC Micro-Credential Courses

- 8.2. Key efforts to bridge the digital divide is through two micro-credential courses offered by the Australian Pacific Training Coalition (APTC). The two courses are: Digital Literacy Essentials which provides an introduction to modern digital technologies, software and popular social media platforms; and Communication Technologies for Business Success which explores digital communication technologies and software used by industry

today and how these can improve productivity and collaboration in the workplace. The courses are being offered through a partnership between the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the Pacific Tourism Organization (SPTO), APTC, and Tourism Solomons in response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Example 2: Digital Literacy in Disadvantaged Rural Communities

- 8.3. In February 2024, a two-day science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) Awareness Basic ICT and Digital Skills workshop was conducted in a rural Community High School in North East Guadalcanal for 20 Teachers and Students. The workshop introduced students and teachers to STEM education and the importance of basic IT and digital skills in pursuing STEM studies. The workshop also looked at STEM career paths and the ways in which STEM studies can be applied to address real-world challenges, such as roads and transport infrastructure, public health, and information specialists. Both teachers and students were taught how to use different computer applications and essential digital skills to support their schoolwork and assignments, draft Curriculum Vitae and apply for jobs, as well as the importance of email and safely navigating the internet. The workshop was organized by the Solomon Islands Commonwealth Scholars and Alumni Associations (SICSA).

Taken Measures to Create Conditions for Gender-Responsive Digital Learning Environment

Example 3: MEHRD ICT Master Plan

- 8.4. The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) has developed an Information Communication Technology (ICT) Master Plan to help support the provision of quality and marketable education; and an alternative option to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning through ICT. It aims to equip and train students with technological knowledge and skills, providing them an advantage in the labour market and in tertiary education.

9. Macroeconomic and Fiscal Policy Environment

- 9.1. A significant effort to understand the macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment on the implementation and advancement of gender equality in the Solomon Islands, is the current undertaking by the SIG MWYCF and MoFT to conduct a Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) gender responsive assessment. This is to collect information on the extent to which gender is mainstreamed in the public financial management (PFM) system and establish a baseline for future assessments. The findings of the assessment are intended to support ongoing reform program to strengthen public financial management for fiscal resilience; to ensure financing of gender policies; to integrate gender responsive budgeting in new budget regulations under the *Public Financial Management Act (2013)*;

and support implementation of gender responsive measures. The assessment is based on the *Supplementary Framework for Assessing Gender Responsive Public Financial Management (GRPFM)*⁸. The assessment was supported by ADB. The GRPFM Indicators are as follows:

PEFA GRPFM INDICATOR	
GRPFM–1	Gender impact analysis of budget policy proposals
GRPFM –2	Gender responsive public investment management
GRPFM –3	Gender responsive budget circular
GRPFM –4	Gender responsive budget proposal documentation
GRPFM –5	Sex-disaggregated performance information
GRPFM –6	Tracking budget expenditure for gender equality
GRPFM –7	Gender responsive reporting
GRPFM –8	Evaluation of gender impacts of service delivery
GRPFM –9	Legislative scrutiny of gender impacts of the budget

- 9.2. While the formal report on the assessment findings has yet to be released, preliminary findings indicate that gender considerations remain largely absent in relevant PFM institutions, processes, or systems in the Solomon Islands.
- 9.3. The National Women's Financial Inclusion Policy (2022-2026) is a roadmap for mobilizing funds to drive efforts and promote gender equality in the financial space, and it is supported by the overall National Financial Inclusion Strategy. One of the ongoing efforts to advance gender equality in finance and the economy is to promote access to financial services, including e-financial products and services. Current initiatives include YouSave/YouSave loMobile, e-money providers like M-Selen, Ezi Pei, and digital initiatives. To increase access to finance and credit and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME), the following initiatives are explored. M-Fund initiative, credit line, SME guarantee scheme, export financing facility, and so on.

Poverty Eradication, Social Protection and Social Services

10. *Actions to Reduce/Eradicate Poverty among Women and Girls*

Supported Women's Entrepreneurship, Access to Markets, and Business Development Activities

⁸ <https://www.pefa.org/resources/supplementary-framework-assessing-gender-responsive-public-financial-management-0>

Example 1: Business Advisory Skills Training

- 10.1. A training workshop for 60 business advisors (experienced and emerging) from across the country, including women, was held in August 2023, as the first of its kind in the Solomon Islands, with the goal of improving the business advisory landscape. The workshop gave participants the opportunity to broaden their knowledge, skills, networks, and systems required in a business advisory practice, such as understanding a variety of business issues, effective communication, and a strong work ethic. The Solomon Islands' business advisor network is expanding, opening up opportunities for women to work as advisors.
- 10.2. The training was delivered in collaboration with the Institute of Solomon Islands Accountants (ISIA), the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce & Industries (SICCI), DT Global, and the Government of New Zealand's Business Link Pacific Program. The workshop was funded by the ADB's COVID-19 Business Recovery Initiative which includes advancing women's economic empowerment as a key strategy.

Example 2: Livelihood of Local Women

- 10.3. A ground-breaking initiative to improve the livelihoods of local women from four rural communities in the Western Province was launched in May 2024, a new line of body lotion and soap made from sustainably harvested sea grapes. The women of these four communities have been actively involved in integrating traditional practices with scientific data to ensure the sustainable management of sea grapes and related marine ecosystems in their communities contributing to climate resilience while also increasing value of their sea grapes by transforming them into other products, such as soap and lotion, contributing to their long-term livelihoods. The processes used in this initiative, such as managing, harvesting, processing, and adding value to sea grapes, have been documented in a manual and video to ensure that this best practice can be shared with other communities in the Solomon Islands.
- 10.4. Climate Resilient by Nature (CRxN), a joint initiative of the Australian Government and WWF-Australia, is funding this project. CRxN promotes nature-based solutions for restoring and protecting critical ecosystems, creating sustainable livelihoods, and increasing resilience to climate change.

Example 3: Small Business & Financial Literacy Training of Trainers

- 10.5. As part of the implementation of the National Strategy on Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls 2020-2023, the MWYCFA's Women Development Division conducted Small Business and Financial Literacy Training of Trainers (TOT) in 2023. The training's goal is to provide women with the knowledge and skills they need to invest their savings in small businesses and advance from the informal to the formal business sector. The TOT targeted rural women savings club leaders from six provinces: Choiseul, Western, Central,

Guadalcanal, Malaita, and Honiara City. The TOT is estimated to indirectly benefit 5291 women and girls in the country. The TOT was implemented through a partnership agreement between MWYCFA and Strongim Bisnis.

11. *Actions to Improve Access to Social Protection for Women and Girls*

- 11.1. Despite a legal and policy enabling environment, the Solomon Islands' social protection coverage and system remain deficient. The current social protection available in Solomon Islands is limited to the National Provident Fund youSave program, a long-term savings scheme and retirement fund aimed at workers in the informal economy, and the implementation of a disability benefit in 2022.
- 11.2. The SIG's policy basis for ensuring social protection systems in the Solomon Islands is based on the following existing policy and legal frameworks: the National Development Strategy 2016-2035, the Family Protection Act 2014, the Children and Family Welfare Act 2017, the National Peace Building Policy 2016-2020 (references to lifecycle risk management), the National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2022-2031, and the Rehabilitation Strategic Plan 2022-2031. Solomon Islands is also a signatory to CEDAW, CRC, and CRPD.
- 11.3. A series of national dialogues are underway to determine the best strategy for strengthening Solomon Islands' social protection system. To support this process, a Child Sensitive Social Protection Training was held in the Solomon Islands in February 2024. The training also ensured that participants understood the concepts, costs, and benefits of social protection programs, as well as their economic and social implications.
- 11.4. Save the Children commissioned consultations to help the Solomon Islands Government strengthen its social protection system, with a focus on developing a shock-responsive and child-sensitive approach. The following are institutional and policy entry points identified through the consultations: the recent passing of a National Disability Policy and ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the Child and Family Welfare Act (CFWA) 2017 and Social Welfare Assistance (SWA) scheme; the 2024 General Election and subsequent government restructuring; the National Disaster Management Office envisions greater use of cash assistance.

12. *Actions to Improve Health Outcomes for Women and Girls*

Promoted women's access to health services through expansion of universal health coverage or public health services

Example 1: Universal Health Coverage

- 12.1. The Solomon Islands Government has adopted *Universal Health Coverage 2021 – 2031 (UHC)* as the guiding principle for health service delivery in the country.

- 12.2. The Ministry of Health and Medical Services intends to review the Health Services Act of 1978 to ensure equitable primary health care services such as maternity, child primary health care, and family planning, among others. Initial consultations to inform the Act's review were held in 2018, with a draft policy document developed in 2019. The review process for the Act is expected to be completed in 2024.
- 12.3. A key success of the National Health Strategic Plan 2016-2020 (NHSP) implementation is that 9 out of every 10 women giving birth are attended by a skilled birth attendant. The revised NHSP 2022-2031 aims to maintain the high quality of maternal services.
- 12.4. The Role Delineation Policy (RDP), created in 2008, serves as a tool for health service planning, infrastructure development, and human resource management. It has contributed to the improvement of primary health care delivery, including patient referral practices and access to health services. The Policy states that GBV services should be available at peripheral (remote) health clinics on outer islands. The review of the RDB should begin in 2024.

Expanded Specific Health Services for Women and Girls, including Sexual and Reproductive Health Services, Maternal Health and HIV Services

Example 2: Maternal Health Care

- 12.5. The Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) has taken a significant step towards improving and strengthening maternal health care in the Solomon Islands by signing a Record of Discussions with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) on the subject.
- 12.6. The four-year project, which began in 2023, aims to improve the health of mothers and newborns in five target provinces: Honiara, Guadalcanal, Western, Central, and Malaita. The project is worth \$5 million USD and is being managed by the WHO Representative Office in the Solomon Islands. KOICA committed an additional 1 million USD as a bilateral component directly to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.

Example 3 Mobile Outreach Clinics

- 12.7. The Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association is the leading non-governmental organization (NGO) that provides sexual and reproductive health and family planning information and services. Mobile outreach clinics for rural areas and vulnerable populations are critical components of their service. The mobile clinics offer a free cervical cancer screening program as well as sexual reproductive health (SRH) education as a strong preventative strategy to address the rising cases of cervical cancer in women and girls. This service is provided for both girls and boys. By 2020, SIPPA had reached and served over 70,000 people across the country, primarily women and girls.

