



**Australian  
Aid** 

**PACIFIC WOMEN**  
SHAPING PACIFIC DEVELOPMENT

## **Beijing 25+ National Review Report: Tuvalu**

**The 2019 national review report on Tuvalu's  
implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for  
Action (1995)**

## Table of Contents

Introduction	3 - 4
Achievements, challenges and setbacks	4 - 11
Intersectional discrimination	12-13
Implications of humanitarian crisis	13 -14
Top five priorities 2020-2024	14 -
Progress across 12 critical areas of concern	16 - 45
Conclusion	46
<b>Annexes;</b>	
List of Organisations Consulted	47
References	48 - 49

## Introduction

The Beijing Platform for Action was adopted by the Government of Tuvalu in 1995 demonstrating support for the advancement of gender equality. At the regional level, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) informed the first Pacific Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (1994, 2018) and the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (2012). The Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and other international declarations that Tuvalu has endorsed also informed the development of Tuvalu's first and subsequent National Women and Gender Policies (1999, 2005 and 2014) and *Te Kakeega* (National Strategy for Sustainable Development) (SPC, 2014 & UNDP, 2010).

In 2015, the Pacific Community worked with Pacific Island governments to produce a regional report titled *Beijing +20: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island countries and territories* based on national-level reports and a regional survey. In the foreword of the report Enele S. Sopoaga, the Honourable Prime Minister of Tuvalu remarked that:

Since 'knowledge is power', it is my belief that this report, by contributing to our collective understanding of where we stand on delivering on the promises made to Pacific women and girls in Beijing 20 years ago, should enable us to

better strategise, prioritise and implement gender equality commitments (SPC, 2015, p. 5).

Following 25 years since the endorsement of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the aim of the national review is to assess progress, setbacks and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action over the last five years.

This report focuses on Tuvalu's implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and covers the period of 2014 to May 2019. In 2015, Tuvalu submitted their responses to the regional survey for the *Beijing +20: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island countries and territories*, this is the first national review report for Tuvalu. It will be utilised to inform the subsequent *Beijing +25 Pacific Regional Review*. Data and information were gathered through a desk review of key documents, questionnaire among key stakeholders and a national consultative workshop, which were then analysed and compiled in this report.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Achievements, challenges and setbacks

### Achievements

The government of Tuvalu recognises the importance of gender equality as demonstrated through a number of significant achievements. New legislation and policies have been developed and implemented as well as legislative changes. Numerous initiatives and activities have also been undertaken and contributed to gender mainstreaming, increased opportunities for women and girls and raised awareness on gender equality in different sectors.

### Addressing family violence

The passing of the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act in 2014 was a significant development that has provided the basis for a range of actions supporting the elimination of violence against women. Other developments include the creation of the Domestic Violence Unit within the Tuvalu Police Services, which eases access

---

<sup>1</sup> The methodology and structure of this report are informed by the UN Women *Guidance Note for Comprehensive National-Level Reviews*.

in reporting incidents and supports the collection of sex disaggregated data on domestic violence. The Act has been the basis of joint efforts between the Tuvalu Police Service, the Gender Affairs Department and key stakeholders to conduct awareness raising activities in communities to increase people's understanding of the Act and the services available. As well, the Family Protection Fund has also been established with accompanying guidelines and a budget allocation of \$50,000 AUD provided by the government of Tuvalu to support survivors of violence.

More recently in 2017 and 2019, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to develop counselling and referral systems for psychosocial support including counselling support for survivors of domestic violence as well as perpetrators. This has included the appointment of a Psychosocial Counsellor Adviser based in the Community Affairs Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Rural Development. Trainings have also been undertaken to develop a pool of local counsellors to provide support throughout the islands of Tuvalu. These are important achievements as they have increased understanding of the issue of domestic violence and served to challenge existing social norms that tacitly accept family violence. They are also significant in protecting the rights of women and children including their rights to safety and to live free of violence.

### Creating social protection mechanisms

To support and improve the lives of people with disabilities and their caregivers, and men and women aged 70 and over. There was an increase in the initial financial support scheme that was set up and endorsed by government in 2006 for elderly people. The scheme initially provided between \$70 AUD per month to people with disabilities or their caregivers and the aged. In 2019, an increase by \$30 AUD was approved by government to provide financial support to elderly people which brings the monthly stipend for the elderly to \$100 AUD per month. These protections are important as they promote independence of people with disabilities, help to reduce poverty and hardship and financially contribute to the burden of care work that is traditionally taken on by women.

### Increasing opportunities for women and girls

A range of initiatives have served to increase education and training opportunities for women and girls. Women and young women have increasingly been offered training and employment in sectors and trades that were traditionally male dominated. For example, over the past five years young women have for the first time enrolled in the maritime school, the number of women police officers increased, a female officer will soon start working on the patrol boat, a woman has been employed as a fisheries observer and women's role in fisheries and natural resource management has been recognised. As well women have been included in international worker mobility programs put in place by the governments of Australia and New Zealand. Importantly, there has also been a change in practice where teenage mothers are now allowed to return to school after having children, in the past they had been expelled from school which severely limited their opportunities for the future. The economic empowerment of women under the national gender policy encourages young women to take up entrepreneurship and the monthly bazaars facilitate and encourage women to engage in micro businesses. Although the gains made in this area have been slow and women are still a minority in a number of sectors, stakeholders noted that these changes are important as they are a step toward achieving gender balance and providing equal opportunities to women and girls.

### Improving gender mainstreaming and gender responsiveness

There have been achievements in enhancing gender mainstreaming with strengthened partnerships between the Gender Affairs Department and a number of government ministries and civil society organisations (CSO). For example, the Gender Affairs Department have been working closely with the Climate Change Office and are part of the National Advisory Council on Climate Change. There have also been improvements to access to basic services – new building codes, creating footpaths, grants for water tanks and more nurses and health specialist visits that have benefitted women as well as children and men. Increasing gender mainstreaming has meant that women's needs and rights are progressively included across government and in all levels of society. This work has also contributed to increasing understand that any development and national process should always include a gender analysis to inform planning, budget and monitoring and evaluation processes.

## Case study 1: Generating evidence, policy and action on gender and disability

The Tuvalu Study on People with Disability (2018) was jointly carried out by the Ministry of Community Affairs and Rural Development, the Gender Affairs Department, Fusi Alofa Association (the national organisation of people with disabilities) with assistance provided by the Australian government's Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) program. The study highlights the gender dimensions of disability in Tuvalu. It notes that of the 466 people with disability in Tuvalu (4.5 per cent of the total population), 271 (58 per cent) are women and 195 (42 per cent) are men. Women (72 women and 14 men) reported higher rates of being subjected to negative attitudes, bullying, harassment and violence due to their disability. This includes verbal abuse, physical abuse and in some cases sexual violence including rape. Nearly twice as many women (63) than men (33) reported higher levels of hardship. The study also found that women make up the majority (78 per cent) of caregivers for people with disabilities, this role is viewed as an extension of women's traditional roles as nurturers.

