



Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development

Federated States of Micronesia Country Plan Summary

Background

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.

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

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 Support Unit's office is in Suva, Fiji, with a sub-office in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

Pacific Women was announced at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' meeting in August 2012. It commits up to AUD320 million over 10 years in 14 Pacific Islands Forum member countries.

Pacific Women initiatives respond to the commitments in the 2012 Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration, while also supporting Australia's Pacific Step-up and its Partnerships for Recovery approach of working together with Pacific partners to address COVID-19 impacts on women, girls and their communities.

The outcomes sought through *Pacific Women* are:

- **Ending Violence against Women:** Violence against women is reduced and survivors of violence have access to support services and to justice.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Women have expanded economic opportunities to earn an income and accumulate economic assets.
- **Leadership and Decision Making:** Women, and women's interests, are increasingly and effectively represented and visible through leadership at all levels of decision making.
- **Enhancing Agency:** Women in the Pacific will have a stronger sense of their own agency, supported by a changing legal and social environment and through increased access to the services they need.

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



Federated States of Micronesia

The four states of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) span nearly 2,700 km of ocean. FSM has embarked on the process of developing an overarching national policy to move gender equality forward.

Efforts have been made in the past few years to ensure equal access to education and health care services and to improve public infrastructure and government services, with significant impact on the quality of life of women and men in all states. However, challenges remain to ensure women and girls are safe from violence, can fulfil leadership roles and fully access economic opportunities. Progress is being made with the support of vibrant women's organisations across all states.

Pacific Women Country Plan

Through *Pacific Women*, the Australian Government will spend **\$1.4 million over 10 years** (2012–2022) on initiatives supporting women and girl's empowerment in FSM.

Country Plans are the mechanism through which *Pacific Women* outcomes and activities are planned and agreed between DFAT and counterpart governments, following extensive document review and national consultations. They provide detail on what will be funded and how these funding decisions are made.

The first *Pacific Women* Country Plan for FSM complements existing local activities that contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment. The Country Plan provides expanded opportunities for women entrepreneurs and supports work that will improve support services to women who have experienced violence.

The program also supports Chuuk Women's Council to reach marginalised girls in Chuuk through a curriculum focusing on sexual and mental health, healthy relationships and developing future goals. This activity is part of Pacific Girl, *Pacific Women's* dedicated regional program to support adolescent girls aged 10–19 years.

In addition to *Pacific Women*, DFAT makes an important contribution to gender equality in FSM through mainstreaming gender outcomes in the aid program, as well as through political, diplomatic and corporate activities.

Rationale for activities in the Country Plan

FSM is in the early stages of introducing a legislative framework for gender equality including developing a draft bill to support temporary special measures for women in parliament. It has a National Strategic Plan on Gender Development and Human Rights in place and a National Gender Policy. The Pohnpei State *Family Protection Act* was passed in November 2017 and Kosrae State *Family Protection Act* was passed in 2014. Chuuk and Yap States have yet to pass family protection legislation.

(a) Increasing women's leadership and decision making

Women have been consistently absent or grossly under-represented at the legislative and executive levels of government. There has never been a woman elected to the FSM National Congress. In the public service, some women have achieved seniority and are able to influence the situation for women. There are no legal barriers to women's representation in government but there are social barriers. A feature of traditional matrilineal societies is for women to have a main role in decision making but for the speaker of the family to be male, usually an uncle or brother.



(b) Increasing economic opportunities for women

Economic activities in FSM consist primarily of subsistence farming and fishing. FSM's economy remains underdeveloped and heavily dependent on the public sector. The labour force participation rate for women in FSM was only 48.4 per cent as of 2010, compared with 66.1 per cent for men.¹ The number of women wage and salary earners is less than half that of men. Not only are women less represented in the paid workforce, they are concentrated at the lower levels of the hierarchy with comparatively lower pay. While there is considerable variation across the states, a 2012 gender stocktake reported that employment levels of men surpassed women in all fields of work.²

(c) Reducing violence against women and expanding support services

The FSM Family Health and Safety Study found that one in three ever-partnered women in FSM has experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner at least once in their lifetime.³ One quarter of partnered women had experienced violence by a partner in the 12 months preceding the study. This figure was the highest among women aged 15–24 (34.7 per cent). Approximately 14 per cent of all respondents experienced sexual abuse in childhood.

Domestic violence counselling services in FSM are limited but some churches provide counselling to their members and the public. Some churches provide emergency refuge for women and children at risk on a case-by-case basis.

¹ Division of Statistics, FSM Office of Statistics, *Summary Analysis of Key Indicators from the FSM 2010 Census of Population and Housing*, http://prism.spc.int/images/census_reports/FSM_2010_Census_Indicators_Final.pdf

² Secretariat of the Pacific Community, *Stocktake of the Gender Mainstreaming Capacity of Pacific Islands Governments – Federated States of Micronesia* (2012).

³ Federated States of Micronesia Department of Health and Social Affairs, *Federated States of Micronesia Family Health and Safety Study* (2014).