13. Actions to Improve Education Outcomes and Skills for Women and Girls

Promoted Safe, Harassment-Free and Inclusive Educational Environments for Women and Girls

Example 1: Security for Girls in Schools

- 13.1. The MEHRD has taken measures to address security concerns for girls in schools, investigate sexual abuse and rape, and prosecute offenders.
- 13.2. Between 2016 and 2020, MEHRD conducted consultations and developed a draft Child Protection Policy. The intent was to include its provisions in the Education Bill. The Child Protection Policy included specific provisions for the safety of students (including girls) in schools, addressing child abuse/rape, as well as the process for prosecuting perpetrators and referring children (victims).
- 13.3. To determine the issues addressed in the Child Protection Policy in education, consultations were held at four locations in Guadalcanal Province in 2020, one in Honiara in 2021, three in Western Province in 2021, and two in Central Islands Province in 2021. These consultations in Guadalcanal, Honiara, Western, and Central Islands provinces drew a total of 400 participants, including teachers, parents, community and youth representatives. Child protection consultations covered the following areas:
 - a) Child protection referral pathways to update and finalize the Schools Administrative Instruction (New Education Reform)
 - b) Initial discussions to develop the Child Protection Manual and Guideline, which are currently underway
 - c) MEHRD's commitment to ensuring that school infrastructure includes fencing, particularly for girls' dormitories, as well as lockable toilets.
 - d) Ensured access to safe water and sanitation services and facilitated menstrual hygiene management especially in schools and other education/training settings

Ensured Access to Safe Water and Sanitation Services and Facilitated Menstrual Hygiene Management especially in Schools and other Education/Training settings

Example 2: Wash in Schools (WinS)

- 13.4. MEHRD launched a *National Standards for WASH in School (WinS)* in June 2018. The National Standards for WinS were developed to help define the requirements for school WASH facilities and to provide a set of achievable standards that are gender sensitive and ensure equitable access. These requirements include child friendly water, toilets and handwashing facilities; hygiene practices; the distance between sanitation facilities and dormitories to ensure safety for girls; the accessibility of disabled children; and the long-term viability of these structures.
- 13.5. Between 2018 and 2020, the MEHRD implemented the Solomon Islands better Learning Environment (SIBLE) project and celebrated the following achievements:
 - a) Developed *Wash in Schools (WinS)* standards for schools
 - b) The development of WinS guidelines and Sanitary Survey Forms

- c) The Ministry of Health and Medical Service (MHMS) has incorporated WASH requirements into the National Minimum Standards for WinS.
- d) The Solomon Islands Education Management Information System (SIEMIS) now includes MHMS indicators from changes to the annual school survey.
- e) WinS Digitized Portal for 1,200 plus schools via AKVO. UNICEF provided support for this.
- f) 15 Student-led WASH clubs in 15 schools (Guadalcanal Province Education Authority/MEHRD).

Strengthened Measures to Prevent Adolescent Pregnancies and to enable Adolescent Girls to continue their Education in the case of Pregnancy and/or Motherhood

Example 3: Gender Equity in Education Policy

- 13.6. One of the primary goals of MEHRD's Gender Equity in Education Policy draft, which was developed in 2017, is to ensure that girls have a second chance at education. For example, the policy encourages school-aged girls who become pregnant to return to school after the birth.
- 13.7. In 2018, MEHRD signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Solomon Islands National University. This partnership aims to provide access to education for women and girls who were unable to return to mainstream schooling due to pregnancy or who dropped out while still in school and wanted to return to study. They can enroll in the SINU Pre-University Program as part of a second-chance educational program. This initiative gives students who are unable to complete their studies the opportunity to continue and pursue their career goals.

14. Economic Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic

Example 1: Solomon Islands Equality Insights Rapid Survey 2022

- 14.1. The disruptions caused by COVID-19, particularly its impact on the economy, meant that the Solomon Islands, despite having a long list of development priorities, faced ongoing challenges due to limited resources. The Equality Insights Rapid Survey provided much-needed poverty deprivation data - data that provides insight into people's lives in Solomon Islands - which was critical to inform priorities, policies, programs, and actions that respond to the diverse and geographically dispersed needs of Solomon Islands residents. The data has aided the formulation of provincial gender and women's development policies.

Example 2: National Employment Policy

- 14.2. In 2021, a Rapid Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on Employment and Businesses in Solomon Island informed MCIL's development of a National Employment Policy (NEP) 2023-2027 with ILO support. In October 2022, a two-day national consultation workshop was held to inform the proposed NEP. One of the key requirements for the NEP

development is to ensure that the policy is gender responsive. The Rapid Assessment was carried out by MCILI in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce and the Solomon Islands Council of Trade Unions, with technical and financial assistance from ILO.

Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

15. *Priority Forms of Gender-Based Violence*

Intimate Partner Violence, including Sexual Violence and Marital Rape and Domestic violence committed by other Family or Household members

- 15.1. Addressing domestic violence, including intimate partner violence (IPV), is a top priority for the Solomon Islands Government, which works through the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs and other ministries with similar mandates. This prioritization is based on the alarming prevalence of IPV violence in the country, as determined by the Solomon Islands 2009 Family Health & Safety Study (FHSS). Although no follow-up studies have been conducted to update these findings, anecdotal evidence and ongoing reports indicate that high rates of violence persist.
- 15.2. Since its enactment in 2016, the government has prioritized the implementation of the Family Protection Act 2014 in order to address domestic violence. In 2020, a comprehensive review of the FPA 2014 was carried out to ensure that it remains relevant and provides effective protection mechanisms for victims and survivors of domestic violence. The review drew on the extensive experience of the SAFENET GBV response and referral network, making a total of 43 recommendations. Details of the review are discussed in other sections of this report, and it has provided critical guidance for the FPA 2014's implementation.
- 15.3. The SAFENET is now established in nine (9) of ten (10) provinces, including Honiara City, providing critical access to services for women and children affected by sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in rural and remote areas. The MWYCFA has helped Provincial SAFENETs strengthen their governance and develop coordination tools.

Sexual Harassment and Violence in Public Places, Educational Settings and Workplaces

- 15.4. Workplace harassment, including sexual harassment, is a key priority for the Solomon Islands government, as overseen by the Ministry of Public Service. A survey conducted within the public sector on the prevalence of sexual harassment revealed the need to address this issue. An important follow-up to this survey is the MPS's preparation to develop an Anti-Harassment Policy beginning in 2024. For more information about this work, see Question 6.

Violence Against Women and Girls Facilitated by Technology

- 15.5. The high prevalence rate of IPV in Solomon Islands shows that GBV is well-entrenched. Where GBV is pervasive, targeted online gender abuse follows in its wake. The digital state of Solomon Islands points to the need to take technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) as a very serious issue to be addressed. The digital state of the Solomon Islands emphasizes the importance of addressing technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV). SI's digital state is as follows: with a population of approximately 732 thousand, there are approximately 264 thousand internet users, representing 36.1% of the total population; approximately 124 thousand social media users, representing 16.9% of the total population; and approximately 523 thousand active cellular mobile connections, representing 71.4% of the total population.
- 15.6. The Solomon Islands government, through the Ministry of Communications and Aviation and the Ministry of Police, has begun significant work on cybersecurity and privacy, allowing us to recognize and incorporate the gendered nature of online harms into our digital regulations. An inaugural TFGBV training, the first not only in the Solomon Islands but also in the Pacific Region, was held to help frontline GBV workers who are members of SAFENET build their knowledge and skills to address TFGBV. The MWYCFA has committed to formally incorporating TFGBV into SAFENET response and referral pathways, SOPs, databases, and so on.

Gender-based violence in Conflict-Affected Settings

- 15.7. The Solomon Islands Government prioritizes addressing gender-based violence in conflict-affected settings. A significant step was taken when the Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace, and Ecclesiastical Affairs (MTGPEA) was invited to join the Family Protection Advisory Council (FPAC), which was established under the FPA 2014 to provide oversight and governance for the FPA 2014's implementation. The invitation to MTGPEA is based on the organization's significant role in promoting the stability and security of families and communities in the Solomon Islands, including peacebuilding, reconciliation, conflict resolution, and support for traditional governance mechanisms, churches, and community and faith-based leaders. On the same principle, the Ministry of Police, National Security, and Correctional Services will join FPAC. The FPAC now includes the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs, the Ministry of Police, National Security, and Correctional Services, the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force, the Ministry of Finance and Treasury, the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, the Social Welfare Division (MHMS), the Ministry of Traditional Governance, Peace, and Ecclesiastical Affairs, and the Family Support Center.

Child, Early and Forced Marriages

- 15.8. An amendment to the Islanders Marriage Act has been proposed that would raise the marriage age to 18 years. This work is being led by the National Action Committee on Committee on Children (NACC), which includes representatives from various government sectors and CSOs. The NACC's mandate is to advise the government on issues affecting children.

Trafficking in Women and Girls

- 15.9. The Solomon Islands place a high priority on combating human trafficking. Significant efforts have been made in the Solomon Islands over the last five years to strengthen its response to TIP, including preparation for the ratification of the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC), which includes protocols for TIP by sea and air, as well as victim protection. In 2021, the UNODC collaborated with the Immigration Division, the MWYCFA, and the National Statistics Office, IOM, and justice agencies to begin work on a nationwide survey to estimate the prevalence of human trafficking in Solomon Islands, in preparation for accession to the UNTOC. MCILI, through its Immigration Division, is in the process of developing a comprehensive legislative framework covering all aspects of anti-trafficking action, including legislation that will regulate the inflow of migrants who may fall victim to trafficking, as well as the availability of legislation to regulate internal trafficking that occurs in extractive industries across the country; and the adoption of the Solomon Islands National Action Plan Against Human Trafficking.

16. *Priority Actions to Address Gender-based Violence*

Introduced or Strengthened Violence Against Women Laws, and their Enforcement and Implementation

Example 1: The Family Protection Act 2014 Review

- 16.1. The Family Protection Act of 2014 became effective in 2016. Section 67 of the FPA requires that an independent review of its operation be conducted within three years of its inception, with the Review Report being tabled in Parliament. The MJLA, with support from the MWYCFA, completed the Act's review in 2020. 163 key stakeholders and service providers were consulted in each of Solomon Islands' nine (9) provinces. The Police, Health, PSOs, and CSOs were all consulted. The review made a total of 43 recommendations: those that relate to the MWYCFA, including their secretariat role of the Family Protection Advisory Council; those that relate to DV service delivery, including membership to SAFENET, safe accommodation, and social welfare; the Family Protection Advisory Council's (FPAC) effectiveness and resource allocation of the Act; domestic violence counselling options, including perpetrator counselling; and public awareness mapping and reach to remote areas and people with disabilities.

