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UN Women Fiji Multi-Country Office

Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu
UN Women is the UN organisation dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women’s equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: Increasing women’s leadership and participation; Ending violence against women; Engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; Enhancing women’s economic empowerment; and Making gender central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system’s work in advancing gender equality.

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The 14 PICTs covered by the Fiji MCO are vastly diverse in relation to linguistics, socio-economic and natural environment, politics and culture. Most PICTs have small populations, based on numerous outer islands or atolls, spread over large distances, with few transport or communication resources, limited government services and often a dependence on imported basic goods. Issues related to governance capacity, inadequate blending of traditional and modern forms of governance and leadership, high levels of gender inequality, migration and urbanisation, resource extraction and inter-group tensions are significant challenges to social and economic development. This is exacerbated by factors such as physical isolation, market access and economies of scale, limited governance structures, varied natural resources, inadequate infrastructure and costly transportation, the impact and variability of climate change, natural hazards risks, and economic shocks, all of which constitute key development challenges in the Pacific.

While there is progress towards gender equality and women’s empowerment in the region, it remains a key development challenge. The MDGs have helped create awareness and gain political support for efforts to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable human development across the globe. However, according to the 2013 Pacific Regional MDG Tracking Report, the Pacific region’s progress on the MDGs has been slow and uneven and many major gender disparities still persist. Women in the Pacific still face unequal access to productive resources, low levels of employment outside the informal sector, and violence against women is at pandemic levels (see Graph 1, which shows the prevalence and patterns of VAW across the Pacific Region). Data is collected from the Family Health and Safety Studies completed in each country). Despite this mixed progress, the MDGs have opened the space for debate at all levels on development in the region, from community to government level. The limitations of the goals in particular have encouraged CSOs and the women’s movement to engage with the MDGs. CSOs in the Pacific have been using the MDGs to continue advancing women’s broader social justice agenda and look closely at the post 2015 development framework.

Despite the mixed progress on MDGs in the Pacific, there is an unprecedented commitment and momentum to promote gender equality across the region. This is largely due to high level commitments from Pacific Islands Forum leaders, increased availability of data, and the development of specific legislation and policies on gender equality and gender violence. In the Pacific the mandate to dramatically increase efforts to promote gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment has never been clearer and more urgent. Evidence of Pacific leaders’ commitment to gender equality was apparent with the issue of a Gender Equality Declaration during the 2012 annual Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting where dialogue identified how progress on all MDGs is contingent upon achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls. Leaders agreed that gender inequality is imposing a high personal, social and economic cost on Pacific people and nations, and that improved gender equality will make a significant contribution to creating a prosperous, stable and secure Pacific for all current and future generations.

In 2012, the Pacific leaders committed to supporting women’s political representation, including by: strengthening consultative mechanisms with civil society groups on key budget and policy issues; advocating for increased representation of women in the private sector and local level governance boards and committees; and considering specific legislative changes to allow TSMs such as reserved seats. Leaders also committed to ensuring that a gender analysis is factored into sustainable development discussions, country programming, and policy decisions.
All but two PICTs have ratified CEDAW and all have adopted the Pacific Platform of Action and the Millennium Declaration, 2000, which together established that it is a state responsibility to take all appropriate measures to address pervasive gender disparities. Some governments have responded by advancing legislation, policies, special temporary measures, and National Action Plans on ending violence against women and girls.

In 2013, PICTs further demonstrated an unprecedented commitment through their active participation in CSW 57, resulting in strong international agreements on how states can best address this issue. What needs to be done has been agreed; the challenge now involves turning commitments into action. The important role of a civil society in responding to and preventing VAWG is well recognised. For decades women’s organisations across the Pacific have been advocating for gender equality and women’s rights.

Progress on MDG3 is being measured by three targets: (i) gender parity in primary and secondary education; (ii) women’s participation in the non-agricultural wage employment; and (iii) the number of seats held by women in parliament. Out of the 14 PICTs nine were reported to have ‘mixed results’ on MDG3, two were ‘off track’ and only three (Cook Islands, Niue and Palau) were ‘on track’ towards meeting MDG3 targets (refer to Table 1).

Importantly, the region is close to achieving gender parity on primary and secondary education levels. From this indicator alone, progress has risen, there are concerns over pay disparities. In addition, women have the load of unpaid domestic work to which they devote large amounts of time and energy.

The MDGs did not specify a goal or a target in regards to women’s political participation. However, one indicator captures the percentage of parliamentarians who are women. In this area, progress remains poor with 10 of the 14 PICTs being ‘off track’ in meeting targets. The Pacific has the lowest rate of women’s representation in national parliaments worldwide, with several PICTs having none or only one female member of parliament at national level, and low levels of representation in local government level. The reasons for this underrepresentation are manifold, one being that political and electoral systems may favour men (due to majority systems being used) and cultural stereotypes that rank women lower than men in society, creating obstacles which largely exclude women from political participation at all levels.

While many PICTs have made significant progress in fostering gender equality in education, by and large, the MDGs have not delivered on gender. The Pacific region is still a long way from achieving gender equality despite the progress made so far.

Progress on MDG5 is being measured by three targets: (i) the number of women who have the right to vote and stand for office; (ii) the number of women in government; and (iii) the number of women in national parliaments. Out of the 14 PICTs, eight of the 14 PICTs are ‘off-track’ in meeting this target and only two countries (Cook Islands and Niue) are ‘on-track’. In PICTs, women are more likely than men to be informal workers, a consequence of their limited skills, restricted mobility and gender norms. Even where participation has risen, there are concerns over pay disparities.

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The heightened commitment to promote gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment is evidenced by the sharp rise in demand for UN Women’s expertise in the region. Pacific governments, civil society organisations, intergovernmental agencies and development partners are increasingly requesting UN Women’s support.

In partnership with Pacific governments, civil society organisations, donors and UN agencies, UN Women adopts a wide range of strategies and measures to increase government leadership and address the development, adoption and implementation of laws, policy and budgetary commitment.

UN Women is committed to actively participating in intergovernmental processes at the regional and international levels, such as CSW, Beijing Platform for Action +20 and SIDS. Support will involve technical and financial assistance, alongside government, CSO and FBO partners, to raise the profile of gender equality and women’s empowerment issues, specifically in relation to sustainable development and the Post 2015 framework. Specific focus will be on the necessity of the Stand Alone Goal to advance gender equality in the Post 2015 development framework, as well as the mainstreaming of gender across all goals. In addition, the Fiji MCO will continue providing technical expertise and advocacy on gender equality within the PIFS as well as other Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific agencies.

The Fiji MCO has established annual workplans and development result frameworks for all 14 countries in the Pacific to highlight the UN Women’s role in implementation of the 14 country based UNDAF matrices, 2013-2017. As a result, with a new gender equality outcome and country based UNDAF matrices, the demand on services and support from UN Women is ever increasing.
ADVANCING GENDER JUSTICE IN THE PACIFIC PROGRAMME

UN Women works in partnership with governments, civil society and international organisations to promote women’s human rights and political participation in the Pacific. The AGIP programme has been designed based on nationally identified priorities that acknowledge and highlight the complexity in changing social norms, values and cultural practices around human rights, access to justice and political participation. The AGIP programme is based on an understanding of gender responsive governance as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels that acknowledges that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities are respected and will not depend on whether they are born male or female. A critical element in achieving gender responsive governance is women’s empowerment based on a foundation of women’s rights as human rights, and improved gender relations through rigorous national, regional and global debates about gender roles, specifically women’s transformative roles as leaders and decision makers.

The programme has a regional approach but interventions are adapted based on indicated country specific priorities. The countries for full programme implementation have been identified based on the request by respective governments, analysis of country context, where PICTs are in the electoral cycle, levels of women’s political participation and whether governments and civil society have identified specific pilot interventions that they would like to have implemented with the support from UN Women.

UN Women will contribute to increasing the gender responsiveness of the justice and governance systems in targeted PICTs by implementing regional and country specific activities holistically to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increased application of women’s human rights standards through multi-sectoral harmonised human rights reporting and implementation;
- Women, girls and marginalised groups have increased access to justice through the adoption of gender responsive informal and formal justice chains;
- Improved gender responsive political governance systems and processes through appropriate measures;
- Women’s equal participation in politics and decision-making increased through the advancement of transformational leadership principles and capacity development; and
- Increased understanding and appreciation of the importance of women’s political participation among the general public.

HARMONISED HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES REPORTING

CEDAW is a standard that is integrated into national constitutions, laws and policies, and its provisions have become fully actionable and have begun to make real changes in women’s lives. As such, CEDAW has great significance as a statement of global commitment on gender equality but its greatest importance is as a concrete, practical tool for advancing the gender equality agenda at the national level. Gender equality advocates from every region of the world have achieved landmark successes for gender equality with the use of CEDAW.