Since the completion of the study the Tuvalu National Policy on Disability has been endorsed by government, it incorporates a gender analysis and includes 12 policy priority areas. Gender is mainstreamed throughout the policy and priority area seven is focused on women, children, youth and older persons with disability. In addition, the government have developed a financial support scheme that is designed to offer financial support to people with disabilities and their caregivers.

### Challenges and setbacks

A number of challenges have been encountered over the past five years in working to progress gender equality, some of which have been addressed while others remain. These challenges were identified by stakeholders through the national consultative workshop and desk review and are described below.

#### Lack of social protection

A lack of social protection for vulnerable people was noted as a challenge encountered that has been partially addressed. A response to this challenge is that there is more support for people with disabilities and their caregivers and the Family Protection Fund has been set up. However, discussions are still underway among government and CSO as to whether an old age care home is needed and also if a domestic violence shelter would be appropriate to the Tuvalu context. As well, consultations are being conducted for the Social Protection Bill that will aim to widen social protection to include babies, pregnant women, widows and lunches for school children.

### Limited resourcing to support gender equality initiatives

A significant challenge noted was the limited resourcing available to support the Gender Affairs Department and gender equality initiatives in general. As stated within the National Gender Policy, the role of the Gender Affairs Department is to monitor and evaluate policy and support gender mainstreaming. Yet, it is also noted that the department lacks the resources in terms of specific gender personnel and finance required to fulfil its mandate as per the policy (GAD, 2018; SPC, 2013). For example, the department should be able to provide support for the process of conducting gender analysis of policies, programs and activities across government. The Gender Affairs Department receive a limited budget for human resources and operating costs but rely on donor assistance for project funds. A response to this challenge is that partnerships and coalitions between government, non-government and community-based organisations have increased. However, more resourcing in terms of personnel and finance to the Gender Affairs Department would help to improve the mainstreaming and implementation of actions intended to support gender equality.

### Fatigue and misconceptions about gender

Gender fatigue was noted as a challenge by stakeholders in that some reported that those attending workshops, trainings and discussions on gender feel that gender issues have already been adequately addressed. Similarly, they noted misconceptions and misunderstanding about the notion of gender equality as it is often misunderstood as women and women's interests taking over and replacing

cultural and traditional norms which usually privilege men. These misconceptions and misinterpretations in many cases are a form of resistance to social change. Village consultations with influential men and awareness raising through radio programs and dramas have helped to address misconceptions about gender but the issue remains as an ongoing challenge. Thus, the need for ongoing gender sensitisation trainings at all levels is critical, as is the need to strengthen and continue the induction program for parliamentarians.

### Advancing women's economic empowerment

Advancement of women's economic empowerment is frequently cited as being central to gender equality in Tuvalu (Government of Tuvalu, 2016; PIFS, 2012; SPC, 2012;). In the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 the importance of women's economic empowerment is recognised, the strategy states that:

Greater economic empowerment of women will raise household incomes and improve gender equality... Economic empowerment, especially the ability to acquire and control capital and material resources, helps reduce the potential for gender-based violence. Providing much needed new injections of capital for microfinance for women will continue to remain a vital step in women's pursuit of equal opportunity. The direct labour empowerment of women will feature prominently in efforts to implement related TKIII initiatives (p. 25).

Yet, the Gender Affairs Department have identified this as one of the key strategic areas in the National Gender Policy where progress has been most limited (GAD, 2018). This is likely due in part to the overall limitations of economic opportunities in the private sector given Tuvalu's geographic isolation, limited resources and the effects of climate change (ADB, 2019). Despite the slow development in the area, it should be noted that the department is working with the Business and Trade Unit within government to promote the participation of women in business. The department has worked with bank institutions lobbying banks to collect sex

disaggregated data and make loan forms accessible and friendly-use. However, the Gender Affairs Department recommend a comprehensive study to better understand the current situation to inform decision-making and targeted support interventions to advance women's economic empowerment in the future (GAD, 2018).

## Social norms and gender equality

The advancement of all aspects of gender equality are strongly linked to changing societal attitudes and gender norms. These challenges are underpinned by culture and tradition that view women's primary role as being in the home and limit their contributions to leadership and decision-making. As noted in the United Nations Human Rights Council's response to Tuvalu's second Universal Periodic Review report (2018), the council highlighted their concern:

(A)bout persisting gender stereotypes, negative traditional values and patriarchal attitudes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in society and in the family, which overemphasized women's roles as mothers and housewives, thereby preventing them from actively participating in all aspects of public life (p. 7).

There is a tension that remains between discriminatory customs and norms and national and international plans and commitments (SPC, 2013). It is important to note that there is some evidence of evolving social norms taking place through generational change (DFAT/*Pacific Women*, 2019; SPC, 2013).

### 1. Top five priorities 2014-2019

- X **Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice**
- X **Eliminating violence against women and girls**
- X **Access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights**
- X **Gender-responsive social protection (e.g. universal health coverage, cash transfers, pensions)**
- X **Other – Strengthening of civil society and non-government organisations**

Through the national consultative workshop and questionnaires, stakeholders noted the following as the top priorities that were focused on during the 2014-2019 period.

### Ending family violence

- Enactment of the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act has supported a range of initiatives to address the elimination of violence against women and girls including the ability to put protection orders in place. However, an implementation plan will ensure successful outcome.
- The Family Protection Fund has been set up to support survivors of domestic violence, with guidelines developed and funds allocated through the 2018 government budget.
- Counselling services were available since the establishment of the Gender Department in 1999, but the service has been formally strengthened through the Psychosocial Counsellor Adviser within the Department of Community Affairs and a pool of local counsellors are being trained.
- Health service providers have increasingly become aware of and sensitive to the issue of domestic violence, and they report suspicious cases to the police.

### Increasing social protection

- Support schemes have become available for a financial support scheme for people with disabilities and the elderly through government funds.

### Strengthening civil society and non-government organisations

- CSO have increasingly become more gender sensitive in the work that they are doing and are increasingly collaborating and working in partnership with the Gender Affairs Department.
- The department is working closely with youth organisations at the informal level to provide technical support on related mandates including good governance, leadership, ending violence against women and economic empowerment of young women.
- Sports plays a significant role in terms of health and education. For example, the partnership of the gender department, Sports Department and the Tuvalu

Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee has been crucial to ensure that women are active and physically and emotionally healthy as a means of addressing non-communicable diseases which are a major issue in Tuvalu.

#### Supporting comprehensive legal reform

- Women have better access to justice, for example through the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act, increasing awareness on women's equality under the law and advocacy efforts undertaken to reduce legal discrimination against women.

#### Enhancing family health

- There has been increased access to sexual and reproductive health services and rights and awareness raising on nutrition through non-communicable disease prevention activities.
- There has also been an increase in the number of young men and women utilising clinical and other services. As well as an increase in the provision of counselling services and peer to peer programs doing outreaching to the public.