- 16.2. The review found that the FPA's implementation resulted in the following positive outcomes: Increased availability of services for survivors; expansion of SAFENET into four provinces at the time of the review (SAFENET has now expanded to nine out of ten provinces, including HCC); development and launch of the DV Counselling Guidelines; long-term strengthening of FPAC with stable membership; and increased GBV data collection through SAFENET.
- 16.3. The review identified several challenges in the implementation of the FPA, including: police duties under the Act; the low number of interim and final Protection Orders issued (only 13 reports resulted in applications for final Protection Orders in the Magistrates Court); reaching people in rural and remote areas, as well as people with disabilities; and gaps in SAFENET service provision, particularly in the provinces.
- 16.4. In April 2019, a research project documented the experiences of 123 women, 3 men, and 24 province-based officers who used the FPA 2014 services and whether they felt safer. These women and men came from Guadalcanal, Isabel, Malaita, Temotu, and Western Provinces. The data set for the research project represented approximately 10% of all women who used FPA services between January 1, 2016 and September 1, 2019. Key findings on why women went to services: one-third went because of encouragement and information from family and friends, 15% through media or awareness, 6% from information from chiefs, and the remainder because they believed police were the "right" place to go. The other findings included were service providers' attitudes and information are a key determinant of whether or not a woman uses the FPA; women who sought legal advice and/or pursued court cases that resulted in court cases or referrals, reported generally high satisfaction; RSIPF is the most commonly used service under the FPA; and approximately half of service users were satisfied with the services and felt safe after using the FPA.

Introduced, Updated or Expanded National Action Plans on Ending Violence against Women and Girls

Example 2: Updated National Policy to Eliminate Violence against Women and Girls

- 16.5. The first National Policy to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) was implemented from 2010 to 2014 and was informed by the 2009 Solomon Islands FHSS; its review informed the National Policy to EVAWG 2016–2020. The 2016-2020 version was updated to reflect the passage of FPA 2014 and changes to sexual offenses in the Penal Code. The current, updated EVAWG Policy 2021-2027 is the result of a review of the 2016-2020 EVAWG policy.
- 16.6. The review of the EVAWG Policy 2016-2020 showed the continued relevance of the priority outcome areas however, the review also showed areas for improvement. These includes the lack of awareness and knowledge of the policy and its objectives in most rural areas; the lack of emphasis on minority groups including women with disabilities; better

link between the Governance of the EVAWG and GEWD policies for better management, reporting and best use of WDD resources; need for increased focus on rural and disability issues in prevention and response to EVAWG; the need for more investment to integrate EVAWG into legal, police and judicial contexts; Outcome 4 (rehabilitation of perpetrators) demonstrated limited effectiveness; however, work by Correctional Services and programming through FBOs and development partners contributes to changing social norms and should be strengthened; more work is needed to integrate EVAWG issues into the education and health systems to create social norms and generational change; in the context of SAFENET, coordination was perceived to be good, but needed to build capacity for implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and learning; coordination and collaboration across all ministries and in the private sector needs to be improved to address issues of sexual harassment and EVAWG in workplaces; more coordination is needed between national government, development partners, and provincial governments to ensure rural women and other marginalised groups can access justice and services; and more coordination with CSOs, as well as ministries responsible for health and education, to increase EVAWG awareness among young people and women seeking primary health care.

- 16.7. In response to the review findings, the National Policy for EVAWG 2021-2027 continued to seek the following five Priority Outcome Areas: Outcome One: VAWG decreases as a result of comprehensive prevention strategies. Outcome two: Legal frameworks, law enforcement, and the justice system are strengthened. Outcome Three: Victims have improved access to essential services such as health, legal, counselling, and protective services; Outcome Four: Perpetrators are held accountable by their communities and the law, and they are rehabilitated; and Outcome five: National EVAWG commitments and systems have improved coordination, data collection, and funding, but with a stronger emphasis on the areas identified during the review.

Introduced or Strengthened Services for Survivors of Violence

Example 3: Domestic Violence Counselling Guideline

- 16.8. To ensure the highest standard of domestic violence counselling service, the SIG, through the MWYCFA, launched the Solomon Islands Domestic Violence Counselling Guidelines in 2020. The guidelines establish a mechanism for registering and deregistering domestic violence counsellors in accordance with Section 54 of the FPA.
- 16.9. In 2021, the first steps were taken to establish the Domestic Violence Counselling Register. The first call for applications to become a registered DV counsellor went out in 2022. There were thirty-two (32) applicants who underwent a thorough and meticulous registration process in accordance with the DVCG. The registration process included assessments, role-playing, observed counselling, additional training, and a thorough

evaluation of relevant prior experience in DV counselling. Eight DV counsellors were successfully registered.

- 16.10. Advertising the DV counselling registry requires a minimum of 20 registered DV counsellors to ensure a "do no harm" approach and to avoid overwhelming the existing 8 DV counsellors. A second call for applications to become a registered domestic violence counsellor is expected in 2024.
- 16.11. The registration process also revealed critical gaps and challenges in our DVCG, providing valuable insights for future enhancements. This included revising the DVCG to require mandatory supervision every 1-3 months and biannual trainings; conducting regular GBV and DV survivor-centered training led by the DVCC; and conducting a one-week survivor-centered counselling training for all applicants, regardless of shortlisting status, focusing on registration, expectations, and basic training skills. Ongoing workshops and training sessions will be held to continuously build counsellor knowledge and skills in order to better understand and serve victims and survivors, as well as to revise the Solomon Islands DVCG.
- 16.12. Domestic Violence Counselling Provider Organizations (DVCPO) must be registered in order for the DVC Register to be implemented. While two DVCPOs applied, only one met the DVCG requirements and was therefore successfully registered: the Family Support Centre. A domestic violence counseling committee has also been formed in Honiara.

17. *Strategies to Prevent Gender-based Violence*

Promoting Positive Gender-equitable Attitudes, Beliefs, Values and Norms, especially Among Men and Boys

Example 1: Male Advocacy Program with CSSI officers

- 17.1. Between 2021 and 2022, the MWYCFA, in collaboration with the Anglican Church of Melanesia Evangelical Gender Coordinator, held two GBV awareness and training sessions for male CSSI officers. The training takes a 'Male advocacy' approach, which involves men 'talking' to men as a strategy for addressing and ending violence against women and girls through positive behavioral change. A total of 55 CSSI male officers attended these trainings. One of the program's main goals is to eventually target male inmates and provide them with similar awareness and training.

Mobilizing Community/Faith/Traditional Leaders, Politicians, Opinion Influencers, Journalists, or Media Influencers to Influence Positive Norms

Example 2: Video of Men against VAWG

- 17.2. In 2021, as part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign against GBV, a group of young filmmakers collaborated with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and Dreamcast Theatre to create a film focusing on the role of men in ending violence

against women, as well as to harness and build on growing public sentiment that men and boys must be more involved in ending violence against women and girls. The project collaborated with 15 prominent Solomon Islander men, including the Governor General of Solomon Islands, a Parliament member, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, the Creative Director/Co-Founder of Dreamcast Theatre, an award-winning Pacific Artist, a Musician/Advocate, the Ethno Temporary Music Director, the President of the Solomon Islands Deaf Association, the Veteran Broadcaster, Captain of the Kurukuru national futsal team, Regional coordinator Uniting Pacific, Youth leader/ Founder of TMC foundation, Chair of the Young Entrepreneurs Council Solomon Islands and the Coordinator of the Mai-Maasina Green belt. The video was launched online on the final day of the 16 days and received widespread traction including being screened on TTV and Pasifika TV.

- 17.3. Link to the video is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=065avuYdk1s>. It was also shared on both the MWYCFA's 16 Days of Activism page, and the SAFENET page. Those wishing to further share the video were encouraged to use the following text or parts of the following text *'Today (December 10th) marks the end of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, but we look forward to continuing our campaign in the coming year under our theme "Safety in our Families leads to Peace in our Nation". We also recognise today the International Day for Human Rights, and acknowledge the fundamental right of women and girls to live lives free from violence. Today, at the close of the 16 Days, we are absolutely thrilled to launch this short film 'Iumi Man Save Endim Vaelens'.*

Raising Public Awareness to Change Attitudes and Behaviours

Example 3: 16 Days of Activism Campaign against Violence Against Women and Girls

- 17.4. The annual 16 Days of Activism Campaign against violence against women and girls will remain the largest platform at both the national and provincial levels for raising awareness about the need to end violence against women and girls, its harmful effects on women and girls, families, and societies, legislation that protects victims and survivors of GBV, and GBV services available in the Solomon Islands. This platform brings together government, NGOs, INGOs, CSOs (including FBOs), people with disabilities organizations, and youth stakeholders to ensure coordinated programs and, more importantly, standardised messaging over a 16-day period aimed at changing attitudes and behaviours regardless of the target audience. The annual 16 Days Campaign directly reaches 300 to 500 people in each province, including Honiara.

18. *Actions to Prevent and Respond to Technology-facilitated Gender-based Violence*

Introduced or Strengthened Legislation and Regulatory Provisions

Example 1: TFGBV Policies and Legislations

- 18.1. There are very few laws, policies, and regulations addressing TFGBV. The FPA domestic violence legislation addresses aspects of TFGBV, defining the use of a mobile phone to perpetrate violence against a family member as domestic violence and a crime. The GEWD and EVAWG Policies' strong commitment to advancing gender equality and ending violence against women and girls lays the groundwork for addressing TFGBV effectively.
- 18.2. The Solomon Islands government, through the Ministry of Communications and Aviation (MCA) and the Ministry of Police, has begun significant work on cybersecurity and privacy, particularly the development of a Solomon Islands Digital Transformation Policy, which allows us to recognize and incorporate the gendered nature of online harms into our digital regulations. Dialogue on the proposed Digital Transformation Policy began in 2024.

Strengthen the Capacity of Government Actors for the Development of Policy and Legislation, and their Enforcement and Implementation

Example 2: Inaugural TFGBV Training for GBV Front-liners

- 18.3. An inaugural TFGBV training, the first not only in the Solomon Islands but also in the Pacific Region, was held to help frontline GBV workers who are members of SAFENET build their knowledge and skills in dealing with TFGBV. The MWYCFA has committed to formally incorporating TFGBV into SAFENET response and referral pathways, SOPs, databases, and so on.

Example 3: Cyber Safety Pasifika Program

- 18.4. A Cyber Safety Pasifika Program was established to ensure a proactive approach to cybercrime prevention in the Pacific region. The program includes cyber-related trainings and investigations for security personnel, including police officers, as well as awareness-raising programs in schools and communities. The Program is a collaboration between the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police (PICP). The Solomon Islands is part of RSIPF's 'National Crime and Community Policing' program. Through this program, the RSIPF has received cybercrime trainings from across the region.

19. Measures to Resource Women's Organizations Working to Prevent and Respond to GBV

- 19.1. The Solomon Islands Government, through the Women's Development Division of the MWYCFA women-led organizations in preventing and responding to GBV. These services are provided on an ad hoc basis in response to requests. Examples of this support are listed below:
 - a) Provincial Women's Development Division: assistance with Provincial SAFENET meetings, raising awareness of GBV programs and case referrals, and managing GBV

clients. Support is both technical and financial. Depending on the activity, the support can range between SBD 4,000 and SBD 15,000.