Throughout the Pacific, governments have experienced difficulties with timely human rights reporting and effective implementation. A number of barriers have been identified which contribute to this including: the small size of Pacific bureaucracies, the lack of institutionalised mechanisms to report and implement human rights obligations and, the inability to harmonise reporting obligations at the national level. The AGIP programme works to promote multi-sectoral and harmonised human rights reporting and implementation processes. The programme will involve all relevant government departments including, but not limited to, sectors from health, economy, labour, agriculture, education and justice in the CEDAW reporting and implementation process.

UN Women supports the integration of national CEDAW Committees into national human rights committees under the harmonised human rights approach, which will not only remove the sole responsibility of CEDAW reporting and implementation obligation from the NWCM, but will also ensure that gender issues are mainstreamed into all human rights reporting and implementation obligations.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Worldwide, gender sensitive justice and legal reform has been acknowledged as an important component in improving the status and security of female citizens. When considering CEDAW implementation and women’s access to justice it is important to look

1. World Law: The country extended its legal framework to cover domestic violence in areas such as marriage, divorce and inheritance, and domestic violence. The Government of Kenya passed the Registration of Partnerships (Marriage and Divorce) Act (2006), and the Divorces (Dissolution of Marriage) Act (2001) after the UN CEDAW Committee “placed the highest priority” on the enactment of laws to end violence against women.

Kenya: Women and girls are getting a fairer share of inheritance after Kenya’s Court of Appeal made an important decision in 2005. The decision directly addressed the conflict between discriminatory laws on inheriting wealth and the equal rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Kenya: The country has embarked upon a major transformation of its response to violence against women, with the 2007 passage of the Domestic Violence Act (2005), the Violence against Women Act (2005) and the Domestic Violence Act (2003) after the UN CEDAW Committee recommended that the government adopt an integrated approach to confronting violence against women.

Sierra Leone: The country amended its legislative framework to eliminate discrimination in areas such as marriage, divorce and inheritance, and domestic violence. The Government of Sierra Leone passed the law to give women and girls the legal right to own property, including matrimonial property. The government has begun to make real changes in women’s lives. As such, CEDAW has great significance as a statement of global commitment on gender equality but its greatest importance is as a concrete, practical tool for advancing the gender equality agenda at the national level. Gender equality advocates from every region of the world have achieved landmark successes for gender equality with the use of CEDAW.

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beyond the physical availability of a court and also consider:

- Access to a fair and equitable set of laws;
- Access to formal and informal justice systems that provide unbiased interpretation of these laws;
- Access to education about laws and legal processes; and
- Access to legal aid.

In order to conduct evidence-based programming on women’s access to justice, an analysis of domestic law for compliance with international human rights law under CEDAW and domestic practice and interpretation of national laws in formal and informal courts will be completed. The first phase of the mapping strategy will be the analysis of the formal justice system (including legal aid), and the third phase will review the application of the law and customary practice in the formal and informal justice systems. This will identify discriminatory interpretation of existing laws, common law rules and customary practices.

The results of the de-jure and de-facto mapping activities will serve as the baseline for legislative change and enable UN Women and other stakeholders to develop and implement country specific strategies to enhance the capacity of formal and informal justice providers to provide justice to women.

UN Women also supports extensive capacity strengthening for national NGOs and justice actors. National NGOs will be trained to envision, record and analyse lower formal and informal court sessions to identify discrimination against women.

In addition, UN Women will focus on increasing the availability of training modules and resources promoting gender responsive legislative change for justice officials. AGIP will contribute to the capacity of the judiciary being enhanced through the development of provincial and national peer-learning mechanisms, which will be available for use by lower formal and informal justice actors. In addition, parallel to the mapping and training process for the justice providers, the initiative will provide legal literacy training for WHR NGOs.

TRANFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

UN Women defines transformational leadership as a visionary process that starts at the level of individual transformation and transcends the personal to express itself at the group and institutional levels. The process leads to the redefinition of power and power relations, and "powerful" leadership is fully aligned with the human rights agenda which was a major breakthrough in the affirmation of equality of every human being regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, class or gender. These principles highlight the importance of the people and organisations in promoting social change which demonstrates the principles of equality within their lives and institutions, thereby strengthening their efficacy. While increasing the number of women in leadership is important, of equal importance is the transformational quality of leadership that women bring.

A transformational leadership capacity development programme will be developed to improve the capacity of NGOs to work with women leaders to develop a shared understanding through the advancement of transformational leadership informed by the relevant international, regional and, where relevant, national frameworks, such as CEDAW and GEED.

It is also critical to support younger women interested in leadership and decision-making in order to develop a viable pipeline of future candidates. Preliminary research completed by UN Women in 2013 showed that some PICTs have a disturbing trend of decreasing numbers of women running for national political office. UN Women will therefore support national institutions such as Vanuatu Women’s Foundation, the Fiji Women’s Movement to strengthen women candidates’ technical capacity and transformational ability. UN Women is also working with regional organisations of younger women such as the PYWLA to hold at least two transformational leadership training activities for young women interested in leadership during the programme cycle. These activities will not only create a foundation of women and young women who will be prepared to seek political office in the future, but also provide opportunities by building and strengthening networks that encourage women and girls to pursue leadership positions. This will contribute to strengthening the pipeline of women leaders and ensuring the sustainability of the action.

WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Representation of women in national parliament in the Pacific (excluding the French territories) is 3%7; the lowest of any region in the world. To address this, UN Women is contributing to strengthening parliaments and sub-national legislature’s capacities to adopt policies, legislation and procedures that promote gender equality and women’s empowerment. UN Women collaborates closely with UN and regional partners who have established parliamentary support programmes. UN Women provides technical support as necessary to UNDP regional programmes and the Pacific Women’s Parliamentary Partnerships across five countries regionally to promote gender responsiveness in existing programming.

The UN Women AGIP programme works to support PICTs through technical and financial support for diagnostic studies to identify the main barriers to women’s political participation. Based on these studies, the best solution for individual countries can be sought. This not only ensures that new policy and legislation provides the expected increase of women in politics, but also creates national ownership. TSMs, such as reserve seats and quotas, have proved to be successful in terms of strengthening women’s political representation and addressing barriers to women’s participation created by socioeconomic inequalities, major barriers to women’s political participation, achieved through in-depth research, an evidence-based country relevant response can be generated.

Strengthened dialogue mechanisms and enhanced policy space to enable gender equality advocates and civil society to promote political participation are critical to gender responsive political governance. The AGIP programme will include an Empowerment Series international exchanges of women leaders and male allies who will host national dialogues and speak about their experiences as women leaders. The impunity of violence against women and sexual and gender-based violence and share first-hand experience of strategies used in the Pacific, Asia and globally to promote women’s political participation.

UN Women has taken the lead globally in supporting governments, that have indicated interest in human rights reporting and implementation, as well as to align the concluding observations with the UPR process in RMI. UNICEF and UN Women work together on human rights reporting in the Pacific, as well as on human rights reporting and implementation. The result has been a more aligned and comprehensive human rights agenda in these countries as well as within the UN agencies.

Vanuatu has ratified five of the nine core human rights treaties, including the CEDAW, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as well as a number of ILO conventions that aim to protect and uphold the rights of its workers.

In July 2013 UN Women supported the PIIF and RRRT in running a consultation in partnership with the Vanuatu Ministry of Justice on harmonised human rights treaty reporting. “This harmonised approach is exactly what countries like ours need to approach human rights reporting and implementation in a systematic and efficient way,” said Mr. Mark Bebe former Director General for the Ministry of Justice.

UN Women began collaborating with the Solomon Islands government to promote a wider understanding of the gender responsiveness of formal and informal courts and to create a baseline to be used for strengthening women’s access to justice. Solomon Islands ratified CEDAW in 2002. Through ratification, the country endorsed the principles of the Convention and indicated their commitment to eliminate discrimination in their legislation as well as in their legal and governance systems. CEDAW (Articles 2 and 15) obligates states to provide equality before the law to its citizens, which includes full access to a country’s justice system regardless of sex and financial means. The spirit of equality before the law is also reflected in Solomon Islands’ Constitution.

KEY RESULTS

Under the leadership of OHCHR, a joint initiative has been developed by UN Women, OHCHR, UNICEF and the AJIP on harmonisation of human rights treaty reporting and implementation, as well as to align the concluding observations with the UPR process in RMI. UNICEF and UN Women work together on human rights reporting in the Pacific, as well as on human rights reporting and implementation. The result has been a more aligned and comprehensive human rights agenda in these countries as well as within the UN agencies.