### 3. Intersectional discrimination

Over the past five years, what measures have been taken to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination?

**X Women living in remote and rural areas**

Indigenous women

Racial, ethnic or religious minority women

**X Women living with disabilities**

**X Women living with HIV/AIDS**

Women with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities

**X Younger women**

Older women

Migrant women

Refugee and internally displaced women

Women in humanitarian settings

Other

### Women living in remote and rural areas

- Women who live on the outer islands of Tuvalu tend to have fewer education and training opportunities than women living on Funafuti. Several initiatives such as the leadership and counselling workshops and trainings have been extended to women from the outer islands through bringing them to Funafuti to participate or by offering training, consultation and awareness raising opportunities in the outer islands. There are also handicraft centres on the outer islands that have direct links with the National Council of Women who provide support for marketing and facilitate selling the crafts which provide income generation opportunities.

### Women living with disabilities

- The Tuvalu National Study on People with Disabilities has helped to better understand the intersections between gender and disability in Tuvalu. The National Policy on Disability acknowledges those intersections and aims to address them.

### Women living with HIV/AIDS

- People living with HIV in Tuvalu receive free medical treatment, as all medical treatments in Tuvalu are free of charge.

### Young women

- Younger women who become pregnant while attending high school have faced discrimination as in the past they have been expelled from school after becoming pregnant. The Gender Affairs Department have worked with the Ministry of Education to change the practices around that policy to allow young mothers to return to school.

- Scholarship opportunities are also available for postsecondary education with flexible criteria that makes more accessible for women who have had children and would like to pursue further study.

#### 4. Implications of humanitarian crisis

Has the increasing number of humanitarian crises – caused by conflict, extreme weather or other events – affected the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in your country?

- No. However, as noted in response to question 31, an assessment of the response to the 2015 Cyclone Pam response brought attention to a lack of gender responsiveness to disaster management and actions have been taken to address this.

#### 5. Top five priorities 2020-2024

- X Leadership and Economic Empowerment**
- X Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice**
- X Eliminating violence against women and girls**
- X Access to affordable quality health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights**
- X Other – Strengthening of CSO**

Through the national consultative workshop, stakeholders noted the following as the top priorities to be focused on during the next five years.

#### Leadership and Economic Empowerment

- Women’s leadership and economic empowerment is crucial for development as it sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication, good governance and decision making and inclusive economic growth.

#### Strengthening of CSO

- Strengthening CSO put forth as a priority as they are the frontline to people and are key to implementation, they can also advocate and are well-positioned to

assist vulnerable people. CSOs also need to be included in making decisions and in projects at the national level.

### Progressing legal reform

- Legal reform is a priority as there is a need to amend outdated laws that are not in alignment with Tuvalu's international commitments on human rights and to enforce existing laws that support and promote human rights and gender equality.

### Enhancing family health

- Enhancing family health is a priority as there is a strong need to address non-communicable diseases that undermine social and economic development and family well-being. Specially it was noted that there is a need for nutrition and exercise awareness, taking a family unit approach, improving sexual and reproductive health and tax reform to make healthy foods more affordable.

### Ending violence against women

- Stakeholders noted that over the past five years there have been challenges in the implementation of the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act. This remains a priority as the implementation and development of systems are ongoing, and the process of social change around violence against women and girls is slow yet integral to gender equality.

## 1. Progress across 12 critical areas of concern

### Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

One of the five priority outcomes within the Tuvalu National Gender Policy 2014-2019 is to: create an enabling environment for the full participation of women in economic development. Women's limited access to land remains a barrier to inclusive development, according to the Native Lands Act and the Tuvalu Lands Code women's ability to inherit and own land is limited due to customs where land is passed through male lineage and only allocated to daughters if there are no sons (PIFS, 2013). Another barrier noted by the Gender Affairs Department is the need for early childcare facilities in light of changing family structures, as childcare was often provided by extended family in the past. Most women return to work after 12 weeks

of maternity leave. They note there is significant pressure on women in the workforce to perform well while they are expected to keep up with childcare and household duties (Gender Affairs Department, 2018).

1. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to advance gender equality in relation to women's role in paid work and employment?

€ Strengthened / enforced laws and workplace policies and practices that prohibit discrimination in the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in the public and private sectors, and equal pay legislation

**X Introduced / strengthened gender-responsive active labour market policies (e.g. education and training, skills, subsidies)**

€ Taken measures to prevent sexual harassment, including in the workplace

€ Strengthened land rights and tenure security

**X Improved financial inclusion and access to credit, including for self-employed women**

€ Improved access to modern technologies (incl. climate-smart technologies), infrastructure and services (incl. agricultural extension)

**X Supported the transition from informal to formal work, including legal and policy measures that benefit women in informal employment**

€ Devised mechanisms for women's equal participation in economic decision-making bodies (e.g. in ministries of trade and finance, central banks, national economic commissions)

€ Other

- Collaboration between the International Labour Organisation, the Gender Affairs Department and Labour Department has supported the formalisation the Tuvalu Labour Migration Act. The Act will enable women and men to be recruited to work overseas through working schemes such as the Australian government's Pacific Labour Scheme and the New Zealand governments Recognised Seasonal Worker program.
- The Tuvalu National Private Sector Organisation, the Development Bank of Tuvalu and the Gender Affairs Department have worked together to develop

flexible criteria for women who apply for small business loans to start their business.

- To address discriminatory recruitment processes the Gender Affairs Department have worked with the Tuvalu Fisheries Department to support female applicants to be able to work in the male dominated fisheries sector which is significant in Tuvalu. In 2016 the first female observer was recruited to work on a fisheries boat.
- Market or bazaar activities have been organised by the Gender Affairs Department and the Tuvalu National Council of Women to create spaces and opportunities for women to sell food and goods. Since, 2016 six bazaars have taken place. As well, a Handicraft Bill is currently under development process has also developed to support women's efforts in preparing plants and products used in making local handicrafts.

2. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation?

- € Included unpaid care and domestic work in national statistics and accounting (e.g. time-use surveys, valuation exercises, satellite accounts)
- € Expanded childcare services or made existing services more affordable
- X Expanded support for frail elderly persons and others needing intense forms of care**
- X Introduced or strengthened maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave**
- € Invested in time- and labour-saving infrastructure, such as public transport, electricity, water and sanitation, to reduce the burden of unpaid care and domestic work on women
- € Promoted decent work for paid care workers, including migrant workers
- X Conducted campaigns or awareness raising activities to encourage the participation of men and boys in unpaid care and domestic work**

**X Introduced legal changes regarding the division of marital assets or pension entitlements after divorce that acknowledge women's unpaid contribution to the family during marriage**

€ Other

- Under the Labour and Employment Relations Act 2017 women are entitled to 12 weeks maternity leave with 100 per cent of their wage or salary during that period. The Act also allows women who are nursing a child under 12 months of age, one hour twice a day as nursing breaks which are counted as hours worked for the purposes of calculating wages. The government parental leave policy has been amended so that male partners are now given two weeks of parental leave after their wives or partners give birth to provide care and support for their wife and child.
- As previously noted, elderly people, people with disabilities or their caretakers are eligible to receive support from the government that ranges from \$70-120 AUD per month.
- The Gender Affairs Department have conducted on-going awareness raising activities with the public to encourage people to alter norms and practices especially in relation to gender roles at home and to encourage men and boys to contribute to unpaid domestic work – they note that perceptions are slowly changing.