- b) Disability Women Empowerment Association: financial assistance for their provincial GBV and people with disabilities rights awareness campaigns. Support ranges from \$5,000 to \$8,000.
 - c) Church women's groups, such as the Provincial Mother's Union, receive approximately \$5,000 in financial support for their 16 Days of Activism Campaign against GBV.
- 19.2. The WDD MWYCFA also provides an annual subvention to Christian Care Centre and Family Support Centre, two leading NGOs that provide critical services to GBV clients. In 2019, the grant to FSC was reduced to 132,478, and the grant to CCC was split between Honiara and Malaita Christian Care Centre (MCCC), with HCCC receiving SBD 150,000 and MCCC receiving SBD 40, 926. Grants to the FSC and CCC were reduced to SBD 90,000 in 2020, most likely due to the pandemic. In 2021, the grants were increased to SBD 132,478 for FSC, SBD 150,000 for HCCC, and SBD 40,926 for MCCC.
- 19.3. Donors and development partners in the gender space, including the Australian Government, UN Women, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, and the European Union, provide significant financial and technical support to women's groups.

20. *Actions to Address the Portrayal of Women and Girls, Discrimination and/or Gender Bias in the Media*

Provided training to media professionals to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotypical, balanced and diverse images of women and girls in the media, including social media

Example 1: Training on Election Candidate Profiling

- 20.1. In March 2024, the Media Association Solomon Islands and the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS) held a training session for media professionals on how to profile the 2024 National and Provincial Election candidates. The training focused on profiling female candidates to ensure strong visibility and address gender biases in leadership positions.

Promoted the Participation and Leadership of Women in the Media

Example 2: Solomon Islands Women in News Network

- 20.2. In October 2023, the Solomon Islands Women in News Network was established to provide a safe space for female journalists and reporters to build solidarity, share challenges and encouragements, and promote leadership in the media.
- 20.3. Currently, the Media Association Solomon Islands Board has five (5) females and three (3) males. The current Board Chair is female. Solomon Star has 9 reporters in print and online,

with only two of them being female and one serving as Editor. The Island Sun employs eight (8) Newsroom Staff, with an equal number of females and males.

Other- Promoting Women's Voices through the Media

Example 3: Solomon Women Newspaper (Online)

20.4. The Solomon Women online newspaper was launched in 2015 and continues to be an effective platform for promoting women and raising awareness about issues affecting women across the country. The newspaper adheres to a strong 'leave no one behind' principle by reporting on women's stories, programs, and activities in a variety of developmental areas such as business, education, health, sports, church, leadership, agriculture, environment, entertainment, fashion, politics, tourism, special needs, and youth. The publisher of the Women's Newspaper is a woman. The Solomon Women Newspaper is housed within the Sunday Isles Newspaper.

21. Actions to Address Violence against Marginalized groups of Women and Girls

Women Living in Remote and Rural Areas

Example 1: Authorised Justices

21.1. The Family Protection Act (FPA) 2014 aims to improve access to protection and justice for victims of domestic violence, primarily women, particularly in Solomon Islands' rural and remote areas. The FPA defines Authorised Justices (AJ) in section 9 (a & b), which states that (a) an Authorised Justice is a Justice of the Local Court (JLC) or (b) a prescribed person or person belonging to a prescribed class of persons. Aside from the Magistrates Court, which issues protection orders, an Authorised Justice has the authority under section 17 (2) of the FPA to: a) issue an interim protection order; and b) vary or revoke an interim protection order. The MJLA has established and trained Authorised Justices in Malaita (31 men) and Guadalcanal Province (two females and thirteen men). Authorised Justices live in remote rural communities and can accept applications for interim protection orders in those communities. As of February 2020, authorised justices in Malaita and Guadalcanal had issued 31 interim protection orders.

Girls, Adolescents, and Younger Women

Example 2: National Youth Forum on Cyber Safety

21.2. A National Youth Forum on Cyber Safety was held in Honiara, Solomon Islands, in July 2021, with 50 children and youth in attendance. The Forum provided an opportunity for young people, including girls and young women, to discuss online safety concerns. The Forum also provided an opportunity for the participating children and young people to discuss key research findings from Plan International Australia's 2020 Online Safety in the Pacific Report, which was published in collaboration with ChildFund Australia and

Western Sydney University. A key outcome of the Forum was the presentation of children and young people's recommendations for policymakers and service providers based on their experiences and priorities regarding online safety. Those in charge of child protection, cyber law enforcement and policy, the Ministry of Communication and Aviation, the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs, PMO, and representatives from the Australian, New Zealand, and British High Commissions were among those in attendance.

Women in Humanitarian Settings

Example 3: Gender Based Violence in Emergencies Sub-Committee

21.3. In March 2020, the National Protection Committee established a Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE) subcommittee to ensure women's safety in humanitarian settings. The subcommittee was formed to ensure a coordinated and effective response to ending violence against women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its members were primarily SAFENET members, as well as relevant non-SAFENET NGOs and donor partners. The Committee's key efforts and developments include: the development and distribution of a GBV COVID-19 Temporary Referral Pathway and an updated emergency phone tree to GBV services in Honiara and in all our provinces; the development of individual GBV services response plans supported by relevant COVID-19 regional gender planning documents; and the establishment of a SAFENET Facebook page to provide information about SAFENET, from SAFENET, and also distribute key messages.

Participation, Accountability and Gender-responsive Institutions

22. Actions to Promote Women's Participation in Public life and Decision-making

Introduced or Increased Targets and benchmarks of legislative Temporary Special Measures

Example 1: Temporary Special Measures

22.1. In December 2023, the Solomon Islands Government Cabinet and Caucus approved a proposed amendment to the Provincial Government Amendment Bill 2018 to create a legislative environment that allows Provincial Assemblies to adopt and implement temporary special measures (TSM) to increase women's participation and representation in their respective Provincial Assemblies. The proposed amendment would allow Provincial Assemblies to prescribe additional specific seats for women in their Provincial Assembly via Ordinance. Endorsements of the proposed amendment through Provincial Assembly Conclusion papers from all nine (9) Provinces, and a report on the nation-wide consultations conducted on TSM and the proposed amendment, were key supporting

documents to the Caucus and Cabinet submissions. The national TSM awareness and consultation on the proposed amendment was held in all nine provinces, reaching a total of 17,042 people, of whom 10,560 were females and 6482 were males. These included tribal/paramount chiefs, community leaders, including church and youth leaders, women, men, youth, teachers, health workers, students, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Opportunities for Capacity Building and Skills Development

Example 2: Provincial Women's Candidate Training School

22.2. In 2022, a Provincial Women's Candidate Training School and TSM training workshop were held with the overall goal of preparing female candidates for campaigning and constituency building, including TSM and practical skills, in order to strategically contest and win their respective Provincial Assembly seats. The Candidate Training School covered the following practical skills: Election Campaign Basics; Fundraising; Campaign Team; Campaign Plan; Voter Targeting and Classification; Message Development; Know Your Audience; Getting Heard; Strategy Development; Campaign Tools to Win; Voting Trends; Voter Contact Techniques; Canvassing Strategy; Campaign Communications; Candidate Materials; Media Interviews; and Self-Evaluation. Participants included seven female candidates running for seats in the Western and Choiseul Provincial Assembly, as well as nine government and CSO representatives, including women's councils and community groups. The training was a collaborative effort by UNDP SECSIP, WRAM, SINCW, and MWYCFA.

Collected and Analysed Data on Women's Political Participation

Example 3: TSM Information Package

22.3. A smaller TSM taskforce was formed to advocate for the amendment of the PGA 1997 and the HCC Act 1999 to include TSM provisions ensuring seats for women in Provincial Assemblies and the Honiara City Council, respectively. The Taskforce developed a TSM Information Package, which was critical to the success of this campaign. A key component of the TSM Information Package is to provide statistical evidence for why women's political participation should be supported through TSM. The data included the number of women in Parliament since the Solomon Islands gained independence, as well as the number of women in Provincial Assemblies since their inception. In the 45 years since independence, only eight women have been elected to Parliament and 17 to Provincial Assemblies. Development partners provide the majority of the budget for the TSM taskforce's activities.

22.4. In 2019, the Women's Rights Action Movement, with the support of IWDA, conducted a study titled "Public Perceptions of Women as Political Leaders: Views on Women's Leadership and Temporary Special Measures in Solomon Islands" to better understand the barriers to women's political participation in the Solomon Islands. The following are some of the key barriers and challenges that women face when entering politics: Cultural

beliefs and gender attitudes regarding women's proper position and role within societies and communities; Lack of Access to Finance and Material Resources by Women where access to cash or money or the ability to offer material resources is a key determinant or influence on voting behavior in the Solomon Islands; Women's Lack of Education as there is widespread idea that women has a greater chance of being elected into politics if they are educated or have a 'good education'; and Women Not Supporting Women Candidates as a common reason quoted by both women and men for why women are not getting elected into politics. The TSM Information package also includes the study's findings. Between October 2018 and October 2022, the Taskforce distributed the TSM package to 454 individuals, 203 of whom were men and 251 of whom were women. Members of the Provincial Assembly, Provincial Government Executives, Provincial Senior Government Officers, Provincial Councils of Women, and female leaders from each of the nine provinces were among those who were reached. This was a part of a national effort to enact TSM through legislative change in order to boost the representation and involvement of women in Provincial Assemblies.

23. *Actions to Increase Women's Access to Expression and Participation in Decision-making in the Media including ICT*

Introduced regulations to advance equal pay, retention and career advancement of women within the media and ICT field

Example 1: WITSI and ICT Day

23.1. Women in IT Solomon Islands (WITSI) advocates for girls to pursue careers in IT. From 2016 to 2024, WITSI has celebrated and coordinated the annual International Girls in ICT Day (April 25th), with a focus on encouraging girls in secondary schools to engage with ICT. The 2024 celebrations were themed "Leadership," emphasising the critical need for strong female role models in STEM careers.

Example 2: Scholarships for STEM

23.2. There is a higher allocation of scholarships for women teachers to pursue further tertiary education in STEM.

Provided support to women's media networks and organizations

Example 3: Women in News on Female Candidates

23.3. Female journalists in Solomon Islands have recently come together under the banner of "Solomon Islands Women in News," a group affiliated with the Media Association. The aim of the 'Women in News' is to empower female journalists across the nation. Established in 2023, one of their inaugural initiatives in 2024 was to support female journalists during the recent elections to focus on women's perspectives and election stories. Stories of female candidates prior and post elections were published on the In-

depth Solomons website and Facebook page. Similar stories were also published on platforms such as SIBC, Tavuli, Solomon Star, Island Sun, and Sunday Isles. These were by female journalist of the Solomon Islands Women in News.