Table 1: Bilateral Activities

PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET
Outcome: Economic Empowerment		
Pacific Women Growing Business (The Pacific Community (SPC))	Enabled women to start and scale up their businesses by providing business skills and development opportunities, including by partnering with the College of Micronesia for entrepreneurship and business development training and providing mentoring support from a Business Development Counsellor.	\$154,800 (2017–2019)
Outcome: Ending Violence against Women		
Eliminating Violence Against Women Services (Chuuk Women's Council)	Strengthening services for survivors of gender-based violence and increasing awareness for the prevention of violence against women and children, including opening a crisis centre.	\$481,872 (2019–2022)
Capacity Building Adviser: Gender Based Violence (Consultant)	Providing technical support to pilot the Chuuk Women's Council's gender-based violence primary prevention and psychosocial support services for survivors of violence and strengthening referral pathways, protocols and services for survivors of gender-based violence.	\$376,976 (2019–2022)
Family Protection Adviser (Government of FSM, Department of Health and Social Affairs)	Providing technical support, training and capacity development to Federated States of Micronesia Government service providers to provide safe and quality essential services to survivors of sexual and family violence.	\$408,398 (2019–2021)
Family Protection Adviser (Government of FSM, Department of Health and Social Affairs)	Worked with FSM government and non-government stakeholders to strengthen referral pathways and services for victims of violence.	\$468,028.00 (2017–2019)
Eliminating Violence against Women in Pohnpei and Chuuk Federated States of Micronesia (Consultant)	Assessed services and gaps in services to end violence against women in Federated States of Micronesia with a focus on Pohnpei State and Chuuk State.	\$88,044 (2017–2018)
Support Pohnpei State's Women's Interest Coordinator attending the Regional Training Programme (Government of FSM, Department of Health and Social Affairs; Fiji Women's Crisis Centre)	Supported Pohnpei State's Women's Interest Coordinator to attend the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre's Regional Training Programme.	\$12,000 (2019)



PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET
Outcome: Enhancing Agency		
Pacific Girl: Young Women's Empowerment Program (Chuuk Women's Council)	Reaching marginalised girls in Chuuk through a curriculum focusing on sexual and mental health, healthy relationships and developing future goals.	\$58,698 (2019–2021) ⁴
Supporting CEDAW shadow reporting (FSM non-government organisations)	Funded representatives to present the NGO Shadow Report to the 66th session of the CEDAW Convention.	\$3,677 (2017)

⁴ The regional program, through Pacific Girl, supports this project.



Table 2: Regional Programs with Activities in FSM

PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET ⁵
Outcome: Leadership and Decision Making		
Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships Project (Australian International and Community Relations Office, Department of the House of Representatives)	Supported building the capacity of Pacific women parliamentarians and their staff to ensure gender equality issues are better addressed in parliament.	\$2,850,037 (2013–2018)
Outcome: Economic Empowerment		
Building prosperity for women producers, processors and women owned businesses through organic value chains (The Pacific Community (SPC) POETCom)	Identifying and supporting organic value chains that benefit women as producers, suppliers, processors and entrepreneurs, while also enhancing their capacity for inter-regional organic trade within the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and Kiribati.	\$3,884,100 (2018–2022)
Outcome: Ending Violence against Women		
Support to the Pacific Community Regional Rights Resource Team (The Pacific Community (SPC))	Focusing on supporting work on ending violence against women, human rights and good governance, RRRT works with Pacific island governments and civil society organisations by providing technical assistance, training and advocating for women and girls to have increased access to justice for domestic violence and to promote and protect human rights commitments.	\$5,750,000 (2015–2020)
UNICEF Pacific Child Protection Program (UNICEF)	Worked across 14 Pacific Island Countries to strengthening protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation	\$7,000,000 (2014–2018)
Outcome: Enhancing Agency		
Pacific Girl	<i>Pacific Women's</i> dedicated program to support adolescent girls. Working with Pacific-based organisations to support change in the social norms that underpin gender inequality and perpetuate discrimination against adolescent girls aged 10–19 years in the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Refer to Annex 1 for more information.	\$4,500,000 (2018–2022)

⁵ This allocation is not for FSM alone but for all multiple countries under *Pacific Women*.



PROJECT NAME AND PARTNER	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET ⁵
Gender Adviser for the North Pacific (The Pacific Community (SPC))	The Adviser supports the work of SPC's Gender, Culture and Youth Programme, and through DFAT's Post in Pohnpei, supports the implementation and monitoring of <i>Pacific Women</i> activities in the North Pacific.	\$391,740 (2015–2018)
Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (The Pacific Community (SPC))	Phase one (completed) conducted stocktakes of Pacific Island governments' capacity to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into policies, legislation and programs and strengthened the collection and analysis of data to better track outcomes. Phase two is supporting Pacific Island countries to adopt evidence-informed policies and legislation that promote gender equality and women's human rights.	\$3,941,712 (2013–2018) \$5,494,203 (2019–2023)