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UN Women worked with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO) to gather legal mapping data in order to identify barriers for women with regard to access to the justice system, and by the UN-government Joint baseline data for evidence-based programming to increase women’s access to, and the gender responsiveness of, the governmental and Family Affairs and the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO) to gather UN Women worked with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO) to gather UN Women worked with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO) to gather UN Women worked with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO) to gather UN Women worked with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO) to gather UN Women worked with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO) to gather UN Women worked with the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs and the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO) to gather
Vanuatu is one of the few countries in the world where there are no women in national parliament. Since independence only five women have been elected to national parliament and in the most recent elections in 2012, no women were successful in gaining a seat in the national parliament.

In 2013, the Vanuatu government made progress towards improving women’s representation in elected positions by amending the Municipal Act to allow for 30-34% reserve seats for women. As a result of this change, the Port Vila Municipal Council now has five female councilors—the highest number of women ever elected at one time to a governing institution in Vanuatu.

Prior to the Port Vila Municipal Council elections, UN Women ran a one week transformational leadership training workshop in December 2013. 45 potential candidates participated, including the five women who would go on to win the seats. It was the first time that participants were exposed to concepts such as transformational leadership and emotional intelligence, and for many it was their first time speaking in public.

Participants examined goals that they wished to achieve, discussed concepts and took part in practical exercises that highlighted the importance of the concepts for achieving their goals and functioning effectively as transformational leaders.

By the end of the workshop, participants understood the importance of transformational leadership and emotional intelligence along with honesty and integrity. The potential candidates were also introduced to gender and socio economic conditions and identified core local issues.

As a member of Port Vila Municipal Council, Catherine Hivo would like to see more health clinics in operation and with adequate resources. She would like to improve the lives of the people of her community through better market places and more available opportunities for women and children. “I take this opportunity to assure the Government and all women leaders in Vanuatu that we, the five women that have been elected as Councillors to the PVMC will always stand and unite together to ensure and maintain our stand and work to achieve what is meant to be for our women population and the future generation” she said.

Rose Peter wants to create changes while she is a councillor. “I am very concerned about the conditions at Port Vila market. I would like to see better allocation of space, improved parking for trucks and safer lighting” she says. She would like to see far more use made of solar lighting in all area as it is much cheaper and more efficient. Mrs Peter commented: “I am looking forward to working as part of the council. I am there for everyone and I am excited about being able to make changes to help all communities.”

Pascalyne Cakau is particularly concerned for women market vendors who often have to sit on the ground when selling their produce. She would like to see better conditions for all market vendors and for more women to be involved in market management in decision-making positions. Mrs Cakau commented “In my heart I want to make change. I have always dreamed of being in a position to really help people and now I have that opportunity.”

The main reason that Marie Kalkoa decided to get involved in politics was because she sees so many issues facing women and feels that she may be able to do more for them by being part of the system that has the power to make change. “I believe that politics is everyone’s business and so I want to learn how the process works so I can make a difference” she said.

When asked what drew her to becoming involved in politics, Leimara Malachi said “I want the environment to be improved. I would like to see better standards in the villages, more space for people to live and more space for children to study and to learn … bring women together who want the same things and we will make the change.”
“From Policy to Action: Ending Violence against Women and Girls in the Pacific” is UN Women’s flagship programme which aims to support a reduction in violence against women and girls in the Pacific region. The design is based on international and Pacific evidence, promoting a holistic approach to eliminating violence against women and girls in partnership with a range of stakeholders.

The programme supports Pacific-led activities to improve the policy environment on EVAW as well as meet the immediate needs of women and men at the community level who are experiencing violence today. It supports Pacific organisations in delivering services that meet the needs of survivors. The programme also takes steps to prevent violence from occurring in the first place by working with media and community organisation to promote sustainable community-based solutions.

The need to support governments in eliminating VAW has never been more apparent or urgent in the Pacific. Governments are struggling to develop adequate minimum services to meet the basic needs of survivors. Different government sectors (such as health, education, justice, and police) struggle to respond to cases, and to work together to provide a better response for women and their children. Access to justice is low, budgets are rarely dedicated to VAW services, and effective coordinated approaches are lacking. There is commitment to address the issues, but there are few human or financial resources to translate commitments to action.

While progress is underway, no PICT has yet implemented a comprehensive, integrated response to VAW. The programme is providing targeted and demand-driven technical support to PICTs, where there is commitment to implement legal and policy commitments.

UN Women is increasingly being asked by governments for support in developing policies, protocols and plans. Supporting an enabling environment to prevent and respond to VAWG, in line with international standards, is a key feature of the programme. In order to meet this demand UN Women is scaling up its support to governments (health, social welfare, police, and judiciary), training curricula of sectoral training programmes of least two Pacific countries (Kiribati and Solomon Islands);

Technical support for the development of legislation on VAWG;

Technical support for the development and adoption of policies and National Action Plans on VAWG;

Training for parliamentarians and policymakers on the causes and consequences of VAWG;

Support for Pacific engagement in international and regional inter-governmental processes (such as CSW and the PIFS SGBV Reference Group); and

Support to costing and mapping exercises on the implementation of services.

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN UN JOINT PROGRAMMES

UN Joint Programmes in Kiribati and the Solomon Islands include partnerships between ILO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WHO and respective governments with a shared commitment to join resources and elevate coordination for the purpose of ending violence against women and girls. Over the next four years, key areas for assistance through the UN Joint Programmes are:

- Technical support to governments to support implementation of integrated response protocols and referral/coordination mechanisms across sectors;
- Technical support for data collection and analysis on VAWG response;
- Curricula on integrated responses to VAWG for leading ministry personnel and UN staff;
- Integrating gender, human rights and VAWG issues in the training curricula of sectoral training programmes of governments (health, social welfare, police, and judiciary),
- UN and donor supported training programmes;
- Support mapping, budgeting and costing work on implementation of multi-sectoral essential services in at least two Pacific countries (Kiribati and Solomon Islands);
- Technical support for the development of legislation on VAWG;
- Technical support for the development and adoption of policies and National Action Plans on VAWG;
- Training for parliamentarians and policymakers on the causes and consequences of VAWG;
- Support for Pacific engagement in international and regional inter-governmental processes (such as CSW and the PIFS SGBV Reference Group); and
- Support to costing and mapping exercises on the implementation of services.

In Solomon Islands, the Joint Programme development has produced early results such as strengthened coordination, information sharing...
and planning around joint support for partners, such as the Safefnet referral system. The Government of Kiribati is advancing new legislation on violence against women and girls, to which UN agencies and the PCF have provided technical and financial inputs, bringing increased awareness and viability to the draft legislation.

PACIFIC REGIONAL ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN FACIlITy FUND

The Pacific Fund has been a central part of UN Women’s work to end violence against women and girls. It has provided support to an extensive capacity building programme to civil society organisations and governments, enabling new actions to EVAW to reach locations and populations with little previous support. UN Women, through the Pacific Fund, makes investments to support the enhancement and expansion of services (protection, health, counselling, legal etc.) for women and girls who are survivors of violence. Key activities include:

- Grants to selected service providers for delivery of services to survivors of VAWG (counselling, medical, legal assistance etc.), especially in remote and rural areas;
- Intensive capacity building for industry training, mentoring and technical advisory services;
- Support regional and national level exchanges on promising practices, innovations and evidence; and
- Documentation of innovative practices for replication across the region.

The Pacific Fund makes grants available in eight countries: Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

KEY RESULTS

Two bills on EVAW advanced in the Pacific in 2013 with significant support from EVAW through UN Women and an extensive capacity building programme to civil society organisations and governments, enabling new actions to EVAW to reach locations and populations with little previous support. UN Women, through the Pacific Fund, makes investments to support the enhancement and expansion of services (protection, health, counselling, legal etc.) for women and girls who are survivors of violence. Key activities include:

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The Pacific Fund makes grants available in eight countries: Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

In Kiribati, UN Women supported advocacy by the Women’s Development Division, part of the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs, to upgrade it to a women’s ministry. The successful advocacy campaign resulted in the new Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, giving a higher profile and voice to the team leading the implementation of the National Action Plan on Sexual and Gender Based Violence.

In Fiji, UN Women is providing substantial technical support to the national EVAW Task Force for policy development, service delivery and coordination, and many Government initiatives such as policies, programmes and legislation. Significant additional technical support has also been requested.

In 2013 the Tonga government approved new legislation on VAW through a major lobbying effort supported by civil society, government, and a project funded by the UN Trust Fund to the RBV. In Fiji, UN Women has joined other agencies and stakeholders in providing technical inputs to the draft legislation throughout the drafting process, with significant support from RRRT.