24. *National Women's Machinery*

- 24.1. In the 1960s, the Women's Interest Division of the Solomon Islands established the national machinery for gender equality. Its primary goals were to reaffirm the domestic role of women in society and to train women in life skills like sewing and baking. The Ministry in charge of Health was the original home of the Women's Interest Division, which over time was moved to other ministries. The Women's Interest Division became the Women's Development Division when the SIG ratified CEDAW in 2002, broadening its mandate to include the perspectives of gender and women's rights in its work. Within the recently formed Ministry of Women Youth and Children Affairs, which later evolved into the present MWYCFA, the Women's Development Division (WDD) was made a core division in 2007.
- 24.2. The National Strategy on the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls (NSEEWG) 2020–2023, the Women Peace and Security National Action Plan 2017–2020 (WPS NAP), the Affirmative Action Strategy 2022–2027–Accelerating Women's Prospects and Paths to Leadership, Decision-Making, and Governance, and the overarching National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy 2021–2027 (GEWD Policy) are the policies that provide the foundation for the national WDD. The Family Protection Act of 2014 imposes statutory obligations on the WDD as well. These policy mandates entail that the key roles and responsibilities of the WDD includes:
 - a) In collaboration with stakeholders, implement, review/formulate and coordinate national policies related to women and gender and our international commitments, especially CEDAW.
 - b) Coordinate national level planning and collaborate in program implementation on gender and women's development and support similar work in provinces.
 - c) Collaborate with other Divisions, organizations and development partners on research, reviews, evaluation and data collection on issues of concern to women, and disseminate information on women and gender to all focal points.
 - d) Provide assistance, skills and training at national, provincial and community levels, including financial and technical assistance to women and women's groups as and when possible.
 - e) Identify needs and support special initiatives for women where existing institutions and agencies are unable to meet.
 - f) Work closely with NCW in promoting issues of concern to women and encourage its roles as a voice and a forum for women and by women.

- 24.3. Although the WDD has increased the number of established positions to guarantee sufficient human resources to carry out its mandate, this problem still exists because the WDD's policy mandate is constantly changing. Donors and development partners frequently fill gaps in human resources, but it can still be difficult to keep some of these positions open after the funding period ends. The SAFENET position and the EVAWG Policy Coordinator position are examples of successfully transferred externally funded positions to SIG establishment within the WDD. By 2025, WDD hopes to transition the WIL and WEE TAs, the next two positions that receive external funding. As of this writing, the WDD has nine established positions, four of which are filled and the other five of which are still in the recruitment process.
- 24.4. The Women's Development Division Budget for 2024 in relation to the whole MWYCFA budget is as follows:

No	Descriptions	Total Budget \$	% of divisional allocations
1	Head Quarter and Admin	5,237,276	33.8%
2	Youth Development Division	5,134,832	33.1%
3	Women Development Division	1,928,002	12.4%
4	Children Development Division	1,584,770	10.2%
5	Research and Policy	475,025	3.1%
6	Family Affairs Division	1,130,823	7.3%

25. *Mechanisms and Tools used to Mainstream Gender Equality Across Sectors*

Example 1: Gender Equality and Women's Development National Stakeholders Taskforce and National Taskforces

- 25.1. The general institutional framework for coordinating, documenting, and overseeing the execution of the GEWD and its subsidiary policies is established by the GEWD Policy. The GEWD National Stakeholder Taskforce (NST) and National Taskforces (NTF) for five of the GEWD Policy's thematic areas—aside from the priority outcomes of education and health—serve as the overall inter-organization coordination mechanism. Clear strategies for implementation, coordination, and input from the entire government—including rural women through its CSO members, such as the National Council of Women (NCW)—are provided in the TORs of the GEWD NST and NTFs.
- 25.2. Coordination and gender mainstreaming between and among national government gender focal points (GFPs), provincial WDDs, Provincial Councils of Women, CSOs including FBOs, the private sector, and development partners have improved as a result of the GEWD NST convenings. Key participants since the GEWD NST's inaugural meeting in 2017 have included the GFPs, Provincial WDDs, Provincial Council of Women Presidents, and an increasing number of business sector participants. These meetings' main agenda items include creating collaborative workplans and providing updates on the

status of policy implementation. The goal was to have annual or bi-annual GEWD NST meetings, but between 2017 and 2022, there were only three. It will remain difficult to secure sufficient funding to call the GEWD NST.

- 25.3. The goal of the National Taskforces created under each of the GEWD policy's priority outcome areas is to improve coordination amongst stakeholders who have a stake in resolving the specific gender issue and/or whose mandates align with the outcome areas.
- 25.4. In addition to aiming to strengthen coordination between various provincial government sectors and community-based organizations, such as Ward Development Committees (WDC), the institutional arrangements for the coordination, monitoring, and reporting of provincial gender equality and women's empowerment policies also mirror the GEWD NST at the provincial level. This provides a platform for gender mainstreaming across sectors at the provincial level.

Example 2: Nation-wide Comprehensive Consultation with Women on the Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill 2018

- 25.5. The Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill (TGCF) 2018 was influenced by women's perspectives and experiences, thanks to the collaboration of UN Women, the UN PBF Fund Women's Component, the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs (MWYCFA), and the Ministry of Traditional Governance Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs.
- 25.6. In order to allow for additional consultations, the government withdrew the TGCFB 2018 in 2018, as recommended by the Parliamentary Bills and Legislative Committee (BLC). Women should be consulted on the Bill (including young people and those with disabilities), according to one of the BLC's main recommendations.
- 25.7. In implementing the BLC's recommendation into practice, MTGPEA held separate consultations with women after UN Women and MWYCFA conducted preparatory sessions with women before holding proper consultations on the Bill. Women were guaranteed to be aware of the Bill through the preparatory sessions, enabling them to make valuable contributions during the Bill consultations.
- 25.8. Against the target of 250 women leaders, 223 women leaders attended the consultations, which is an 89% attendance rate. Women from all nine provinces, including Honiara, participated in the consultation process.
- 25.9. An independent gender assessment of the draft Bill was also conducted.
- 25.10. The final gender assessment report on the draft Traditional Governance Bill of the Solomon Islands: Fostering women's equal participation in decision-making in traditional governance and the recognition of women's rights under customary law and dispute resolution practices was submitted to the Minister in charge of the Bill in October 2021. It included the findings from the gender analysis of the Bill as well as the

recommendations from the women during the consultations. National Human Rights Institution

- 25.11. In 2018, the Solomon Islands government carried out research to determine the most effective strategy for setting up an independent complaints' mechanism and human rights institution for Solomon Islands. The study comprised an ideation workshop, an analysis and validation phase, and a consultation phase that involved focus group discussions with 237 individuals (95 men and 142 women) from seven Provinces and Honiara. In 2019, the study report's conclusions were confirmed and approved. The main conclusions of the study confirmed that the Solomon Islands needed a National Human Rights Institution and suggested a step-by-step process to establish one. These steps include drafting a National Human Rights Action Plan that will specify specific goals for advancement toward specific human rights priorities, including those determined by consultation, and assisting the current government in determining which institutional model is most appropriate for a human rights body in the Solomon Islands. There were two options: creating a new, dedicated organization or Human Rights Commission, or broadening the current Office of the Ombudsman's duties to include the promotion and defense of human rights. The constitution of the Solomon Islands would need to be changed for both options. The NHRI's establishment is still a work in progress.

Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

26. *Actions taken to Build and Sustain Peace, Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development and Implement the WPS agenda*

Adopted and/or Implemented a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

Example 1: Solomon Islands Women Peace and Security National Action Plan

- 26.1. The Women Peace and Security National Action Plan 2017–2021 (WPS NAP) was approved and introduced by the Solomon Islands government in 2017. For the Solomon Islands and the surrounding area, the WPS NAP 2017–2021 is a first. The Solomon Islands' adherence to Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, and 2122 as well as UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) is reflected in the WPS NAP 2017–2021. The CEDAW, in particular General Recommendation 30, provides a strong foundation for the WPS NAP 2017–2021.
- 26.2. The WPS NAP 2017–2021 seeks the following high-level outcomes in accordance with UN SCR 1325's four pillars of participation, protection, prevention and recovery, and reconciliation of women in conflict, post-conflict, and peacebuilding contexts: Women's participation, representation, and decision-making in peace and security are expanded at all levels; women's human rights are protected, and women are safe from sexual and gender-based violence; the Solomon Islands actively prevents conflict and violence

against women and girls; and the priorities and rights of women and girls are reflected in development and peacebuilding. It adds a women-specific focus to the peace and security sector, complementing other government policies on peace and security, such as the Ministry of Police National Security and Correctional Service (MPNSCS) National Security Strategy (2020) and the MTGPEA National Peacekeeping Policy.

- 26.3. The review of the WPS NAP has begun and is expected to be completed in 2024. The review will provide an opportunity to ensure the needs and challenges of women and girls in terms of their effective participation in peace and security procedures and processes remain relevant; draws increased attention to the impact of natural hazards, climate change, and humanitarian crises on societies, especially on those most vulnerable, including women, girls, and children; and strengthens the policy environment needed to address different forms of violence including conflicts related to natural resources management and extractive industry operations and their negative impact on communities.

Used Communication Strategies, including Social Media, to Increase Awareness of the Women, Peace and Security agenda

Example 2: WPS Advocacy Tools

- 26.4. In 2023, the MWYCFA, MJLA, and UN Women developed information awareness materials for advocacy on the FPA, access to justice, women's participation in decision making in relation to traditional governance, and climate change as part of the UN Women Access to Justice Project's 'Enhancing Women's Access to Justice in Asia and the Pacific: Bridging the gap between formal and informal systems through women's empowerment, A2J program'. The advocacy materials consisted of three audio podcasts, three radio spot messages (30 seconds each), three social media spot messages (30 to 45 seconds each), and a training video. While the advocacy materials have been developed, their dissemination is pending the development of a plan for information dissemination, awareness and advocacy, training for authorized justices, and the use of the advocacy tools.

Increased Budget for the Implementation of the WPS agenda

Example 3: United Nations Peace Building Fund

- 26.5. The Women's Development Division (WDD) of the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) received a significant funding of SBD 1,506,767 under the UN Women component of the Peacebuilding Fund for the implementation of the following women's peace and security activities:
- a) Traditional Governance Bill (TGB) Women's Recommendations National Level Advocacy Workshop
 - b) Provincial Advocacy on the TGB Recommendations and Byelaws including TA support

- c) Women's Empowerment, Leadership and Decision-Making trainings for Customary Landholding Groups Women Representatives
 - d) Community Awareness Workshop on Existing Laws and Policies that Protect Women and Girls from all Forms of Violence related to Extractive Industries in Solomon Islands
 - e) National Advocacy on Existing Laws and Policies that Protect Women and Girls from all Forms of Violence related to Extractive Industries in Solomon Islands
 - f) TA support to the MWYCFA
- 26.6. All activities were successfully completed by December 2021. The Australian Government and UN Women continue to support the Women's Peace and Security agenda.