**3. Has your country introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing, over the past five years?**

- No measures were noted.

## Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

Analysis of the 2010 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) data indicates that 26 per cent of the population live below the locally defined basic needs poverty line (Government of Tuvalu, 2016).<sup>2</sup> Health and education are both noted under priority outcome one of the National Gender Policy which aims to “(I)ncrease capacity within all sectors of Government to address key issues of concern in achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment within each sector.”

### 4. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

**X Promoted poor women’s access to decent work through active labour market policies (e.g. job training, skills, employment subsidies, etc.) and targeted measures**

€ Broadened access to land, housing, finance, technology and/or agricultural extension services

**X Supported women’s entrepreneurship and business development activities**

**X Introduced or strengthened social protection programmes for women and girls (e.g. cash transfers for women with children, public works/employment guarantee schemes for women of working-age, pensions for older women)**

€ Introduced/strengthened low-cost legal services for women living in poverty

**X Other**

- Women have been invited to participate in business training activities and government initiatives such as the Credit Guarantee Loan Scheme, these activities are not targeted at women but women are encouraged to participate and apply for credit.

---

<sup>2</sup> A more recent HIES was conducted in 2016 but does not include poverty analysis data.

- Through the process for developing Island Strategic Plans women's active participation in their communities has been encouraged and hands on training on planting, gardening, sewing and entrepreneurship has been provided.
- A study focused on hardship in Tuvalu is in progress but has yet to be completed.

5. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve access to social protection for women and girls?

- € Introduced or strengthened social protection for unemployed women (e.g. unemployment benefits, public works programmes, social assistance)
- € Introduced or strengthened conditional cash transfers
- € Introduced or strengthened unconditional cash transfers
- € Introduced or strengthened non-contributory social pensions
- € Reformed contributory social protection schemes to strengthen women's access and benefit levels

**X Improved access to the above for specific populations (e.g. women in informal employment, including domestic workers; migrant and refugee women; women in humanitarian settings)**

**X Other – Social Protection Bill**

- €
  - Women have been included and are able to access low-skill and semi-skilled jobs through the Australian government's Pacific Labour Scheme and New Zealand government's Recognised Seasonal Worker program.
  - In partnership with UNICEF, the Community Affairs Department and the Attorney General's Office are conducting consultations for the Social Protection Bill. It will aim to widen social protection to include babies, pregnant women, widows and lunches for school children.

6. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?

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

**X Expanded specific health services for women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health services, mental, maternal health and HIV services**

**X Undertaken gender-specific public awareness/health promotion campaigns**

**X Provided gender-responsiveness training for health service providers**

**X Strengthened comprehensive sexuality education in schools or through community programmes**

€ Provided refugee women and girls as well as women and girls in humanitarian settings with access to sexual and reproductive health services

€ Other

€

- The Ministry of Health have expanded the services that they provide to women and children through clinics, they provide sexual and reproductive health services through a dedicated obstetrician-gynaecologist and have nurses based on the outer islands.
- The Ministry of Health have conducted awareness raising workshops for women on health issues that are common to women such as breast and cervical cancer as well as other disease such as diabetes and high blood pressure. They have also conducted training for health workers on women's health and domestic violence.
- Tuvalu Family Health Association (TuFHA) provide sexual and reproductive health services and information for women and youth. TuFHA also conduct comprehensive sexuality education in non-formal education settings for young people in school and other training institutes. TuFHA also aims to get comprehensive sexuality education incorporated into the formal education curriculum. Discussion of gender-based violence is integrated throughout the work the association does.

- Through support from the Global Fund for HIV, TB and Malaria the Ministry of Health have worked with the TuFHA to reach vulnerable populations to provide counselling, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

7. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls?

**X Taken measures to increase girls' access to, retention in and completion of education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills development programmes**

€ Strengthened educational curricula to increase gender-responsiveness and eliminate bias, at all levels of education

**X Provided gender equality and human rights training for teachers and other education professionals**

€ Promoted safe, harassment-free and inclusive educational environments for women and girls

**X Increased access to skills and training in new and emerging fields, especially STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and digital fluency and literacy**

€ Ensured access to safe water and sanitation services and facilitated menstrual hygiene management especially in schools and other education/training settings

**X Strengthened measures to prevent adolescent pregnancies and to enable adolescent girls to continue their education in the case of pregnancy and/or motherhood**

€ Other

- As previously noted, efforts have been made to encourage women and girls to be educated and train in fields that have been male dominated such as the fisheries sector.

- Through the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls program, which is jointly funded by the European Union and the Australian government, the Pacific Community are working to develop and implement a

project focused on enhancing formal in-school and informal education on gender equality and prevention of violence against women and girls.

- As previously noted, the Gender Affairs Department have worked with the Ministry of Education to change the practices around a policy that had previously expelled pregnant students to amend the policy to allow young mothers to return to school.
- The Tuvalu National Policy for Persons with Disability aims to improve access to education for women and girls with disabilities.

### Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

The Tuvalu Demographic and Health Survey (2007) is the most recent study that documents rates of violence against women in Tuvalu. It notes that 41 per cent of women between the ages of 15-49 have experienced violence by a husband or other intimate partner (Tuvalu Central Statistics Division, SPC and Macro International Inc., 2007).

### 8. In the last five years, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific contexts or settings, have you prioritized for action?

#### **X Intimate partner violence/domestic violence, including sexual violence and marital rape**

- € Sexual harassment and violence in public places, educational settings and in employment
- € Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (e.g. cyberviolence, online stalking)
- € Femicide/Feminicide
- € Violence against women in politics
- € Child, early and forced marriages
- € Female genital mutilation
- € Other harmful practices
- € Trafficking in women and girls
- € Other

- The Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act provides protection from violence within domestic relationships and criminalises behaviours relating to domestic violence, including physical, sexual, verbal, psychological and economic abuse. Setting up the Domestic Violence Unit within the Tuvalu Police Service has assisted women and girls as it provides more accessible support as they are able to walk-in to report or seek assistance from the unit.