In Kiribati, the Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Task Force was established in 2013, and is working actively to advance policies and services, with technical and financial assistance from UN Women through support from the Australian Aid Programme. UN Women provided direct support to the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs to lead and coordinate action to end gender based violence in Kiribati. Several major gains were made as a result, including strengthening a broad and inclusive network of multi-sectoral service providers - including re-activating referral networks on outer islands, and identifying areas for improved coordination, data collection and information sharing - particularly among government departments. These areas for development are included for action in the UN- government Joint Programme on ending SGBV in Kiribati, which has wide support from partners across sectors. As a result of support provided by UN Women, the government of Kiribati has developed the National Action Plan on Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. Partnering with RRRT has resulted in an implementation plan for the draft legislation, the Family Peace Bill, the first such implementation plan for legislation.

UN Women supported members of the Kiribati national taskforce on EVAW through extensive capacity building programmes through workshops, extensive multi-sectoral consultations and study tours to Auckland, New Zealand and Melbourne, Australia to learn about multi-sectoral referral systems. This was a result of UN Women’s strategic objective to assist the Kiribati Government in identifying appropriate systems in Kiribati. Consequently, the team returned to Kiribati with clear plans for priority changes to make in the current response systems and have begun making these changes.

UN Women has played a significant coordination, leadership and participation role in ending violence against women and girls in many Pacific countries, engaging with governments, civil society, and in Kiribati with local and national government agencies and stakeholders.

In Fiji, a key achievement has been the establishment of the National Action Plan on Sexual and Gender Based Violence and the Kiribati Family Peace Bill, addressing violence against women and girls. In Kiribati, UN Women provided funding to the Kiribati Family Peace Bill, addressing violence against women and children. In Kiribati, UN Women has provided technical assistance for the drafting process, with significant support from RRRT.

In 2013, the Results Based Management for the Pacific Fund project was strengthened considerably, and as a result, has dramatically improved monitoring and evaluation of the Fund. Capacity building programmes for grantees of the Fund were developed and implemented, and have brought about improved reporting by grantees.

In 2013, UN Women produced two short films about the work of the Pacific Fund grantees, designed to capture learning and enable sharing of Pacific practices, challenges, and successes in addressing VAWG across the region.

FIJI RED CROSS

The Fiji Red Cross Society (FRCS), a Pacific Fund grantee, has demonstrated increased capacity by providing gender and human rights training to its first responders and volunteers, with the focus on prevention of VAW and response during times of emergency and disaster. The project tackles an issue with particular relevance to the Pacific given the vulnerability of islands to climate change and natural disasters: considering the different needs of women, men, girls and boys during disasters to prepare for and respond to those needs before, during and after crises. To date the FRCS has reached more than 200 people including its own staff and volunteers, their District Officers and Red Cross members, health care workers and members of selected communities, preparing these front line responders to anticipate and respond to gender-based violence in emergencies.

NATIONAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Fiji’s Ministry of Education’s National Substance Abuse Advisory Council (NSAAC) is educating students and teachers alike to change negative social norms and attitudes about gender and violence. A Pacific Fund grantee, NASSC has trained 417 peer educators and 302 support teachers, who have collectively reached close to 8,000 students throughout Fiji since 2011. NASSC is a strategist in implementing the education sector’s efforts to change social norms, attitudes and knowledge related to gender and violence. The programme provides students with a ‘safe space’ for freely expressing ideas, feelings and experiences, in addition to seeking advice from a trained professional.

“A national survey of women in Fiji in 2012 by the Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre has found that 64% of women – that is more than three in five women – who had ever been in a relationship have experienced physical or sexual violence or both by a husband or intimate partner. The education sector has the responsibility to not only educate but also transform attitudes and behaviours early about this issue,” said Misaelle Driubalavu, of NASSC.

Since the training, the students have been disseminating information to their peers on the nature and causes of violence against women and girls, its impacts upon survivors, children, families and perpetrators, and on how to recognize healthy and unhealthy relationships. The peer educators also refer students to support teachers and counsellors.

"After attending the Peer Education Training programme, I learned that it is never a girl’s fault if she is raped or sexually assaulted. I learned to consult those who can offer appropriate services and through the programme I was able to help my friend in her hardship,” a male student participant commented.

STREETWISE PROJECT - FOUNDATION OF THE PEOPLES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL

Ongoing in Vanuatu, the Streetwise Project has facilitated nine workshops on gender-based violence and human rights, conducted by the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International
hidden violence and abuse faced by women and girls with a disability, openly about the subject. MMF is empowering women leaders in actively advocating in churches, villages and workplaces on gender In Tonga, 53 women leaders with strengthened capacity are now “said to be mindful that there are severe and strict laws for punishment, members: stripping members found guilty of committing any form of violence against women of their licences.

“I have spoken to perpetrators of violence against women and girls, reminding them how bad it is to humiliate and endanger women and girls, as they are an integral part of us as men, and have warned them to be mindful that there are severe and strict laws for punishment,” said Atama, Streetwise project participant and street leader.

MA’AFAFINE MO E FAMILI
In Tonga, 53 women leaders with strengthened capacity are now actively advocating in churches, villages and workplaces on gender equality and the elimination of violence against women through the support of the Maafafine Mo e Famil (MMF). To date, these women leaders have been able to reach 500 more women in their various constituencies. While violence against women and girls is often a difficult subject to talk about in a patriarchal society, MMF has reported that the participants have strengthened confidence to talk openly about the subject. MMF is empowering women leaders in Tonga using the principles of Transformative Leadership.

TE TOA TOTATA
Using drama to communicate sensitive issues, such as the often hidden violence and abuse faced by women and girls with a disability, Te Toa Totata (TTM) advocates and lobbies on behalf of persons living with disabilities in Kiribati to create a consistent awareness in the wider community of the need for equalisation in all aspects of life, especially the right to live a life without violence.

Through funding from the Pacific Fund, TTM worked to collect stories of violence and inequality from its members for the compilation of a three-part drama. This was performed by members of TTM (both men and women) at 10 locations on the main island of Tarawa, including at high schools and community meeting places. Through this drama, TTM reached 20% of the people (1,800 people) on Tarawa and also carried out activities in two remote islands, reaching up to 95% of people with disabilities in these areas. The House of Sarah, run by the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia and FSVPI, has been working with Enabling People with Disabilities, especially the right to live a life without violence. The House of Sarah, run by the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia and a Pacific Fidowharoe, provides women survivors of violence as well as community education in its parishes throughout Fiji. Their aim is to empower women with basic knowledge and skills and to be available at the parish level to help and support more people in their communities when issues arise.

To date, the House of Sarah has reached 432 women through 12 workshops held in parish communities on three of Fiji’s main islands. Additionally, the counselling centre has providing counselling to 46 women survivors. The workshops focus on gender, domestic violence, child abuse, rape, sexual harassment and Fiji’s laws that govern family and marriage. They also cover human rights and UN Conventions on discrimination against women and children’s rights.

In early 2013, through its advocacy and lobbying within the church hierarchy, the House of Sarah was influential in the decision of the Anglican Synod of the Diocese of Polynesia to declare “that within the Diocese of Polynesia there be zero-tolerance of violence within our churches, schools, settlements and homes.” The House of Sarah has also been included in discussions with groups of key women leaders from other churches to form a committee to look at developing an eccumenical manual (resource book) on religion and domestic violence that can be used by all churches in EVAW.

HUNAUNA WOMEN’S GROUP
Hunauna Women’s Group (HWG) “When Men support us, we End Violence against Women and Girls” project, in Solomon Islands, has reached 4,500 women from informal settlements and economically and socially-challenged homes and communities, a total of 76 women were able to tell their stories of abuse, rape and violence. The group included 2,500 informal women with a disability, 1,000 women with disabilities, young people created during the workshops to enable the women to share stories, some for the first time, and create a greater understanding of gender-based violence in families and community systems in Fiji. Following on from the workshops, WAC coached 23 of the women to act in the theatre pieces and also produced a DVD.

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF MOROBE
A faith-based organisation, the Literacy Volunteers of Morobe (LVM) undertook this pilot project, through funding from the Pacific Fund, to train its volunteers in gender and human rights and reach out to survivors of violence in their communities.

Volunteers visited 1,034 homes and made contact with 1,258 people in three zones of the Lae District, PNG. In high risk places, the volunteers were escorted by the Police. The volunteers identified that many of the women, girls and children who were illiterate were also those who were suffering the most and lived in unhealthy conditions (volunteers also distributed food items and clothing to these people). It was noted that there was a general lack of knowledge on violence and women’s rights in the communities and it was identified that there was a need to educate the vulnerable women, girls and children on violence, abuse and their rights. After initial training of volunteers in gender and human rights approaches to ending VAW, LVM embarked on them to support community survivors through referring them to the Police and the Family Support Centre in Lae. LVM also carried out literacy and life skills training, after identifying those who needed it the most.

