

Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development: Federated States of Micronesia

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

Providing technical, knowledge sharing and convening support to the portfolio of partners is *Pacific Women's* Support Unit, working to improve the long-term impact of gender equality projects in the Pacific.

The Australian Government, through *Pacific Women*, has committed approximately \$1.4 million over 10 years (2012–2022) on initiatives to support women's empowerment in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

Figures¹

Community awareness and outreach

- 172 women participated in financial literacy and business management trainings.
- 32 police officers from state and municipal levels were trained on the Pohnpei *Domestic Issues Act* 2017, gender and human rights.
- 110 women engaged in the Pacific Women Growing Business (PWGB) rural outreach project, from January to May 2019.
- Six rural women's groups provided with specific business orientation through PWGB.

Crisis support services

- First domestic violence counselling service established in Chuuk State including: trained gender-based violence (GBV) counsellors; technical support in program development; 'do no harm' and survivors' safety; and a renovated building customised for GBV counselling to ensure a safe, accessible space for the new service.
- First GBV Counselling Adviser in FSM, supporting Chuuk State to provide domestic violence and other counselling services.

Achievements

Economic Empowerment

- 172 women clients of the Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation, and other women small business owners successfully completed financial literacy and business management training through the Pacific Women Growing Business project. The project is supported by *Pacific Women*, implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC) and delivered in partnership with the College of Micronesia's Center for Entrepreneurship. As a result, several women small business owners upscaled their businesses. Examples include international expansion for a coffee plantation business operated by a local woman and improved accounts management for better cashflow and growth for a woman-operated used tyre sale business.
- The Pacific Women Growing Business project also supported a Business Counsellor to travel to rural and remote areas offering rural outreach and introducing 110 women to the project while assessing their needs for future support.
- Key development lending institutions such as the FSM Development Bank and the Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation are working with the Pacific Women Growing Business project to identify women-led businesses and women's groups that may benefit from small business lending and micro finance programs.

Ending Violence against Women

- Support to a dedicated Family Protection Adviser with the Department of Health and Social Affairs, Gender Development Office has progressed implementation of the Pohnpei *Domestic Issues Act* 2017 and the Kosrae *Family Protection Act* 2004 and helped to establish the Pohnpei Domestic Violence Act Taskforce. In 2018, the Taskforce committed to progress implementation of the protection order sections in the Act with the Adviser supporting the Pohnpei State Women's

¹ Information collated from *Pacific Women* implementing partner reports cumulative to June 2019 unless otherwise stated.



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Interest Officer to submit a recommendation to the Governor – a significant step towards full implementation of the Act.

- The Pohnpei Police Domestic Violence Unit was formed following training provided by the Department of Health and Social Affairs Family Protection Adviser to police about the Pohnpei *Domestic Issues Act 2017*, gender and human rights.
- Chuuk Women's Council – the only non-government organisation in FSM providing GBV counselling services – refurbished its building and trained its GBV counsellors, then officially launched its GBV crisis support centre in March 2020. Staff are providing advocacy, counselling and referrals for women experiencing GBV.
- Support for an assessment of counseling services for survivors of GBV in FSM identified key gaps in service provision and was launched at the 8th FSM National Women's Conference in 2018. Findings from the Eliminating Violence Against Women (EVAW) in Pohnpei and Chuuk, FSM: Assessment of EVAW Services and Gaps in Services report are being used to better assist women and children to access services relating to domestic violence. This includes the launch of the Chuuk Women's Council GBV counselling service and work progressing to re-open the Pohnpei safe house.
- Pohnpei Women Interest Officer, Lululeen Santos, was supported to attend the Regional Training Program (RTP) delivered by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) to assist and develop the capacity of participants working in the area of violence against women.

Enhancing Agency

- Chuuk Women's Council conducted three rounds of a week-long summer Young Women's Empowerment Program for 58 girls in 2019, with its success resulting in a commitment to run the program annually. The program covers sexual and mental health, healthy relationships and developing future goals.
- The FSM government increased its capacity to generate sex-disaggregated data and to use gender statistics to guide national policy and decision-making, evaluation and learning and human rights reporting. This resulted from support to SPC's Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (PGEP) project.
- Support enabled FSM representatives to attend the first 2017 Micronesian Women's Conference hosted in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Support included co-funding for the conference along with the European Union and other partners. At the conference, ministers, elected representatives and senior government officials in Micronesia signed the Jined Kiped Declaration, agreeing on strategic recommendations to accelerate progress toward gender equality, with an emphasis on climate change and disability.

Pacific Women Partners

Government of the Federated States of Micronesia: Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, Department of Health and Social Affairs.

Federated States of Micronesia civil society and private sector partners: Chuuk Women's Council and other women's NGOs collaborating on Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) shadow reporting; College of Micronesia; FSM Development Bank; National Chamber of Commerce; Pohnpei Consumers Organisation (disabled people's organisation); Pohnpei Chamber of Commerce; Pohnpei Farmers Association; Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation.

Other partners: Australian Department of the House of Representatives; Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC); the Pacific Community (SPC): POETCom, Pacific Women Growing Business, Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (PGEP) and the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT); UNICEF; and *Pacific Women's* regional partners.