9. What actions has your country prioritized in the last five years to address violence against women and girls?

**X Introduced or strengthened violence against women laws, and their enforcement and implementation**

€ Introduced, updated or expanded national action plans on ending violence against women and girls

€ Introduced or strengthened measures to increase women's access to justice (e.g. establishment of specialist courts, training for the judiciary and police, protection orders, redress and reparations, including for femicide cases)

**X Introduced or strengthened services for survivors of violence (e.g. shelters, help lines, dedicated health services, legal, justice service, counselling, housing)**

**X Introduced or strengthened strategies to prevent violence against women and girls (e.g. in the education sector, in the media, community mobilization, work with men and boys)**

€ Monitoring and evaluation of impact, including evidence generation and data collection, including regarding particular groups of women and girls

**X Introduced or strengthened measures for improving the understanding of causes and consequences of violence against women among those responsible for implementing measures on ending violence against women and girls**

€ Other

- Several partners including the Gender Affairs Department, Community Affairs Department, Tuvalu Police Service and CSO have worked to support the

implementation of the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act. They have worked together to increase the public's understanding of the Act including processes and procedures around reporting and to develop referral pathways. The police force have also put in place: a no drop policy; issuing of police orders, and arrest of offenders (Government of Tuvalu, 2018). This work has also included developing and distributing a brochure in Tuvaluan language outlining the services and support available.

- The Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act includes a provision for certified counsellors to provide counselling services for victims. Basic counselling support has been available since the Gender Affairs Unit was established in 1999 but there were no certified counsellors. Through donor assistance activities have been undertaken to support the development of services and support for survivors of gender-based violence. In November 2017 a training was conducted by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre aimed at establishing a pool of trained women who are sensitive to women and girls disclosing gender-based violence experiences. In 2018 the Fiji Women's Criss Centre also conducted a training focused on male advocates against gender-based violence. In March 2018, Psychosocial Counsellor Adviser was placed within the Ministry of Community Affairs and Rural Development to provide technical assistance to support the development counselling capacity; providing specialist counselling services; promoting inter-agency collaboration; and developing referral procedures. A short course in counselling was carried out in 2018 by the Australia Pacific Technical College to deliver three units toward a Diploma in Counselling with plans for the complete diploma training to be offered in country. The 20 course participants (13 women and 7 men) selected were already working or volunteering in the social service sector.
- In 2017 the government endorsed the establishment of the Family Protection Fund which is intended to support women and children survivors of domestic violence. An operational policy has been established, to date the fund has been utilised to support two women and their children.

10. What strategies has your country used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls?

- Public awareness raising and changing of attitudes and behaviours**
- Work in primary and secondary education, including comprehensive sexuality education**
- Grassroots and community-level mobilization**
- Shifting the representation of women and girls in the media
- Working with men and boys**
- Perpetrator programmes**
- Other

- Public awareness raising to prevent violence against women and girls has been conducted by the Gender Affairs Department in co-operation with various partners such as the Tuvalu Police Service, Domestic Violence Unit and the Tuvalu Family Health Association. Awareness raising has also been done in primary and secondary education through the Gender Affairs Department and the Community Affairs Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Rural Development.
- Some work has been done with men and boys, including the Male Advocates training that was carried out by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and training of seven men to become counsellors with awareness on prevention of violence against women and girls. The EKT Church have also provided support to address and work with perpetrators of violence against women. In 2016 and 2017, the *Kaiga Lasi Fiafia* Committee, comprised of many gender-based violence stakeholders from government, civil society and island communities, implemented a house visit initiative where a small team of personnel led by the president of the committee, members of the Police Service Domestic Violence Unit would visit and talk with perpetrators of violence to improve their understanding of the issue of gender-based violence and the impact to their families and the society. The initiative was noted as being well received by the men visited.

11. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?

- € Introduced or strengthened legislation and regulatory provisions
- X Implemented awareness raising initiatives targeting the general public and young women and men in educational settings**
- € Worked with technology providers to set and adhere to good business practices
- € Other

- The Police Tuvalu Service have conducted awareness with youth groups focused on cyber-crime.

12. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media?

- € Enacted, strengthened and enforced legal reforms to combat discrimination and/or gender bias in the media
- € Introduced binding regulation for the media, including for advertising
- € Supported the media industry to develop voluntary codes of conduct
- X Provided training to media professionals to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotypical, balanced and diverse images of women and girls in the media**
- € Promoted the participation and leadership of women in the media
- € Established or strengthened consumer protection services to receive and review complaints about media content or gender-based discrimination/bias in the media
- € Other

- Gender sensitisation training has been conducted by the Gender Affairs Department with media personnel to ensure that they are gender sensitive and utilise a gender lens in their work.

13. Has your country taken any action in the last five years specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?

- Limited action has been taken in this area, however Fusi Alofa Association have undertaken advocacy on the elimination of violence against women and girls as under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which was ratified by Tuvalu in 2013.

#### Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions

Tuvalu has only one woman within its 15-member Parliament. Since independence in 1978 three women have been elected meaning that there has only ever been one or no women in parliament. In the most recent 2015 general election, a total of 29 candidates stood for elections of which three were women, making up only 10 per cent of the ballot (UNDP, 2019). At the local government level each island has its own *falekaupule*, which functions as the traditional meeting house and decision-making entity for the *kaupule* (local government or island council) (SPC, 2013). Notably women are better represented within government, they make up 46 per cent of senior management, but only 32 per cent of the highest levels of senior management (Gender Affairs Department, 2018).

14. What actions and measures has your country taken in the last five years to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?

- X **Reformed constitution, laws and regulations that promote women's participation in politics, especially at decision-making level, including electoral system reform, adoption of temporary special measures, such as quotas, reserved seats, benchmarks and targets**
- X **Implemented capacity building, skills development and other measures**
- X **Encouraged the participation of minority and young women, including through sensitization and mentorship programmes**
- X **Provided opportunities for mentorship, training in leadership, decision-making, public speaking, self-assertion, political campaigning**

**X** Taken measures to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish violence against women in politics

€ Collected and analyzed data on women's political participation, including in appointed and elected positions

€ Other

- Several activities have been conducted by government and UNDP to support and train women in politics. In 2016, a practice parliament for women was held. In 2017, women from Funafuti and the outer islands and a women with a disability participated in a leadership and good governance training. More recently in 2018, 20 women from Funafuti and the outer islands participated in a five-day capacity building workshop jointly conducted by Gender Affairs Department and UNDP that aimed to increase the interest and the level of participation of women in the upcoming general and local elections in 2019.
- During the 2018-2019 review of constitution the Gender Affairs Department lobbied to reform the constitution and provided a strategy paper to Constitutional Review Committee on constitutional changes that were needed in order to make the constitution compliant with CEDAW. Specifically, changes were recommended to include gender and disability as grounds for non-discrimination as per section 27 of the constitution which would make it compliant with both Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Government of Tuvalu, 2018).<sup>3</sup> However, there efforts were unsuccessful in reforming the constitution.
- Recently, the Gender Affairs Department reported that at local government level, more women have been elected into the *falekaupule*. There was an increase from 6 per cent in 2016 to 10 per cent in 2018. They report anecdotal evidence that there is more acceptance for female *kaupule* members to become presidents of the *falekaupule*, noting that there have been two islands with women *kaupule* presidents since 2016.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Government of Tuvalu recognises that while sex is already a basis for non-discrimination under section 11, there is growing international recognition that gender is distinct from sex (Government of Tuvalu, 2018).