27. Actions to Increase the Leadership, Representation and Participation of Women in Conflict Prevention, Resolution, Peacebuilding, Humanitarian Action and Crisis Response

Promoted and Supported Women's Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes and the Implementation of Peace Agreements at all Levels

Example 1 Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill

- 27.1. In 2021, 223 women leaders from all nine provinces of Solomon Islands were supported through preparatory sessions to ensure their meaningful participation and feedback on the draft Traditional Governance and Customs Facilitation Bill 2018, prior to the MTGPEA's formal consultation on the Bill. The incorporation and passage of women's recommendations into the Bill will help foster women's equal participation in decision-making in traditional governance, as well as the recognition of women's rights under customary law and dispute resolution practices.

Adopted Gender-responsive Approaches to Humanitarian Action and Crisis Response

Example 2 Protection in Disaster Committee

- 27.2. The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) established the Protection in Disaster Committee (National Protection Committee (NPC), which is in charge of disaster preparedness and response planning at the national level in order to prevent, reduce, and alleviate human suffering caused by disasters through the integration of protection into disaster management arrangements. The scope of work includes targeted action for protection, including for displaced populations, as well as thematic areas such as child protection, GBV, and protection of specific groups such as people with disabilities; and support for other disaster responders to mainstream protection. The NPC has established four specialized subcommittees: GBV in emergencies, People with Disabilities, Child Protection, and Psychosocial. The NPC is replicated across all ten provinces of Solomon

Islands, including HCC, via Provincial Protection Committees, to ensure gender responsive disaster response at the provincial and rural levels.

Developed, Adopted and / or Implemented a high Impact National Action Plan on 1325

Example 3: Solomon Islands Women Peace and Security National Action Plan

27.3. Solomon Islands adopted its Women Peace and Security National Action Plan in 2017, which was a first of its kind in the Solomon Islands and the region. The review of the Solomon Islands WPS NAP 2017-2021 is currently underway and expected to be completed in 2024. Please refer to 27.1 to 27.3 for more details of the WPS NAP.

28. Actions to enhance Judicial and Non-judicial Accountability for Violations of International Humanitarian Law and Violations of the Human Rights of Women and Girls in situations of armed and other Conflicts or Humanitarian Action and Crisis Response

Implemented Legal and Policy Reform to Redress and prevent violations of the rights of women and girls

Example 1: National Action Plan against Human Trafficking and People Smuggling 2020-2025

28.1. The Solomon Islands National Action Plan Against Human Trafficking and People Smuggling 2020–2025 outlines nine goals aimed at combating human trafficking in Solomon Islands. Goal six aims to promote international cooperation and partnerships. Actions to achieve this goal include strengthening collaboration with international stakeholders and partners, regional governments, national and regional organisations. Create and strengthen partnerships and networks between service providers and stakeholders, including international and non-governmental organisations (INGOS); Collaborate to develop and implement joint law enforcement programs and activities regionally and internationally - Oceania Customs Organisation, Pacific Transnational Crime Coordinating Center, Pacific Islands Chief of Police; Participate in regional and international workshops and forums on human trafficking-related issues through partnership agreements; and Strengthen partnership with the Solomon Islands National University with the aim of including human traffickers.

Taken Measures to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children

Example 2: Proposed Ratification of the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC)

28.2. In 2018, a working committee was formed to support the ratification of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), which includes protocols for human trafficking by sea and air, as well as victim protection. The working committee is made up of representatives from the MCILI Immigration Division, MFAET, RSIPF, Attorney

General Chambers, Save the Children, the MHMS Social Welfare Division, UNICEF, and MWYCFA. IOM supports the working committee.

- 28.3. In 2021, the UNODC collaborated with the Immigration Division, the MWYCFA, the National Statistics Office, the IOM, and justice agencies to begin work on a nationwide survey to estimate the prevalence of human trafficking in the Solomon Islands, in preparation for accession to the UNTOC. Ascension to UNTOC is pending Cabinet approval.

Example 3: Proposed Anti-Trafficking Legislation

- 28.4. MCILI, through its Immigration Division, is developing a comprehensive legislative framework to address all aspects of anti-trafficking action, including legislation to regulate the inflow of migrants who may become victims of trafficking, as well as legislation to regulate internal trafficking in the country's extractive industries.
- 28.5. In 2022, the Labour Division of the Ministry of Commerce, Immigration, Labour, and Industries (MCILI), with the assistance of the International Office of Migration (IOM), began a review of the Immigration Act 2012 through provincial consultations.

29. Actions to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child

Taken Measures to Combat Discriminatory Social Norms and Practices and increased Awareness of the Needs and Potential of Girl Children

Example 1: Revised National Children's Policy and its Socialisation

- 29.1. The Children's Development (CDD) Division of the MWYCFA commissioned a review of the first *National Children's Policy (NCP) 2010-2015*, which served as the foundation for the current *NCP 2023-2028*, which was released in February 2024. The review process included review workshops and stakeholder interviews, which included approximately 900 children aged 10 to 18 from schools in Honiara and selected provinces.
- 29.2. The *NCP 2023-2028* seeks the following six policy outcomes:
- a) All children in the Solomon Islands enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and wellbeing through quality, child-friendly and inclusive information, services and support.
 - b) All children in the Solomon Islands have equal access to learning and education opportunities to reach their full potentials that will open up future development opportunities for themselves.
 - c) All children in the Solomon Islands are safeguarded from physical harm, emotional stress and exploitation.

- d) All children in Solomon Islands are given opportunity in social, economic and political sectors to contribute meaningfully to decision making and development efforts.
 - e) The CDD and National Advisory and Action Committee on Children (NAACC) Parties oversee and coordinate activities that promote child survival, development, protection and participation outlined in this policy in a cost-effective manner with continuous research and capacity building efforts.
 - f) Successful implementation of the 2020-2025 Policy and Plan with sufficient resources from SIG, donors, NGOs and communities to allow for proper monitoring throughout, mid-term review in 2023, and evaluation in 2025
- 29.3. The policy is being implemented across the country, with three of the ten provinces, including Honiara, already completed: Isabel, Malaita, and Central Islands Province. Each province holds a socialisation workshop at the Provincial Station or Headquarters, as well as one in an identified community. Communities are identified based on population and emerging issues affecting children. The socialisation process includes raising awareness about policy priority outcomes, forms of child abuse and discrimination against children, including girls, as well as the CRC and CEDAW; and a group activity to identify areas for stakeholder alignment and collaboration in the implementation of the NCP.

Example 2: Child Protection Community Facilitation Package

- 29.4. The CDD MWYCFA created a Child Protection Community Facilitation Manual as a prevention strategy to address child protection issues in SI, particularly those affecting girls. The manual's goal is to assist parents, caregivers, and families in caring for their children while also preventing child protection issues in the community. The manual supplements the implementation of the CFWA 2017, focusing on prevention intervention programs. The manual's rollout began in 2020 with a Training of Trainers session for 20 professionals from government and non-government organizations. The manual was also taught to 20 Community Facilitators from ten communities in and around Central Islands Province, ten of whom were female and ten were male. Community facilitators are community leaders who represent their respective communities.

Implemented Policies and Programmes to Reduce and Eradicate Child, Early and Forced Marriage

Example 3: Community Awareness on Relevant Laws and Policies on Violence against Women and Girls related to Extractive Industries

- 29.5. Between June and August 2021, the MWYCFA collaborated on a Community Awareness Project with several key partner Ministries, including the Ministry of Mines, Energy, and Rural Electrification, the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management, and Meteorology, and the Ministry of Traditional Governance. The project aimed to raise awareness about relevant laws regarding various forms of violence against women and

girls, such as child, early, and forced marriage, in seven communities near mining and logging sites in Guadalcanal, Rennell Bellona, Malaita, and Western Provinces. The total number of participants was 578, exceeding the target number of 385. Of the 578 participants, 37% were women, 32% were men, 17% were female youths, and 14% were male.

- 29.6. The project resulted in recommendations for the protection and safeguarding of women and children in extractive industries. The recommendations were advocated for and brought to the attention of relevant and responsible government ministries during a follow-up National Advocacy Workshop in September 2021. The advocacy workshop was designed to mobilise their commitments and actions in response to the recommendations. Participants were relevant government ministries and agencies, including the Office of the Prime Minister; Public Solicitors Office; Law Reform Commission; Attorney General's Office; Health and Medical Services; Environment, Conservation and Meteorology; Finance and Treasury; Forestry; Fisheries and Marine Resources; Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening; Foreign Affairs and External Trade; Tourism and Culture; Justice and Legal Affairs; Commerce, Industries, Immigration and Labour; Agriculture and Livestock; Traditional Governance, Peace and Ecclesiastical Affairs; Lands and Housing; Police and National Security; and Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification.

Environmental Conservation, Protection and Rehabilitation

30. *Actions to Integrate Gender Perspectives and Concerns into Environmental Policies*

Supported Women's Participation and Leadership in Environmental and Natural Resource Management and Governance

Example 1: Customary Land Holding Group Women's Reps Empowerment Leadership and Decision-making Training

- 30.1. In December 2021, women representatives of customary land holding groups (CLHG) from Western, Malaita, and Guadalcanal Province received training in empowerment, leadership, and decision-making. The training was held in Noro, Western Province; Masupa, Malaita Province; and Sahalu, Guadalcanal Province. The three provinces chosen for the training were chosen to ensure that the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Survey continues to support the customary land recording process, which began in these three provinces in 2018, with the exception of Isabel Province.
- 30.2. The key objectives of the Empowerment leadership and decision-making training were to: equip women representatives of the targeted Land Holding Groups with relevant

leadership and decision-making knowledge and skills, including knowledge on Gender and Human Rights; build their confidence to be able to articulate and advocate for women's issues and influence decisions related to land; and raise the awareness of the women representatives on legislation related to the protection of women including those related to land; and the services available including access to justice.

- 30.3. Given the limited number of women in CLHGs in all three provinces, the targeted number of CLHG women reps for the training was between 10 and 15 women per province, for a total of 45 women reps of CLHGs. The number of participants who attended the training in all three provinces met (and exceeded) the targeted participants for each province as follows: Malaita had 31 participants on day one and 85 on day two; Guadalcanal had 18 on day one and 14 on day two; and Western Province had 10 participants on all three days of training. Based on attendance on each of the final days of training in all three provinces, the total number of participants was 109, far exceeding the target of 45 female representatives.
- 30.4. Key highlights and accomplishments of the training included the participants' overwhelming appreciation for the training workshop. For the majority of participants, the training would be a first of its kind for them and their communities, and thus a lot of new learnings, especially on gender and human rights; and while there is appreciation for the training workshop, participants also expressed the desire to see these kinds of training workshops also conducted for their male representatives of CLHGs, considering that even when women are trained, the challenge of their voices being heard in CLHGs will continue if men are not also gender sensitized.