“From the training I have learned a lot of new things on VAW, gender and human rights. I have realised that teaching the small children in the classroom to respect the girls and women will make a lot of difference when they become an adult. I am now starting to integrate gender teaching as part of my lessons though it is not part of the school curriculum,” said Tabetha Saking, 38, Bukawa Compound-Bumbu Settlement primary school teacher and volunteer at Literacy Volunteers of Morohe.

EASTERN HIGHLANDS FAMILY VOICE
Eastern Highlands Family Voice (EHFV) has reached a total of 6,600 people in PNG. The funded project is to improve access to services and empower women survivors in the Eastern Highlands Province of PNG.

The project has focused around three main areas: targeting women with information; training men on health and respectful relationships; and advocacy and lobbying.

In response to a baseline survey, EHFV began a targeted information dissemination campaign reaching more than 300 women, along with 150 men and 60 children. Following on from this, EHFV provided training for 45 men focusing on respectful relationships, family planning, sexual reproductive health, STIs and HIV/AIDS. The majority of the men reported hearing the information for the first time and many pledged to be male advocates in ending violence against women. EHFV is currently setting up a male advocacy network on EVAW in Eastern Highlands to enhance its supportive role to the men.

With further support from the Pacific Fund, the Director of EHFV attended Lobbying and Advocacy training in Fiji. On his return, he initiated the “Speak Out” Campaign mobilising EVAW partners including human rights groups in the Eastern Highlands Province to petition the government on ending violence against women and girls. More than 5,000 people participated in the “Speak Out” march and presentation of the petition to the EHP Member of Parliament.
SAMOA HELPLINE SAVES LIVES

In 2005, Samoa was the first country selected in the Pacific region to complete a study on women’s health and domestic violence, culminating in the publication of the Samoa Family Health and Safety Study (2007). This study, which provided the first-ever picture of the prevalence of violence against women in Samoa, found that 46.4% of women between the age of 15 and 49 years who had ever entered a relationship, reported experiencing physical and/or emotional and/or sexual violence, by an intimate partner.

In 2013, the Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG), a UN Women Pacific Fund grantee, established a 24-hour helpline to address a gap in services provided to victims of gender-based violence. Since its launch in April 2013, the helpline has had a dramatic impact in Samoa. Not only has access to counselling for survivors of violence against women in Samoa improved but it has also encouraged witnesses to speak out, and in doing so has saved lives.

In the first five months since the launch in April 2013, the service answered more than 1,764 calls, 83 of which were life-threatening domestic violence cases requiring overnight shelter assistance, immediate evacuation of the women survivors and their children, and referral to the Police Domestic Violence Unit, as well as counselling and mediation assistance at the SVSG office. Most calls are handled through online counselling, assistance and referral to SVSG village representatives closer to the location of the caller. Callers have ranged in age from 14 to 80.

Since the inception of the helpline, community awareness and involvement in ending violence against women has increased substantially. People have been called as witnesses to alleged crimes and have provided supporting evidence including videos and texts. This information, collected in homes, by the roadside, schools and public places, is vitally important when a case is tried in the judicial system.

Calls have sometimes included requests for other services, such as disability and home care assistance. Response includes the distribution of wheelchairs and general welfare support such as clothing and food. In one case, a village representative called in on behalf of a woman who is speech-impaired and she reported four cases of abuse against people with disabilities.

The helpline has also been instrumental in alleviating the frustrations of parents, husbands and partners who are looking for someone to talk to about these problems. This group comprises 65% of the helpline’s callers, a testimony to the fact that Samoans increasingly want to ‘speak out’ and seek assistance.

SVSG credits the media with spreading the word about the 24-Hour Helpline. At the launch Prime Minister Tuilaepa Acefa Sialele Malielegaoi asked for help informing the public, an influx of calls came through, encouraged by media reports.

"The positive use of the media, coupled with your 24-hour Helpline peopled by trained and committed staff, is a breakthrough for ending violence against women in Samoa," UN Women Country Programme Coordinator Suisala Mele Manuavai also noted.
Rural and urban markets in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are central to the livelihood strategies for a majority of the population, especially for poorer households. Many small-scale market operations, especially vending, are dominated by women who comprise between 75% and 90% of all vendors. Hours are long, profits are often low, and conditions difficult. Despite the apparent small-scale nature of marketplace operations, market vending and other informal sector activities contribute significantly to gross domestic product across the three countries. In this regard, marketplaces are central to the livelihoods of many households, and contribute towards local and national revenues.

Enhancing women’s economic empowerment is strategic for long-term, equity, growth, and sustainability. UN Women research has shown that improving the economic status of women leads to increased economic activity in communities and positive ripple effects for the whole nation. Marketplaces are key sites for women’s economic empowerment as well as national poverty reduction. Marketplaces are often dominated by rural and urban women vendors whose cash incomes constitute a significant part of the income of poor households.

Targeting markets and improving economic and social outcomes at marketplaces is expected to improve efficiency along farm-to-market supply chains, reduce food wastage, and increase revenues for vendors and councils. Through the empowerment of mainly female vendors, many of whom market their own produce, UN Women will help expand the range of local foods available at market, improve the quality of produce, improve packaging and preservation, expand transport networks, diversify product lines, and add value through processing (e.g. cooking). Exposure to new business models through training, south-south exchange and other learning opportunities are especially effective when provided in marketplace environments, offering value for money. Marketplaces also offer important venues for expanded trade between wholesalers and retailers, and the emergence of new business deals and previously unknown opportunities.

Marketplaces also provide a significant revenue stream for local councils, however, the economic contribution markets and market traders make to local and national economies is not often recognised by national and local governments. For the most part, market vendors, especially women, face unhealthy and unsafe work environments, and violence against women is widely reported. Despite the dominance of women market vendors, women are often excluded from market governance and decision-making as a unified community. This involves supporting the establishment and strengthening of market vendor associations.

The result will enable opportunities for women market vendors to contribute to the elimination of gender-based discrimination and violence, and to expand economic opportunities for women market vendors.

The M4C project will focus on building the capacity of both local government and women market vendors to engage with each other on improvements to market governance and infrastructure.

Over the next six years, through the M4C programme, UN Women will focus on the following key areas:

**REPRESENTATIVE MARKETPLACE GROUPS**

M4C will work with relevant stakeholders to build and support organised groups that advocate for women market vendors’ rights and interests and enable market vendors to have a voice to articulate the hardships they face.

UN Women research has shown that while informal market networks often exist among vendors, along with some formal associations, these are often dominated by men. M4C is focusing on empowering women market vendors to organise and participate in marketplace governance and decision-making as a unified community. This involves supporting the establishment and strengthening of market vendor associations.

The result will enable opportunities for women market vendors to contribute to the elimination of gender-based discrimination and violence, and to expand economic opportunities for women market vendors.

**Socio-economic security of market vendors**

M4C is partnering with UNDP and service providers to assess and respond to the multifaceted needs, interests and needs of market vendors and deliver appropriate services, trainings and interventions. UN Women’s pilot projects have shown that supporting initiatives that meet the particular needs of women market vendors have had important impacts on product diversification, turnover and revenue.

M4C will involve increasing access to financial and social services, such as savings accounts and mobile banking, which are often inaccessible to those in the informal sector. M4C will also involve increasing access to social protection services and awareness of health and reproductive rights.

Trainings will focus on business and leadership skills and interventions to increase productivity and product development such as product diversification, environmentally sustainable practices, disaster resilient crops, and value adding.
Because of their importance to local councils, marketplaces offer important opportunities to build partnerships with these councils. M4C will work with local governments and market management to ensure that they are gender responsive, effective and accountable to women market vendors’ needs.

M4C will help facilitate the relationship between local government, market management and women market vendors to ensure that women market vendors’ priorities are heard, changes made in response and information is shared effectively and transparently.

M4C will work with local government and market management to build capacity and draft, adopt and implement bylaws, policies and budgets that ensure safe and secure market infrastructure, adequate amenities and services, and transparent revenue collection and expenditure. M4C will work to ensure local governments and market management are aware of and committed to national gender policies and international agreed norms and standards including CEDAW and the MDGs.

Specific improvements often focus on safe, accessible toilets and washing facilities as well as hygiene practices, the accessibility of the market for people with disabilities, the availability of child care services at the market, the accessibility of shelter, and market designs to reduce the risks of crime and violence as well as damage from extreme weather.

**KEY RESULTS**

The M4C team carried out a mapping exercise from April to August 2013 following the “Getting Started – Market Vendor Association” workshop undertaken in 2012 in Fiji. In women representation in existing market vendor associations in Suva, Nausori, Sigatoka, Nadi, Namaka, Rakiraki and Tavua. The mapping exercise has provided disaggregated data and information on existing market vendor associations and will assist the M4C team to address gaps and challenges identified. Further to this, a baseline data collection exercise was carried out at the mentioned markets focusing on the market vendors, market management and Council management in areas of governance, operations, management and policies. Similar baseline data exercises were carried out for markets in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

M4C teams in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have been working in an inclusive manner with the respective local governments and market management and have been providing technical assistance on gendered needs analysis in areas of infrastructure planning and design phase. A pilot is being carried out at Suva City Council whereby UN Women is providing technical assistance through drafting an MOU on the formation of a working committee at Suva City Council between the Suva Market Vendors Association and the Council.