- Women with disabilities have been included as board members in CSO. Both Fusi Alofa Association which is the national people with disabilities organisation and Tuvalu Association of Non-government Organisations (TANGO) the national NGO umbrella organisation have women with disabilities on their board.

### Case study 2: Working toward advancing women's leadership roles through temporary special measures (TSM)

As is the case for most Pacific Island countries and many countries around the world, notable challenges remain with the advancement of women in leadership and decision-making roles at the parliamentary and local government levels. Within the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 it is stated that the Gender Affairs Department should “*pursue amending the Falekaupule Act to emphasise woman's affairs in local government, and enshrine more political participation of women at the national level by having a special allocation of two extra seats in Parliament under Temporary Special Measures*” (Government of Tuvalu, 2016, p. 25). At the same time this is a challenge as according to tradition men are viewed as being in charge of decision-making at this level and women are discouraged from participating as their role is viewed as running the household and raising children (Molotii, Baker & Corbett, 2014; SPC, 2013). Island councils or *falekaupule* tend to be male dominated and viewed as “*a bastion of culture and tradition,*” and women *falekaupule* “*representatives feel that important development initiatives that might benefit women — particularly those that relate to households — are overlooked or ignored by their male colleagues who prefer different projects, such as those relating to infrastructure*” (Molotii, Baker & Corbett, 2014, p. 1).

Women's political participation has been a matter of discussion for many years and Temporary Special Measures have been widely discussed over the past five years. Molotii, Baker & Corbett (2014), note that increasing women's representation at the national level is a more viable then at the island council level and present three different TSM options. In 2016, the Gender Affairs Department carried out a national awareness campaign on the National Gender Policy which included discussions on TSM, it covered all of the islands of Tuvalu. The Gender Affairs Department and Attorney General's Office produced a TSM options paper that recommends the

creation of two extra seats in parliament for women. However, during the constitution review in 2018-2019 the issue of TSMs was not advanced and it remains as an ongoing challenge for the advancement of gender equality.

15. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?

- € Strengthened the provision of formal and technical vocational education and training (TVET) in media and ICTs, including in areas of management and leadership
- € Taken measures to enhance access, affordability and use of ICTs for women and girls (e.g. free wifi hubs, community technology centers)
- € Introduced regulations to advance equal pay, retention and career advancement of women within the media and ICT field
- € Collaborated with employers in the media and ICT field to improve internal policies and hiring practices on a voluntary basis
- € Provided support to women's media networks and organizations
- € Other

- No actions were noted.

16. Do you track the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?

- No. The Gender Affairs Department report that this is one area where they are lacking both capacity and resourcing to undertake this work.

17. As a donor country, does your country track the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?

- Not applicable as Tuvalu is not a donor country.

18. Does your country have a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality?

- Yes. *Te Kakeega III* is the third iteration of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016 to 2020. It covers 13 national priorities, most are based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). SDG 5 is covered under priority 4 under Health and Social Development gender is included in section 4.16.
- The Tuvalu National Gender Policy 2014-2019 is the guiding framework to operationalise Government's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment in Tuvalu. The policy states that, the priority outcomes are sought over the next 5 years of this plan (2014–2019):
  1. Increase capacity within all sectors of Government to address key issues of concern in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment within each sector;
  2. Reflect Government commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in legislation and in sector policies affecting government and civil society;
  3. Create an enabling environment for the full participation of women in economic development;
  4. Take measures to ensure women's and men's equal access and full participation in decision-making as a means of enhancing leadership and governance at all levels;
  5. Eliminate all forms of violence against women.

- The National Gender Policy and National Sustainable Development Plan have not been costed and limited resources are allocated in the current government budget. In the 2018 budget, the Gender Affairs Departmental budget received a slight increase and a one-off payment of \$50,000 AUD to support the Family Protection Fund.

19. Does your country have an action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women?

- No, there is no action plan or timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) or the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Tuvalu presented its CEDAW combined third and fourth periodic reports in 2012 and its second Universal Periodic Review report in 2018.

20. Is there a national human rights institution in your country?

- In 2017 government passed National Human Rights Institution Act and the Leadership Code Amendment Act to establish a National Human Rights Institution with support from the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) of the Pacific Community. The National Human Rights Institution is independent of government and was established within the Ombudsman Office, giving it the dual mandate of good governance and human rights. The work of the institution is focused on promoting the human rights mandate, for example to provide information for women and girls to seek support if they face discrimination or domestic violence. They also aim to monitor the performance of government against its international human rights obligations and commitments. Yet, the office is under resourced in terms of human resources and funding. There are plans to bring on board a Human Rights Commissioner and a Communication and Education Officer in the year 2020 to increase their capacity to meet their mandate. There is also a Tuvalu

Human Rights National Action Plan 2016–2020 that includes a focus on women’s rights.

## Peaceful and inclusive societies

21. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?

- € Adopted and/or implemented a National Action Plan on women, peace and security
- € Integrated women, peace and security commitments into key national and inter-ministerial policy, planning and monitoring frameworks
- € Used communication strategies, including social media, to increase awareness of the women, peace and security agenda
- € Increased budgetary allocations for the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda
- € Taken steps to reduce excessive military expenditures and/or control the availability of armaments
- € Re-allocated funds from military spending to social and economic development, including for gender equality and the empowerment of women
- € Supported inclusive and gender-sensitive conflict analysis, early warning and prevention mechanisms
- € Other

- No actions were noted.

22. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?

- € Promoted and supported women's meaningful participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements
- € Promoted equal participation of women in humanitarian and crisis response activities at all levels, particularly at the decision-making level
- € Integrated a gender perspective in the prevention and resolution of armed or other conflict
- € Integrated a gender perspective in humanitarian action and crisis response
- € Protected civil society spaces and women's human rights defenders
- € Other

Tuvalu has done a lot in the above, although some of the areas like armed conflicts do not necessary apply. Every other area are covered under the gender mainstreaming and human rights based approach that is widely and commonly used in Tuvalu.

23. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?

- € Implemented legal and policy reform to redress and prevent violations of the rights of women and girls
- € Strengthened institutional capacities, including of the justice system and transitional justice mechanisms as applicable, during conflict and crisis response
- € Strengthened capacity of security sector institutions on human rights and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse
- € Increased access of conflict-affected, refugee or displaced women to violence prevention and protection services
- € Taken measures to combat illicit arms trafficking
- € Taken measures to combat the production, use of and trafficking in illicit drugs
- € Taken measures to combat trafficking in women and children
- € Other

- Actions were taken in areas applicable to Tuvalu such as having a Family Protection Law to protect families especially women and girls from violence in various forms. Constant trainings and awareness raising on other related issues such as trafficking and use of drugs are on going even though it is not known to be happening in Tuvalu at the moment.