Example 2: Training of Trainers for Women-Led CSOs and Targeted Prescribed Persons

- 30.5. In November 2022, the UN Women Project 'Enhancing Access to Justice for Women in Asia and the Pacific: Bridging the gap between formal and informal systems through women's empowerment' conducted a TOT for women-led national, provincial, and community CSOs. Other attendees included representatives from the national and provincial governments, as well as prescribed persons from the targeted provinces of Guadalcanal and Malaita. The TOT Workshop had 20 participants, including resource facilitators.
- 30.6. The Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop aimed to increase the capacity of women-led CSOs and targeted prescribed individuals on human rights issues, women's rights, and access to justice, as well as women's participation in decision-making processes related to traditional governance and climate change; Prepare women-led organizations and targeted prescribed persons to effectively present and respond to information, as well as lead activities that reinforce the need for improved access to justice in community awareness sessions; Provide a platform for participants to share information and knowledge with their respective communities; Increase your knowledge and

understanding of the Family Protection Act 2014 (FPA) and related services as referral pathways. The TOT covered key topics such as gender and sex, human rights, GBV, the Family Protection Act 2014, women's participation, decision making, and traditional governance justice, and Climate Change Justice, which included understanding the gender dimensions of climate change and identifying specific gender-based inequalities that contribute to women's exposure and vulnerability to the effects of climate change.

- 30.7. Key lessons learnt from the TOT included the participation of women-led CSOs with prior experience working at the community level; and the mode of training delivery included information sessions, group discussions, demonstrations, brainstorming, icebreakers, and role-plays, which brought more contextual issues to the forefront, deepened participants' understanding of subject areas, and kept the training alive. Areas for improvement included more training in climate change and climate justice, which was a new subject for many of the women.
- 30.8. The project was a collaboration between UN Women and the Solomon Islands Government's Ministries of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs and Justice and Legal Affairs. The project was a partnership between UN Women and the Solomon Islands Government, through the MWCFA and the MJLA.

31. Actions to Integrate Gender Perspectives into Policies and Programmes for Disaster Risk Reduction and Building Environmental and Climate Resilience

Strengthened the Evidence base and Raised Awareness about the Disproportionate Vulnerability of Women and Girls to the Impact of Climate Change, Environmental Degradation and Disasters

Example 1: Research Paper 'Local Insights into Social Resilience and Climate Change in Solomon Islands'

- 31.1. The research paper 'Local Insights into Social Resilience and Climate Change in Solomon Islands' presents key findings to support the incorporation of social dimensions into Solomon Islands efforts to address climate change and disaster risk management, with a focus on key governments, development finance institutions (DFIs) such as the World Bank, and civil society institutions involved in climate policy and practice development. The research's key findings are: (1) repeated climate-related shocks are exhausting the social resilience of communities; (2) other sources of vulnerability and stressors, such as poverty, hardship, livelihoods, education, health, and gender relations, can interact with and/or amplify climate risks; (3) attempts to build the social resilience of communities to the impacts of climate change in the Pacific have had mixed results; and (4) building resilience should not be limited to protecting communities impacted by climate change and focusing on the physical aspects of infrastructure development. Investments in social

inclusion and human capital development are also critical to building resilience; and (5) To effectively address broader systemic and structural challenges, policy responses to support social resilience should be state-led, multisectoral, and locally tailored. The research paper includes recommendations for the SIG and its development partners. The research paper is the first guidance note in the World Bank's Social Dimensions of Climate Change: Pacific Series.

Example 2: National Climate Change Forum 2023

- 31.2. The Solomon Islands Climate Action Network (SICAN) in collaboration with the Climate Change Division from the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM), hosted a National Climate Change Forum in September 2023, under the theme: *Voices for Equity: Advancing Climate Justice through Dialogue, Collaboration & Action*. The forum provided an opportunity to bring together diverse groups and voices to dialogue and discuss their various experiences and issues related to climate change in the Solomon Islands, as well as to network and collaborate for the purpose of conducting data-driven research that will be useful in influencing key policymakers nationally and internationally. The forum covered the following topics: International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on Climate Change and Human Rights; Climate Change Loss and Damage; Climate Mobility: Relocation, Displacement, and Migration; Climate Finance; Youth & Economic Empowerment, Gender & Social Inclusion; Ocean & Blue Economy; Climate Change Adaptation; Climate Change Mitigation; and Research & Climate Assessment Tools. The forum was co-sponsored by two Oxfam Pacific projects in the Solomon Islands: PACCCIL and the Kotui Project.

Introduced or Strengthened and Implemented Gender-responsive Laws and Policies related to Disaster Risk Reduction and Building Climate and Environmental Resilience

Example 3: The Solomon Islands National Climate Policy 2023-2032

- 31.3. The *Solomon Islands National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) 2023-2032* is a result of the review of the *National Climate Change Policy 2012-2017*. The *NCCP 2023-2032* is the overarching policy to addressing climate change in Solomon Islands. It seeks the following objectives, to:
- a. Establish and strengthen the governance framework to address climate change emergency.
 - b. Target adaptation and risk resilience on key vulnerabilities.
 - c. Focus mitigation actions on sustainably lowering emissions and enhancing sinks, whilst simultaneously promoting economic growth and strengthening our resilience to climate change.
 - d. Address Loss and Damage.

- e. Achieving national obligations to meet our regional and international commitments.
 - f. Strengthen technical capacities for assessment, technology and finance mobilisation, and mainstreaming of climate change actions
- 31.4. The NCCP 2023-2032 is based on the pillars of inclusion, equity, good governance, and local ownership, with a strong emphasis on prioritizing the needs and respecting the rights of the most vulnerable, women, youths, children, people with disabilities, and the elderly, as well as facilitating their effective participation in intervention planning and implementation as a key guiding principle for policy implementation. Key policy directives and strategies for achieving the policy's vision, mission, and objectives include developing climate change legislation and implementing a national climate change vulnerability, risk, and adaptation assessment program that incorporates gender, equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI).

Section Four: National Institutions and Processes

32. *National Strategy or Action Plan for Gender Equality*

- 32.1. The *National Gender Equality and Women's Development (GEWD) Policy 2021 – 2027* is the third iteration of the National *GEWD policy*, building on the *GEWD Policy 2016-2020*. The *GEWD Policy* is the overarching framework for achieving gender equality and women's rights in Solomon Islands strongly reflecting Solomon Islands commitment to the implementation of *CEDAW*, the *SDGs* and the *Universal Periodic Report (UPR)*. The *GEWD Policy* seeks the following priority outcome areas:
- a) Gender-responsive government programs and services
 - b) Improved economic status of women
 - c) Equal participation of women and men at all levels of decision-making, governance and leadership
 - d) Preventing and responding to violence against women and girls
 - e) Women and girls are fully engaged in peace and security efforts, including in crisis, post-crisis and disaster situations
 - f) Gender equality and equity in education, training, and out-of-school programs
 - g) Advancement of Women's Sexual and Reproductive health and rights
- 32.2. A preliminary Results Framework is also attached to the *GEWD Policy*, that can be adapted based on ongoing Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) of the *GEWD Policy* implementation. Annexed to the *GEWD Policy* is how the policy outcome areas are aligned to the National Development Strategy 2016-2035 and areas for synergies, see table below. The NDS 2016-2035 is the *SDG's* translation to country-level including *SDG 5*.

OUTCOME	LINKS TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OBJECTIVES	ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL SYNERGIES
1. Gender responsive government programs and services.	All NDS objectives	Investment in comprehensive gender analysis and gender indicator development for each NDS objective and all medium-term strategies. This would support strengthened policy focus and linkages. Introduction of gender budget analysis – centrally and by sector NDS to specify need for sex/age and rural/urban data disaggregation from NSO and CBSI. Inclusion of gender issues in High Level Discussions with all development partners and investors and in development coordination and planning. Policy coordination across all medium-term strategy implementation. Addition or integration of outcome level desired results for humanitarian response, disaster management and climate change.
2. Improved economic status of women.	Obj 2 + 3	
3. Equal participation of women and men at all levels of decision-making, governance and leadership.	All NDS objectives with emphasis in 2, 5, 3	
4. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence.	Obj 2 + 3 + 5	
5. Women and girls are safe and secure including during crisis/disaster situations.	All NDS objectives with emphasis in Obj 5	
6. Gender equality and equity in education, training, and out of school programs	Obj 1 + 3	
7. Advancement of women's sexual and reproductive health and rights	Obj 1 + 2 + 3 + 4	

- 32.3. The GEWD Policy has the following gender-specific subsidiary policies: the *Ending violence against women and girls Policy 2021-2027*; the *National Strategy on the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls 2020-2023*; the *Women Peace and Security National Action Plan 2017-2020*; and the *Affirmative Action Strategy 2022-2027- Accelerating Women's prospects and pathways to leadership, decision-making and governance*.
- 32.4. The GEWD Policy establishes the overall institutional arrangement for the coordination, reporting, and monitoring of the implementation of the GEWD and its subsidiary policies, with the national WDD in charge of their administration, including the secretariat role.

32.5. Seven of the ten provinces, including Honiara City Council, have policies in place to promote gender equality and empower women. These policies are consistent with the National GEWD Policy and its subsidiary policies, ensuring the implementation of CEDAW and UPR at the provincial and local levels.

33. *System for Tracking the Proportion of the National Budget that is Invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women*

33.1. Currently, the Solomon Islands lacks a system for tracking the proportion of the national budget allocated to gender equality and women's empowerment. However, as part of the Solomon Islands government's reform program to strengthen public financial management for fiscal resilience, a gender responsive budgeting initiative is underway, which includes the development and approval of new budget regulations under the Public Financial Management Act of 2013. The initiative will include piloting GRB in specific government ministries. The pilot is being led by the MOFT and MWYCFA, with technical assistance from the Asian Development Bank.

33.2. In the absence of a tracking system, the Women's Development Division of the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children, and Family Affairs, the focal government machinery for women, receives the primary dedicated national budget allocation for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

34. *Formal Mechanisms for different stakeholders to Participate in the Implementation and Monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

34.1. The Gender Equality and Women's Development National Stakeholders Taskforce is the formal mechanism established under the overarching National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy⁹, that is responsible for the coordination, reporting and monitoring of the implementation of the GEWD Policy and any other international, regional and national gender frameworks including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development specifically SDG 5. The GEWD NST and the GEWD Policy alignment to the SDG are also discussed under question 25 and 33.

