Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development: Samoa

Through a 10-year commitment, Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women) connects more than 160 gender equality initiatives funded by the Australian Government and implemented by 153 partners across 14 Pacific Island countries. Providing technical, convening and knowledge sharing support to the portfolio of partners is Pacific Women’s Support Unit, working to improve the long-term impact of gender equality and women’s empowerment projects in the Pacific.

The Australian Government, through Pacific Women, has committed approximately $9.3 million over 10 years (2012–2022) on initiatives to support women’s empowerment in Samoa.

Figures

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<tr>
<th>Community awareness and outreach</th>
<th>Support services and skills development</th>
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<td>▪ 110 women received small grants in Upolu and Savaii resulting in 76 income generating businesses.</td>
<td>▪ 550 men participated in a male advocacy forum on ending violence against women.</td>
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<td>▪ 618 women received financial literacy and business management training.</td>
<td>▪ More than 1,000 people responded to the second Family Safety Study, launched in 2017.</td>
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<td>▪ 5 women MPs were mentored and participated in a gender mainstreaming exchange with parliaments in Australia.</td>
<td>▪ 45 participants learned more about gender statistics and their use to better guide national policy and programs.</td>
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Achievements

Leadership and Decision Making

▪ Support through an emergency grant mechanism during the Samoan measles epidemic allowed the Shifting the Power Coalition to help ensure sexually active women and pregnant women were included in the long-term response and that correct messages about vaccination reached families.

▪ To promote women's leadership the United Nations Development Programme’s Women in Leadership Samoa (WILS) project works with a range of stakeholders, from Parliamentarians through to communities, contributing to there being more women in nationally elected positions. A record 24 women stood in the 2016 national election. Four women were elected in open seats, with a fifth woman appointed under temporary special measures.

▪ Two Samoan women participated in the Women’s Leadership Initiative that links Australian Awards scholarship alumni from Pacific Island countries with mentors, with a further two selected for 2020.

Economic Empowerment

▪ Small grants to 116 women recipients have helped them to develop small businesses through the Samoa Women Shaping Development Program. In June 2019, 89 of these women reported their businesses were operating and they were receiving increased income to help cover household costs.

Ending Violence against Women

▪ Samoan disabled persons’ organisation Nuanua O Le Alofa, the Pacific Disability Forum and UN Women encouraged and empowered organisations to include disability in projects aimed at ending violence against women by developing a toolkit about disability and violence specific to Samoa, in both English and Samoan languages.

▪ By hosting a film workshop and competition, the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD) encouraged young filmmakers to document gender issues, including gender-based violence and teenage pregnancy.

▪ The Second Samoa Family Safety Study provides longitudinal data on prevalence and types of violence experienced by women, men, girls, boys and the elderly. The MWCSD is using the findings to develop the Safer Families, Safer Communities Strategy and to inform future programming.

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

- The Pacific Community (SPC) Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific project assisted 45 participants to learn more about gender statistics and their use to inform national programming. Through PGEP’s ongoing support, the Government of Samoa is increasing 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.
- Support from the SPC Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) helped Samoa to submit its first Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) report in 2017.
- Sexual and reproductive health services are more available to rural remote communities, people with disabilities and the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex (GLBTI) community through the expansion of the Samoan Family Health Association (SFHA) services. In 2017, SFHA received the Samoa Disability Human Rights Award for its inclusive disability measures in polices, programs and service delivery.

Pacific Women Partners

Government: Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development.
Other partners: Australian International and Community Relations Office, Department of the House of Representatives; International Planned Parenthood Federation (with local partner Samoan Family Health Association); the Pacific Community: Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific and the Regional Rights Resource Team; Shifting the Power Coalition; UNICEF; United Nations Development Programme; UN Women; Civil Society Support Program; and Pacific Women's regional partners.