#### 24. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child?

- € Taken measures to combat negative social norms and practices and increased awareness of the needs and potential of girl children

#### **X Strengthened girls' access to quality education, skills development and training**

- € Tackled disadvantages in health outcomes due to malnutrition, early childbearing (e.g. anemia) and exposure to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases
- € Implemented policies and programmes to reduce and eradicate child, early and forced marriage
- € Implemented policies and programmes to eliminate violence against girls, including physical and sexual violence and harmful practices
- € Implemented policies and programmes to eradicate child labour and excessive levels of unpaid care and domestic work undertaken by girl children
- € Promoted girls' awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life
- € Other

- As previously noted, measures have been taken to change practices to allow teenage mothers to continue their education.

#### Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

Climate change is the first strategic area of the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2020 as it poses a serious threat to Tuvalu's security and survival. The

Government of Tuvalu have been a strong voice in global discussions on climate change, highlighting that with an average height of three meters or less above sea level they are very vulnerable to climate change. The consequences of climate change are far ranging on all aspects of development including environmental, economic and social development outcomes with gendered impacts.

25. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies?

**X Supported women's participation and leadership in environmental and natural resource management and governance**

€ Strengthened evidence and/or raised awareness about gender-specific environmental and health hazards (e.g. consumer products, technologies, industrial pollution)

€ Increased women's access to and control over land, water, energy, and other natural resources

**X Promoted the education of women and girls in science, engineering, technology and other disciplines relating to the natural environment**

€ Enhanced women's access to sustainable time- and labour-saving infrastructure (e.g. access to clean water and energy) and climate-smart agricultural technology

**X Taken measures to protect and preserve the knowledge and practices of women in indigenous and local communities related to traditional medicines, biodiversity and conservation techniques**

**X Taken steps to ensure that women benefit equally from decent jobs in the green economy**

€ Monitored and evaluated the impact of environmental policies and sustainable infrastructure projects on women and girls

**X Other – gender mainstreaming**

- The Tuvalu Fisheries Department have worked in collaboration with the Gender Affairs Department to increase their engagement and inclusion of women and women's groups. In 2016, the Gender Affairs Department provided a capacity

building training for the Tuvalu Fisheries Department staff. The training addressed women's roles in the fisheries sector highlighting their contributions to post-harvesting processes, food preservation and food security. The Funafuti Reef Fisheries Stewardship Plan was launched in 2017 and takes into account women's roles and contributions. As well, there are two women registered under the Funafuti Fisherman's Association (Gender Affairs Department, 2018).

- The Environment Department within the Ministry of Natural Resources have access to a considerable amount of development assistance to support climate change resilience efforts. They noted a number of practices and processes they have put in place to support gender mainstreaming. For example, gender considerations are part of Environmental Impact Assessments, action plans and all workshops and trainings aim for a gender balance. They noted the challenge of consultations particularly in the outer islands being male dominated and consultation facilitators aim to ensure that women are also given the opportunity to speak.

26. What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation?

- X Supported women's participation and leadership, including those affected by disasters, in disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation policies, programmes and projects**
- X Strengthened the evidence base and raised awareness about the disproportionate vulnerability of women and girls to the impact of environmental degradation and disasters**
- X Promoted access of women in situations of disaster to services such as relief payments, disaster insurance and compensation**
- X Introduced or strengthened and implemented gender-responsive laws and policies related to disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation (e.g. disaster laws addressing vulnerability of women in disaster)**

- Following Tropical Cyclone Pam in 2015, the Gender Affairs Department produced a Post Tropical Cyclone Gender Assessment that highlighted the lack of gender and social inclusion considerations in the distribution of food following damages sustained to the northern islands of Tuvalu. The assessment noted that women were the first to hear the cyclone warning on the radio and then prepared preserved food for the cyclone and post-cyclone period. It also noted the stress placed upon women to provide protein rich food during and after cyclones. Women reported that emergency food supplies came in late, and there was a significant shortage of protein rich food. The Gender Affairs Department have worked to ensure that the lessons and recommendations of the assessment were shared so that they could be taken into consideration in the future.
  
- Disaster risk reduction along with gender and social cross-cutting issues have been the focus of collaboration efforts between the Gender Affairs Department and Tuvalu Red Cross Society. The Gender Affairs Department provided training to Red Cross and their network of volunteers to build capacity of resource personnel (staff, volunteer network, board members etc.) in addressing needs of women, children and persons with disabilities during disasters. This partnership has resulted in gender sensitive strategic plans, procedures and practices.
  
- Since 2016, the Gender Affairs Department have increasingly been working with the Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, they are active member of the National Advisory Council on Climate Change. The Gender Affairs Department have also supported the preparation of briefings for the Humanitarian Summit in 2016, Climate Change Week activities and review of the Climate Change Policy and Disaster Management Act. They have also participated in workshops on disaster management and climate change.
  
- The Gender Affairs Department has also been more active and engaged in providing gender analysis for donor funded climate change and environment projects, for example the UNDP Ridge to Reef project, EU/SPC funded Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific (BSRP) and the New Zealand government funded water security project.

- The Tuvalu National Policy on Disability aims to ensure that people with disabilities, particularly women and girls are supported during and considered in disaster risk reduction.

### 3. National Institutions and Processes

27. What is your country's current national machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women? Please name it and describe its location within Government.

- The Gender Affairs Department is now located within the Office of the Prime Minister. In 1999, the Government of Tuvalu formed the Department of Women's Affairs which was located within the Ministry of Health, Women and Community Affairs. The decision to move the Gender Affairs Department to the Office of the Prime Minister in 2013 demonstrated the government's recognition of the importance of addressing issues affecting women. It has also allowed the Gender Affairs Department to focus more on gender mainstreaming across government as opposed to small-scale activities and projects (SPC, 2013). As stated within the National Gender Policy, the role of the Gender Affairs Department is to monitor policy and support gender mainstreaming. However, the staffing and resourcing within the department has remained the same over the past five years with a minimal budget increase that was provided in 2018. The department lacks the resources required to fulfil its mandate as per the policy (GAD, 2018; SPC, 2013).
- There are a total of five staff positions within the Gender Affairs Department – the positions include a Director, Policy Advocacy Coordinator, Project Manager, Communication Campaign Officer and Clerical Officer. Attracting and retaining staff has been an ongoing challenge for the department. Through donor assistance provided by the Australian Government's *Pacific Women* program, a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Adviser was placed within the department for a two-year period from 2016-2018. Also, a Country Focal Officer contracted by the RRRT is based in the Gender Affairs Department.

- The Tuvalu Council of Women (TNCW) was established in the 1970s and is an important component of the national women's machinery. It consists of 16 women, with two representatives of each of Tuvalu's nine islands. The council serves as the formal link between government and civil society to support the national machinery for gender equality.

28. Is the head of the national machinery a member of the institutional process for SDG implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordinating office, commission or committees)?