In Sigatoka UN Women has partnered with the Sigatoka Town Council in the construction of 42 new market stalls and fence around the market infrastructure. This has impacted market vendors by providing protection from weather conditions and has increased security for 700 market vendors who were previously vulnerable to theft.

In Suva City Market, the construction of an overhead roof extension at the market for the flower vendors impacted at least 24 women market vendors who now have protection from weather conditions. An added result is that flowers have a longer life hence minimising losses for the vendors.

The Rakiraki Town Council and UN Women have worked to extend the sanitation and ablution block at the market. This has provided almost 250 market vendors with higher quality and safer facilities as market vendors spend many hours every day at the market and require sufficient, well managed, clean and safe sanitation blocks.

In Nadi, 27 new trestles tables and benches were made available for market vendors who previously were forced to sit on the concrete floor to sell their fresh produce. This infrastructure project has resulted in more hygienic and healthy produce sales.

The addition of water storage tanks in Tavua, along with improvements to drainage systems and construction of additional stalls for the handicraft vendors has resulted in almost 250 market vendors with higher quality and safer facilities as market vendors experience a better working environment and produce is now not subjected to the dirt and dust of the market floor, resulting in the minimisation of produce wastage thus increasing the revenue of the market vendors.

In Solomon Islands, UN Women supported the refurbishment and upgrade of sanitation facilities. The project carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of Honiara Central Market site addressing issues of poor sanitation and ablution facilities, inclusive of the market and seafood area. Based on the EIA report’s recommendation, a structural plan for the refurbishment and upgrade of sanitation facilities is currently being undertaken.

In Vanuatu, the Shefa Provincial Local Government in Vanuatu has worked in partnership with UN Women to provide an entirely new market building for the fresh produce market vendors. The new market will allow between 100 - 150 market vendors to sell their produce from one location, previously many vendors used to operate from illegal, makeshift structures along the roadsides and often used to overspill on the footpaths and walkways of the Port Vila Market.
Market vendors in Solomon Islands face difficulties accessing banking services; both male and female market vendors are often restricted from, or hesitant to open savings accounts due to the banks’ strict criteria and complicated processes.

UN Women has worked to build the capacity of women market vendors at the Honiara Central Market (HCM) through facilitating a partnership between Bank South Pacific (BSP) and Honiara City Council (HCC) to open access to financial services for HCM market vendors.

In the past, the requirements by banks to open a new account were an intimidating long process. Vendors were required to provide a letter from a community or church leader or an employer, a difficult task for many market vendors as nearly half of the stalls at HCM are occupied by resellers who have settled with families in town or are renting cheap accommodation in the settlements. Resellers face difficulty getting letters from their community elders or a church leader as they are often far away from their communities and not often affiliated with a church. As a result of this, many of the vendors keep their money at home or with them, which increases the risk of theft and makes saving a challenge. One woman vendor expressed that these practices were unsafe and often resulted in money being spent unwisely: “I have been selling vegetables in the market for almost 10 years, and still I don’t have any savings,” she said.

UN Women negotiated for BSP to take its services to the HCM where, through a partnership with HCC, the council facilitated the issuing of the necessary papers, allowing the bank to waive the identification and other requirements. On the 14th and 15th August 2013 the BSP team visited HCM. Market vendors collected individual identification letters from the HCM market manager which they presented to BSP staff who signed up each vendor. Vendors were able to open a savings account and collect an ATM card.

Through UN Women’s assistance, BSP has recognised and supported the aspirations of market vendors and provided an easy process to cater to their needs, resulting in more than 150 market vendors opening bank accounts in August 2013.

"I just realised and know that banks are for all humans to keep their money. I thought it’s only for those who work in the offices".

Woman market vendor, HCM, Solomon Islands, 2013.

"I’m very excited that BSP is here at the market. [There is] no need to fill in forms and no other documents to present apart from the letter from HCC. It’s always difficult if we go through the normal banking processes. … I thank BSP and UN Women to have such services provided to us".

Woman market vendor, HCM, Solomon Islands, 2013.
INCREASING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE THROUGH THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL HAZARDS

Women are systematically excluded from decision-making relating to adaptation and mitigation of climate change, and management of disaster risk. UN Women's IREACH programme works with partners to empower women to use their knowledge and skills, to provide technical advice and training to practitioners; and to compile and conduct research into the gendered impacts of climate change and disasters.

The IREACH programme works directly in communities to empower women and provide access to sustainable energy sources, as well as providing training on disaster risk reduction and response. UN Women also provides training, support and resources to climate change and disaster management professionals, to better conduct gender analyses; to disaggregate data by age and gender; and to take into account the different needs of women and men in their work. UN Women is developing a long-term program, which will aim to focus on the three target areas of research, community programming, and technical assistance and advocacy. This strategy will be delivered in collaboration with a range of partners.

KEY RESULTS

A Pacific Gender and Climate Change toolkit has been developed in collaboration with SPC, SPREP, UNDP, UN Women, and GIZ. The toolkit was finalised by the end of 2013 with an accompanying training program to be rolled out in early 2014.

The toolkit was developed to support practitioners in mainstreaming gender into the design and implementation of climate change programmes. Tools are provided to help project managers and those involved in project design undertake gender analysis at different stages in the project cycle and to better inform design, implementation, and tracking of results. The toolkit includes several sector-specific modules on topics such as energy; water, disaster risk management, and food security. Staff from UN Women Fiji MCO wrote the modules on energy and gender and provided editorial support for the toolkit as a whole. The toolkit was launched during the 12th Triennial Pacific Women's Conference in Cook Islands in October 2013.

Gender was mainstreamed in the Post Disaster Needs Assessments that took place in Samoa and Fiji following Tropical Cyclone Evan which affected both countries in late 2012/early 2013. This is the first time PDNAs were conducted in each country. UN Women’s technical assistance during the disaster needs assessment also contributed to the recognition of the respective governments for the need to consider women, men, girls and boys in disaster preparedness and response. This recognition is expected to lead to providing gender mainstreaming into the existing national disaster risk management strategies.

Following Tropical Cyclone Evan, the Fiji National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) established a national Protection Cluster. This establishment emerged as a direct result of the lobbying and advocacy of the Protection Cluster of the Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT). UN Women contributed to this result through its role as a co-lead of the GBV Sub-Cluster within the Protection Cluster.

The Pacific Humanitarian Team met in Suva in October 2013 for the 6th annual Regional Workshop. Through sponsorship from UNOCHA, UN Women and UNFPA, seven NGO and government gender focal points in the area of humanitarian response, (from Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) received capacity building to address the needs of women, men, girls and boys in both the preparedness and response to natural disasters. The gender focal points will continue to be supported through relevant training with the intention that they will be the first points of contact for the NDMO when it comes to gender inclusion in their national humanitarian responses.

In addition to attending and actively participating in the 6th annual PHT meeting, the gender focal points also attended Cluster meetings to ensure gender was mainstreamed in the Cluster annual work plans for 2014.

UN Women, along with staff members from UNOCHA/UNHCR, as part of the PHT Protection Cluster, completed an assessment on the protection needs of vulnerable groups in Ha'apai in the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Ian on request from the Government of Tonga. The cyclone, a Category 5 system, destroyed 800 homes and directly impacted around 5,000 people. The Tongan Government formed a cluster system and requested support from the PHT Cluster to assist in assessing the protection needs of the communities affected. UN Women and the Tongan Government’s Women’s Affairs Division staff including ‘Ofa Masila, one of the UN Gender Group’s Gender Focal Points, gathered information on crucial factors affecting the lives of Ha’apai women following the cyclone. This included their access to distribution and services, and women’s involvement in community level decision-making structures.

The report will support the gender-sensitivity of longer-term recovery efforts and provide a key resource to mobilise resources to help rebuild the lives of women in Ha'apai and to deploy services to ensure their safety, security and dignity during the difficult reconstruction period to follow. UN Women will continue to offer technical assistance and support to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and to the wider Tongan and PHT recovery effort.

In collaboration with the Pacific Community’s Gender and Natural Hazards Programme, UN Women, in conjunction with the Pacific Humanitarian Trust Fund established an IREACH programme to work directly in communities, to mobilise men and women to co-design and implement an action plan to address the gendered impacts of climate change and disasters. The programme works with partners to empower women to use their knowledge and skills, to provide technical advice and training to practitioners; and to compile and conduct research into the gendered impacts of climate change and disasters.
Women, girls, boys, and men have different roles within their families and communities in Fiji. Each of these groups is differently affected by, and has distinct ways of dealing with, the effects of climate change. Women have valuable knowledge and skills which they can use when given the opportunity.