⁹ Was established under the 2nd iteration of the National GEWD Policy and continues to be the formal coordination mechanism in the current iteration of the Policy.

35. *Stakeholders Contribution to the Preparation of the Present National Report.*

- 35.1. Due to a lack of funds, data collected from stakeholders to inform the Beijing report were collected over the past five years, primarily through ongoing established gender reporting mechanisms such as the GEWD NST established under the GEWD Policy; review reports of national and provincial gender and women's issues, including the review of the GEWD and EVAWG policies; and data collected to inform the Solomon Islands CEDAW periodic reports that began in 2015. All of the processes listed above were participatory with all stakeholders, government and non-government organizations, at both national and provincial levels, and included focused group discussions, one-on-one interviews, and requests for submissions to relevant reports. As a result, participants came from both national and provincial governments, including provincial women desk officers, SIG Gender Focal Points, civil society organizations such as faith-based organizations, INGOs, donors and development partners, and the private sector.
- 35.2. A workshop was held on May 16th and 17th, 2024, to inform the Solomon Islands CEDAW and National Beijing review and report. While one day was dedicated solely to the CEDAW report and the other to the Beijing review report, the similarities in the themes between the two reports ensured that data collected on either date helped inform both reports. The workshop was mostly attended by stakeholders from Honiara (the capital of the Solomon Islands). Participants came from both the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including SIG Gender Focal Points, women-led organizations, faith-based organizations, INGOs, donors, development partners, and the private sector. The total number of participants was 41 (34 females, 7 males).
- 35.3. The workshop was designed to be participatory, allowing for in-depth discussions and feedback based on the "Guidance Note for the Comprehensive National-level Review." The report was also influenced by a literature review.

36. *Action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*

- 36.1. Solomon Islands is a State Party to CEDAW and is preparing to respond to the List of Issues and Questions Prior to Reporting, which is due on June 5, 2024. These responses will comprise its fourth and fifth periodic reports.
- 36.2. While an action plan was developed in 2015 to implement the UN CEDAW Committee's concluding observations and recommendations from 2014, it was never finalized or launched. The UN CEDAW Committee's final observations and recommendations were in response to Solomon Island's combined CEDAW initial, second, and third periodic reports, which were submitted in 2014. However, the revisions of the National GEWD Policy and

its subsidiary policies ensured the incorporation of the concluding observations into its priority outcome areas, strategies and action plans: the National GEWD Policy 2021 – 2027 is the third iteration of the National GEWD policy, building on the GEWD Policy 2016-2020; similarly the EVAWG Policy 2021-2027 is also its third policy; the *NSEEWG 2020-2023* is the second strategy building on the NSEEWG 2015 and preparation for its review is underway; the WPS NAP 2017-2020 is a first of its kind for Solomon Island and is currently under review; and the Affirmative Action Strategy 2022-2027- Accelerating Women’s prospects and pathways to leadership, decision-making and governance is also a first for Solomon Islands.

- 36.3. Solomon Islands is yet to submit its third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review report. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade is responsible for the administration of the UPR and develops a tracking matrix to monitor the progress of the UPR.

Section Five: Data and Statistics

37. *Areas of most Progress in Gender Statistics at the National Level*

Improved Administrative-based or Alternative Data Sources to Address Gender Data Gaps

Example 1: Gender Based Violence Administrative Data

- 37.1. In 2020, the MWYCFA implemented a new GBV administrative data collection and monitoring system for the SAFENET, allowing for the measurement of GBV multi-sector service delivery and trends across the country, as well as improved network monitoring. SAFENET agencies in Honiara have received training on how to use the tool, and data collection and reporting for 2020 and 2021 are complete. The MWYCFA, in collaboration with UN Women, is conducting an evaluation and review of the current data collection tool and data sharing processes, with a particular emphasis on agency capacity in both national and provincial SAFENETs, to ensure that the GBV administrative data system is tailored to the specific contexts of all Solomon Islands provinces. The evaluation will also consider the implementation of a new online database for SAFENET data collection.

Produced knowledge products on Gender statistics

Example 2: Equality Insights Rapid Study

- 37.2. To improve the availability of gender statistics and poverty data in the Solomon Islands and support action on the SDGs, NSO and the MWYCFA, with support from IWDA, conducted an initial Equality Insights Study (formerly known as the Individual Deprivation Measure Study) in Guadalcanal and Central Islands Province in 2020, followed by a national Equality Insights Rapid Study in 2022. The Study sheds light on the

multidimensional deprivation and issues that define poverty and inequality across the following dimensions: food, water, shelter, health, education, energy, sanitation, relationships, clothing, family planning, environment, voice, time use, and work.

Engaged in Capacity Building to Strengthen the use of Gender Statistics

Example 3: Gender Statistics Training

37.3. The NSO is committed to the 2020 Pacific Roadmap for Gender Statistics and, in collaboration with the MWYCFA, hosted a gender statistics training from October 10 to 13, 2022, titled 'National Training: Producing and Using Gender Statistics to Monitor the SDGs and Implement the Pacific Roadmap in Solomon Islands'. The training was the second in a series of national workshops for Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) co-organized, funded, and implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC), the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), with support from the Australian Government.

38. *Priorities for Strengthening National Gender Statistics*

Establishment of an Inter-agency Coordination Mechanism on Gender Statistics

38.1. The Solomon Islands National Statistics Development Strategy 2015-2035 (NSDS) serves as a guiding strategy for all key stakeholders involved in the creation, dissemination, and application of statistics for policy, development planning, and decision making. The NSDS also establishes mechanisms for implementing, coordinating, reporting, and monitoring gender statistics. The NSO in charge of administering the NSDS is preparing to develop the TOR for the coordination mechanism. Members of the coordination mechanism will be appointed by the Minister of National Statistics.

Re-processing of Existing Data to Produce more Disaggregated and/or New Gender Statistics

38.2. The NSO, with the support of the MWYCFA, intends to reprocess the 2019 National Population and Housing Census in order to create a gender monograph. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community has been contacted for technical assistance in moving this project forward. The current gender monograph for the Solomon Islands is based on the 2009 National Population and Housing Census.

Statistical capacity building of users to increase statistical appreciation on and use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)

38.3. NSO intends to conduct a capacity assessment of the Public Service to inform a Gender Statistics Training Development Plan for the entire government. Gender statistics training will be institutionalised by incorporating it into the IPAM, ensuring its long-term sustainability.

39. *Gender-specific Indicators prioritized for monitoring progress on the SDGs*

39.1. The National Development Strategy 2016-2035(NDS) is the overall national framework that outlines Solomon Islands national socioeconomic priorities to guide the overall planning and implementation across sectors, government institutions, Civil Society Organisations (CSOS), Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) including women's organisations, development partners and communities at both national and provincial levels. The NDS is Solomon Islands translation of the SDGs to country-level.

39.2. The NDS outlines five long-term development objectives, fifteen (15) Medium Strategies, and a Monitoring and Evaluation Performance Framework that includes 109 SDG performance indicators, targets, and reporting agencies. Only 34 of the 109 Sustainable Development Goal indicators are gender specific.

39.3. Sexual orientation is not a priority of the Solomon Islands; it is criminalized under its constitution and the penal code act.

39.4. The NDS prioritizes the following SDG gender-specific indicators: SDG 1 on poverty eradication; SDG 2 on agricultural productivity and incomes; SDG 3 on maternal mortality and sexual and reproductive health services; SDG 4 on formal and informal education; SDG 5 on gender equality; SDG 8 on employment and decent work; SDG 10 on inequality reduction; SDG 11 on safe transportation; SDG 13 on climate change; and SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies.

39.5. The 2017 Performance report highlighted some of the key challenges for collecting and compiling data for the NDS 2016-2035. They include:

- a) The need to improve SIG and Donor cooperation to ensure that all donor funded programs are linked to MDPAC standards and are able to be tracked and monitored
- b) The need to improve project designs to include log frames and clear indicators for monitoring
- c) The need to improve human resources and capacities of workers to effectively implement programs and projects
- d) The need to improve inter-ministry cooperation, communication and coordination
- e) Slow budget processes and the need to align budget timelines to project and program timelines

- f) The lack of transparency in reporting on the Constituency and grant related programs/projects i.e. the Constituency Development Fund
- 39.6. To strengthen the monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the performance of the *NDS*, the Ministry of National Planning and Development Coordination (MNPDC)^[1] conducted a nation-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System Analysis (MESA) for the country, beginning 2022. The MESA Survey report and its accompanying Strategic Plan is now pending Cabinet endorsement.

40. *Data Disaggregation routinely provided by major surveys*

- 40.1. Specific questionnaires on geographic location, sex, age, education, marital status, race/ethnicity, religion and disability are always part of demography sections in major Solomon Islands National Surveys.
- 40.2. Different national surveys provide information on differing categories of income depending on the target of that survey. Income and Expenditure Surveys are carried out every ten years. An example is the Household Income and Expenditure Survey.
- 40.3. The National Population Census is the only national survey that provides information on migratory status. Data collection on migratory status is often challenging due to the difficulty in measuring the movement of people of Solomon Islands. For internal movement the NSO analyses data collected on 'place of birth', 'place of enumeration', and 'place of residence five years before census'. Visitor's Statistics are used to collect data on international migration using administration data.

Section Six: Conclusion and next steps

41. *Key takeaways from the review*

- 41.1. One of the key takeaways from the review process is the need for Beijing to better align with the Solomon Islands' national gender frameworks. Some aspects of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action are not reflected in the Solomon Islands national gender policies, and thus have not been adequately monitored in comparison to our policy priorities. There is a need for a refresher on the 12 Critical Areas prior to reporting years, particularly for country focal points. This will facilitate the interpretation of the review questions.
- 41.2. Due to the WDD MWYCFA's limited resources, no specific budget has been allocated for the Beijing Review. Conducting a nationwide consultation to inform the national review

^[1] Previously the Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination

report is always difficult due to the geographical spread of the Solomon Islands. The use of existing gender reporting mechanisms and protocols over the years has greatly aided this round of national review. However, a separate budget should be allocated to support the Beijing national reviews.

- 41.3. The importance of developing the knowledge and skills of Solomon Islands Government Gender Focal Points on Beijing and its reporting obligations will greatly aid in data collection and analysis for the Solomon Islands Beijing national review report.
- 41.4. A revision of the Beijing review questions is recommended to minimise repetition of the underline subjects of the questions, and thus reduce burdens of reporting.
- 41.5. The MWYCFA will continue to work closely with all other government ministries through its gender focal points, NGOs, INGOs, CSOs including FBOs, private sector and development partners in particularly those working in non-traditional gender spaces or sectors to ensure gender mainstreaming including gender responsive budgeting across whole of government and at all levels.

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