- The head of the national machinery is a member to most of the boards or committees that feeds information as to the process for the National Strategic Plan and SDGs Whereas the head do not

29. a.) Are there formal mechanisms in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

- No. However, there is a National Coordinating Committee for CEDAW. As stated in the terms of reference, the committee is a network of government agencies and NGO and their role is to coordinate and monitor the implementation of Tuvalu's gender equality obligations under CEDAW.

b.) Do you have mechanisms in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalized groups can participate and that their concerns are reflected in these processes?

- No there is no formal mechanism in place. However, issues faced by women and girls from marginalised typically brought forth through their national umbrella organisations. For example, women from the outer islands raise issues through the National Council of Women and health issues are raised through the Tuvalu Family Health Association.

c) Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.

- The Gender Affairs Department worked jointly with the *Pacific Women* Support Unit which provided technical assistance to prepare, gather information and develop and seek endorsement of the National Review Report. A desk review was conducted to gather background data and information on initiatives that have been carried out over the past five years to support gender equality in Tuvalu. A modified and condensed version of the questionnaire from the UN Women *Guidance Note for Comprehensive National-Level Reviews* was provided to 15 national stakeholders to complete. A National Consultative Workshop was jointly conducted by Gender Affairs Department and the *Pacific Women* Support Unit to consult with stakeholders and reflect on progress and challenges in supporting the advancement of gender equality and the Beijing Platform of Action as well as to identify future areas of priority. The findings of the desk review, questionnaire and national consultative workshop were compiled and developed into a draft National Review Report, that was then submitted to the government of Tuvalu to provide feedback and endorsement of the report.

30. Is gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation?

- There is no national plan or strategy for SDG implementation. However, in the *Te Kakeega III* (National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016 to 2020) incorporates the concerns expressed in the SDGs gender is included in section 4.16 under Health and Social Development.

#### 4. Data and Statistics

31. What are the top three areas in which your country has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?

- € Promulgated laws, regulations, or statistical programme/strategy setting out the development of gender statistics
- € Established an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical working group, inter-agency committee)
- € Used more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects
- € Re-processed existing data (e.g., No information was received from the Central Statistics Division.
- € censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics
- € Conducted new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)
- € Improved administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps
- € Produced knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)
- € Developed a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics
- € Engaged in capacity building to strengthen the use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)
- € Other
  - No information was provided.

32. Out of the following which are your country's top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years?

- € Design of laws, regulations, or statistical programme/strategy promoting the development of gender statistics
- € Establishment of an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical working group, inter-agency committee)
- € Use more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects

**X Re-processing of existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics**

- € Conduct of new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)
- € Greater utilization and/or improvement of administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps
- € Production of knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)
- € Development of a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics
- € Institutionalization of users-producers' dialogues mechanisms

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

€ Other

- The Gender Affairs Department identified the need to conduct another prevalence study on domestic violence and to work together with our Central Statistics Division on this initiative to get the true picture of the status of domestic violence in the country and to support the need of providing better service to the people of Tuvalu. This could support national capacity development on research, data collection and application. They also noted the need to have the data to inform policy, laws and initiatives to address gender-based violence.
- No information was received from the Central Statistics Division.

**33. Have you defined a national set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs?**

€ Yes

**X No**

- The national monitoring and evaluation unit within government monitors the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 and international and regional commitments. They report on national level indicators that incorporate the SDGs.

34. Has data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs begun?

Yes

No

35. Which of the following disaggregations is routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

Geographic location

Income

Sex

Age

Education

Marital status

Race/ethnicity

Migratory status

Disability

Other

### Conclusion

The government of Tuvalu and civil society and private sector organisations have recognised the importance of gender equality as demonstrated through a wide range of significant achievements that contribute toward the realisation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The National Gender Policy 2016-2019 and the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2020 are both scheduled to be reviewed in the near future, it is important that gender mainstreaming continues to be strengthened in policies and plans and even more so that they are implemented and put into

practice. Going forward as was identified by national stakeholders, there is a need to continue to strengthen partnerships, implement policy and legal reforms and address family health and violence against women as significant social challenges.

## Annex 1: List of Organisations Consulted

- Gender Affairs Department, Office of the Prime Minister
- Community Affairs Department, Ministry of Home Affairs and Rural Development
- Tuvalu Family Health Association (TuFHA)
- Tuvalu Association of NGOs (TANGO)
- Tuvalu National Youth Council
- Tuvalu National Women's Council
- Budget Department, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
- Department Climate Change and Disaster, Office of the Prime Minister
- Fusi Alofa Association
- RRRT Country Focal Officer
- Ombudsman Office
- Attorney General's Office
- Ministry of Health
- Department of Environment, Ministry of Natural Resources

## Annex 2: References

Asian Development Bank. (2019). *Member Fact Sheet Tuvalu*. Retrieved from <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/27808/tuv-2018.pdf>

Central Statistics Division (TCSD), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and Macro International Inc. (2007). *Tuvalu Demographic and Health Survey*.

Central Statistics Division. (2010). *Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2010 Report*.

DFAT/Pacific Women. (2019). *Review Report: Tuvalu Country Plan 2015-2018*.

Gender Affairs Department, Office of the Prime Minister. (2018a). *Monitoring and Evaluation Retreat – Summary Report*.

Gender Affairs Department, Office of the Prime Minister. (2018b). *TSM Option Paper*.

Government of Tuvalu. (2011). *Report, 3rd and 4th Periodic report to the United Nations on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women CEDAW*.

Government of Tuvalu. (2014a). *National Gender Policy 2014-2019*.

Government of Tuvalu. (2014b). *Family Protection and Domestic Violence Act*.

Government of Tuvalu. (2016). *Te Kakeega III National Strategy for Sustainable Development, 2016-2020*.

Government of Tuvalu. (2018). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21\* Tuvalu (Universal Periodic Review Report)*.

Government of Tuvalu and Pacific Community. (2018). *Tuvalu 2015/2016 Household Income and Expenditure Survey Full Report*.

Molotii, A., Baker, K., and Corbett, J. (2014). *Women's Representation and the Question of Temporary Special Measures in Tuvalu*. Australian National University, Canberra.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. (2013). *Tuvalu Gender Profile*.

Secretariat of the Pacific Community. (2013). *Stocktake of the Gender Mainstreaming Capacity of Pacific Island Governments Tuvalu*. Noumea, New Caledonia.

Secretariat of the Pacific Community. (2015). *Beijing +20: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island countries and territories*. Noumea, New Caledonia.

Tavola, H. (2018). Tuvalu Study on People with Disability. DFAT/Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development. Retrieved from <https://pacificwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Tuvalu-Study-on-People-With-Disability-Full-Report-July-2018.pdf>

UNDP. (2010). *Tuvalu Millennium Development Goals Progress Report 2010/2011*.

UNDP. (2018). *Tuvalu Seeks to Increase Women's Representation in Upcoming Elections*. Retrieved from <http://www.pacific.undp.org/content/pacific/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2018/tuvalu-seeks-to-increase-womens-representation-in-upcoming-elections.html>

UN Women. (2018). *Guidance Note for Comprehensive National-level Review*