Communities in remote, rural areas of Fiji often lack access to conventional power sources. Solar electricity provides an alternative energy solution while simultaneously spurring progress in poverty reduction, gender equality, education and health.

UN Women works in conjunction with Barefoot College of India, a non-government organisation whose purpose is to improve the quality of life for the poorest of the poor across the world. The Barefoot College provides support to build self-sufficiency in a sustainable manner. It promotes the ideology of ownership: for rural development activities to be successful and sustainable, they must be based in the village and managed and owned by beneficiaries.

Through this programme, 10 women from Fiji were sent to India to train as solar engineers at Barefoot College with the support of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women, and Poverty Alleviation. They spent six months learning their trade, and have since returned to their communities to install solar panels for use by each household in their community. The women will remain in their communities, and are available to provide maintenance and repairs. They are also training others in the installation and maintenance of solar panels.

The solar engineers are from rural and remote communities, they are grandmothers or mothers, and illiterate or semi-literate. They are selected on these criteria because older women are some of the poorest members of their community, and they are most likely to remain in their villages to continue to work as engineers, increasing the sustainability of programme outcomes. By showing what older and less educated women can achieve, the solar engineers provide an example to other women in these communities that they can aspire to do more than their traditional gender roles. The program seeks to empower women to be agents of change in their communities, and use their skills to combat climate change. By gaining prominent and important roles, the solar engineers also increase their influence in the male-dominated power structures which manage community affairs.

To date, the 10 solar engineers have installed solar panels for 376 households in 12 villages around Fiji. Reapi Waitaleca is a grandmother from the village of Nabouwalu in Kadavu. She was trained by Barefoot College and has since returned to her village to work as a solar engineer. She has successfully established a solar workshop, and has wired up the solar panels and batteries which allow her to power the tools and equipment in her workshop using only solar electricity. She has provided solar panels for all the households in her village and has also trained Sofaia Waqabaca, an 18-year-old high school graduate, as an apprentice engineer. Nabouwalu has established a solar committee to manage the solar power programme. The committee manages the funds collected, which are used to pay Reapi for her work and contribute to the costs for maintenance and the repair of the solar panels and the workshop.
GENDER GROUP

The main role of the UN Gender Group is to support gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the Pacific UNDAF and in the Pacific Humanitarian Team.

The UN Gender Group is convened by UN Women to promote accountability of UN agencies to deliver on their shared mandate of advancing gender equality and empowerment of women. UN Women convenes and chairs UN Gender Group meetings and provides technical and executive secretarial support, and UNFPA provides co-chair service in order to facilitate regular meetings and decision-making.

UN Gender Group membership consists of gender specialists and gender focal points nominated by Heads of Agencies, from 14 agencies1 based in the Fiji UN Multi-Country Office and representatives from the UN Multi-Country Office Samoa.

The UN Gender Group works to:

• Provide support to the Pacific UNDAF through monitoring of the GE Outcome, UNDAF annual reviews and increased country level coordination on gender-related work;
• Identify areas for potential joint programming around gender equality and women’s empowerment and support gender mainstreaming in joint programmes developed by the other outcome groups;
• Support the capacity building of UN staff in the area of gender;
• Engage with processes and mechanisms at the regional and international levels, including the Gender and Development Partners Meeting, Triennial Conference of Pacific Women, CSW, SIDS, human rights treaty reporting, and UN observation days; and
• Ensure that a Pacific humanitarian response includes under and GBV sensitive processes and programming.

The UN Gender Group is working to increase harmonisation with Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies around work related to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A plan for joint action between SPC, PIFS and the UN Gender Group has been drafted and includes areas of collaboration and cooperation related to regional and international processes. UN Women will still continue to support Pacific engagement at regional and global levels, including CSW, SIDS, and others by coordinating inputs from governments, UN Women's civil society organisations/CSAG and key development partners into national and regional reports, developing thematic background materials and proposing language for lobbying at the regional and international levels, establishing space for CSOs to discuss key issues.

12TH TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF PACIFIC WOMEN, 20-25 OCTOBER 2013

The Triennial Conference is a regional gathering, unique in that it provides an opportunity for country government representatives, CSOs, international development partners, academics and the private sector to discuss, share experiences and learn from each other, while reviewing progress on gender equality and the status of women in the Pacific.

UN Women provided significant support to the 12th Triennial Conference and the subsequent ministerial meeting and drafted two overview papers on VAW and on Regional and International Processes for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. UN Women also hosted a Costing of VAW and Gender Inequality side event, which was attended by more than 30 participants from governments, NGOs and donors. The result of the costing side event was the understanding that costing exercises, even small scale ones (unit costing), have been useful to governments to advocate for specific budgets for VAW services. UN Women launched the two short films developed by the Pacific Regional EVAW Facility Fund by presenting one of the films on Preventing Gender Based Violence.

Twenty-five young women from 13 PICTs were selected to attend the Triennial, as well as a three-day Pre-Triennial Dialogue facilitated by PWYLA members including UN Women. The young women took part in panels and in side-events during the Triennial, and many formed part of their National Delegations. As a result of PWYLA engagement at the Triennial, young women’s perspectives and profiles were very visible. The Triennial outcome statement makes specific reference to young women 18 times, and contains 10 recommendations that had been advocated by young women participants. The PWYLA is now a recognised regional player which has established contacts and networks across the region.

Furthermore, in partnership with other UN agencies, UN Women supported PWYLA’s series of online dialogues which included topics on participation, transformational leadership, sexual and reproductive health and rights, peer-to-peer learning, bodily security,
and peace and security. The information gained has been used as a platform for wider discussion among development and government practitioners working in the Pacific.

UN Women moderated the dialogue on bodily security and has provided overall editorial support for the dialogue booklet. The dialogues were then made into a publication which was launched at the 12th Triennial Conference of Pacific Island Women.

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW)

UN Women provided significant technical and financial support for Pacific delegations to attend and actively participate in CSW 57. UN Women partnered with PIFS to implement a project on “Strengthening Participation of Pacific Delegates in the 57th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.” A pre-CSW workshop, for members and civil society organisations was convened by PIFS, jointly with UN Women, UNFPA and SPC.

The workshop built the capacity of Pacific delegates in the areas of global negotiation and advocacy, and provided an in-depth understanding of the CSO process and issues surrounding VAW, as well as national and regional responses on eliminating VAW. The workshop also provided an opportunity for members to get involvement from civil society organisations and to formally recognise civil society as one of their most important constituencies.

UN Women has created CSAGs across the globe – including global, regional and country-based groups – with the aim of being forums for dialogue and sustained engagement to assist the achievement of shared goals. These groups are expected to develop a strategic and substantive network of highly qualified individuals from the sector with diverse experience, expertise, perspectives and knowledge in UN Women’s focus areas. This network will help to sharpen ideas and strategies for UN Women’s initiatives, policies and programmes while fostering dialogue and engagement on gender equality and women’s empowerment issues at the different levels.

The Pacific CSAG aims to:
• Provide strategic advice to UN Women on its thematic priorities and positions, including during the strategic planning process;
• Provide intelligence and guidance on political, economic, social and cultural developments and trends to support UN Women’s regional/national programming;
• Provide analysis on the socio-economic and political environment at the country/ regional levels and its impact on gender equality and women’s rights issues;
• Provide guidance and inputs to advocacy strategies at the national and Pacific Region level;
• Assist UN Women in strengthening its engagement and dialogue with civil society at all levels.

The Pacific CSAG held the inaugural meeting in February 2013 where UN Women staff and CSAG members discussed the role of the CSAG and how to move forward. Special consideration was given to preparations for CSW and the MDGs along with Post 2015 development. Since this time, CSAG members have been given regular updates and initiatives from UN Women and have been invited to contribute to work being undertaken.

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS

Globally, UN Women seeks to position itself as the global champion for women and girls and is engaging in intensified resource mobilisation efforts to carry out its mandate. In order to capitalise on the growing interest generated worldwide, it is important that the organisation presents itself consistently as a united voice, positions itself as a leader on women’s empowerment and gender equality, and demonstrates the impact and results of its interventions. Communications initiatives are pivotal in this regard.

UN Women Fiji MCO communications unit aims to support the global UN Women communication mandate and enhance the positioning of women’s empowerment and gender equality as key issues in the Pacific. The MCO, will build on the existing frameworks and platforms including the UNITE campaign and coordinate UN system efforts in the region.

One focus for media outreach will be radio, in particular community radio, and other outlets for citizen journalism. By building a Facebook community UN Women will communicate on a daily basis on: programmatic areas (general updates as well as specific events and stories); Pacific news that highlights women’s empowerment and women’s rights issues; share information from global and regional UN Women platforms, other UN Agencies and partners to increase audience and relay a consistent voice. Information from press releases as well as photos and short videos and documentaries will also be shared.

Communications is a critical component of resource mobilisation, Success in today’s competitive development marketplace requires that donors and potential donors know what UN Women is doing and what it has to offer. Positioning UN Women as an authoritative global voice on gender issues and providing information about UN Women’s work that showcases results is pivotal to secure both core and non-core funding. Focus will be on local success stories that can be packaged for donor on both regional and global level.
16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM IN THE PACIFIC

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is held each year on 25 November and starts the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence campaign, which runs from 25 November to International Human Rights Day on 10 December each year. The 16 Days of Activism is commemorated each year around the world to raise awareness and spark action to end gender-based violence. Violence against women and girls is a universal phenomenon which takes place in all countries irrespective of levels of income, conflict or political stability.

In 2013, the 16 Days of Activism was celebrated throughout the Pacific region, with UN Women staff and other UN Agencies as well as governments and CSOs uniting to advocate for, and initiate actions against, gender-based violence.

In several countries, UN Women staff and local advocates spoke on local radio and television on EVAW and gender equality and women’s rights.

EVAW marches and parades were conducted in a number of PICTs including Samoa, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands. UN Women engaged with partners from government, local government, NGOs, including Pacific Fund grantees, and other UN Agencies to provide awareness-raising workshops, information booths, a dance competition, media events, and a pledge programme where men of all ages were encouraged to pledge to stop, no longer excuse or be silent on violence. Press releases and key EVAW messages were sent to media contacts in all 14 PICTs. Posters and knowledge products were displayed in libraries, universities, bus and taxi stands, markets and other public spaces and key messages including EVAW themes were displayed on big screens in high traffic areas.

An EVAW/UNiTE Campaign toolkit was developed for the Pacific region prior to the 16 Days of Activism 2013 as an initiative for raising awareness and actions towards ending violence against women and girls. The toolkit was disseminated to the 14 PICTs under the UN Women Fiji MCO through the networks of UN Women country offices, UN Joint Presence offices, the UN Gender Group, Civil Society Advisory Group and Pacific Young Women’s Leadership Alliance. Key messages and country-specific statistics on ending violence against women and girls were also disseminated.
PARTNERING FOR RESULTS IN THE PACIFIC

In delivering its contributions, UN Women works in partnership with multilateral, regional and bilateral organisations to complement each other’s comparative advantages and in assisting the governments and stakeholder institutions through a consistent people-centered, gender sensitive and rights-based approach.

UN Women partners with UN agencies for joint programming in support of activities aimed at effectively and efficiently achieving the MDGs and other international commitments arising from UN conferences, summits, conventions and human rights instruments. UN Women Fiji MCO is investing in increasing its operational and programmatic capacity in the Pacific. As part of this plan, in 2013 UN Women joined the UN Joint Presence arrangements with UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP in the nine Pacific Islands countries with UN Women hosting the Joint Presence in Nauru.

The Pacific EVAW Facility Fund UN Women works directly with grantees from the Pacific; Governments and CSOs, RRRT/SPC, UNFPA, UNICEF, OHCHR, and CSO partners such as PWCC, partner with UN Women on the grants approval committee of the Pacific Fund. The Pacific Fund engages responsible partners to provide ongoing specific capacity development support and mentoring to grantees, including SPC/RRRT, PWCC, and other organisations. At the intergovernmental level, UN Women collaborates regularly with PIFS, SPC, UN, and SREP within its key programme areas in the Pacific.

UN Women is grateful for the increased support of its donor community and looks forward to widening and deepening its partnership base. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the European Union, the Australian and New Zealand communities and the Japanese National Committee are some of the esteemed donor partners who have been vital in providing non-core funding to the work of UN Women in the Pacific.

Special gratitude is rendered to the Governments in the Pacific, many of whom have pledged to support UN Women’s core resources base. Other countries, especially for small scale funding. Over the years, the partnership with UN Women National Committees has developed from generating political and financial support from member states to active fundraising from individuals and the private sector. The National Committees have been extremely active and supportive of the work in the Pacific region. UN Women programmes have benefited from funds raised by the National Committees in Australia, New Zealand and Japan in the areas of VWE, EVAW and DRM. There is potential for similar relationships to be established with other National Committees, especially for small scale funding.

NATIONAL COMMITTEES

UN Women and Volunteer Service Abroad New Zealand (VSA) have come together in partnership, whereby VSA provides volunteers to support programme implementation. To date, six volunteers have begun their assignment with several other roles in the recruitment phase. The UN Women assignments offer New Zealanders volunteering opportunities and enable more New Zealanders to contribute to transforming the lives of those they work with as well as their own.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES ABROAD

UN Women and Volunteer Service Abroad New Zealand (VSA) have begun their assignment with several other roles in the recruitment phase. The UN Women assignments offer New Zealanders opportunities to contribute through a range of different roles and specialties. This is in line with VSA’s goal to create innovative volunteering opportunities and enable more New Zealanders to contribute to transforming the lives of those they work with as well as their own.

EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union has been a key donor in the UN Women project on Women’s Access to Justice/CEDAW implementation in Solomon Islands. The project supports the multi-sectoral approach to CEDAW reporting and implementation. Access to justice initiatives involve:

(i) gender sensitive legislative change and effective implementation strategies;
(ii) capacity development for justice sector actors (informal and formal justice system) to provide gender justice;
(iii) civil education on human rights and paralegal training for women human rights defenders; and
(iv) strengthened legal aid services to allow gender responsive legal advice and representation.

EXTRAORDINARY PROGRAMME SUPPORT

In 2013 UN Women began the Extraordinary Programme for Justice and Governance (GEPG) project and its transition to AGJP. Through this programme UN Women is contributing to increasing the gender responsiveness of the justice and governance systems in targeted PICTs. DFAT is also the main donor of the M4C project as a key component of the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development initiative. This project is aimed at empowering women vendors and strengthening market governance and operations including improvements and expansion of physical market infrastructures in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu in order to facilitate women’s economic empowerment.

AUSTRALIAN AID PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

DFAT has been instrumental in the provision of funding for UN Women Fiji MCO’s largest programme, the EVAW as well as funding the Transitional Phase of the AGJP Programme. Looking forward, DFAT will also be involved in the M4C project.

Alongside providing grants, the Pacific Fund also offers capacity building initiatives for the grantees to strengthen their project development and management skills. In addition, Australian Aid Programme supported the Gender Equality in Political Governance (GEPG) project and its transition to AGJP. This programme UN Women is contributing to increasing the gender responsiveness of the justice and governance systems in targeted PICTs.
ACRONYMS

AGIP
Advancing Gender Justice in the Pacific

Beijing+20
Beijing Platform for Action + 20 Years

CEDAW
Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

CRC
Convention on the Rights of the Child

CSAG
Civil Society Advisory Group

CSOs
Civil Society Organisations

CSW
Commission on the Status of Women

EVAW
Ending Violence against Women

FBOs
Faith-Based Organisations

FPTP
First Past the Post

FRCS
Fiji Red Cross Society

FSPF
Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International

GBV
Gender-Based Violence

GED
Gender Equality Declaration

GIZ
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

HHTR
Harmonised Human Rights Treaty Reporting

ILO
International Labour Organisation

IREACH
Increased Community Resilience through the Empowerment of Women by Addressing Climate Change and (Natural) Hazards

MAC
Markets for Change

MCO
Multi-Country Office

NDMO
Natural Disaster Management Office

NSAAC
National Substance Abuse Advisory Council

NWM
National Women's Machinery

Pacific Fund
Pacific Regional Ending Violence against Women Facility Fund

PHT
Pacific Humanitarian Team

PICTs
Pacific Islands Countries and Territories

PIF
Pacific Islands Forum

PIFSA
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

PPYWA
Pacific Young Women's Leadership Alliance

RMI
Republic of Marshall Islands

RRRT
Regional Rights Resource Team

SGBV
Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

SDS
Small Island Developing States

SOE
State-Owned Enterprise

SPC
Secretariat of the Pacific Community

SVA
Samoa Victim Support Group

TSM
Temporary Special Measure

UN
United Nations

UNCT
United Nations Country Team

UNDP
United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNDP
United Nations Development Programme

UNFPA
United Nations Population Fund

UNGG
United Nations Gender Group

UNICEF
United Nations Children's Fund

UNOCHA
United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNOHCHR
United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

UN Women
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

UPR
Universal Periodic Review

VAWG
Violence against Women and Girls

WEE
Women's Economic Empowerment