



Government of Samoa

Beijing +25

Samoa National Report: Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) 2019




Foreword

It gives me great pleasure as the Minister for Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD) to present Samoa's National Review of progress in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action on this special anniversary of 25 years since the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995.

The work on the advancement of women continues to progress in line with the policy direction of our national development plan, the Strategy for Development of Samoa 2016-2020, the Community Development Sector Plan 2016-2020 and the Samoa National Policy for Gender Equality 2016-2020 as well as other policies and strategies outlined in this report. We acknowledge that women and girls need to participate as leaders in and contributors to social and economic development programmes, and should not be seen as just beneficiaries.

We recognise the progress and achievements to date, and acknowledge the many challenges that exist to move the gender equality agenda forward. The government with the ongoing support of its development partners will continue to adopt the multi-sector approach in implementing our national and international obligations under the Beijing Platform for Action and other Human Rights treaties.

We wish to acknowledge the assistance provided by UN Women to support the compilation of this report. I would also like to commend the work of the government ministries, our Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO), our Civil Society organisations, Community based organisations, village representatives (women and men), community networks, development partners and all who have contributed to our ongoing efforts to improve the status of women in Samoa.



14.06.2019.

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Minister, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development



Samoa Consultative Workshop

Beijing Declaration & Platform for Action - Information & Data Collection

24th April, 2019

Compiled by the Ministry of Women Community of Social Development

Contributory partners:

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- National Institute for Human Rights/ Ombudsman's Office
- Ministry of Police
- Ministry of Justice, Courts and Administration
- Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labor
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
- Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Prime Minister & Cabinet
- Office of the Regulator
- Samoa Bureau of Statistics
- Public Service Commission
- Samoa Prisons and Corrections Reform
- Samoa Law Reform Commission
- Central Bank of Samoa

NON-GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- National Council of Early Childhood Education in Samoa (NCECES)
- Goshen Trust
- Samoa Refuge – Tofa Sinasina
- Samoa Victim Support Group
- NOLA – Nuanua o le Alofa
- Faataua le Ola (FLO)
- Sei Oriana Trust
- Small Business Enterprise Centre
- ADRA (Adventist Disaster Relief Agency) Samoa

A big thanks to our donors:

- UN Women Pacific
- UNDP

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Acronyms	
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
SBS	Samoa Bureau of Statistic
UNESCAP	United Nation Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
CLCA	Community Law Centre Act
CDC	Cabinet Development Committee
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
WTO	World Trade Organisation
LDC	Least Developed Countires
SDS	Strategy for the Development of Samoa
SLRC	Samoa Law Reform Commission
SBWWIP	Small Business Incubator Without Walls Programme
SFSS	Samoa Family Safety Study
OFO	Office of the Ombudsman
ADRA	Adventist Disaster Relief Agency
GDRMP	Gender in Disaster Risk Management Policy
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
CDCRM	Community Disaster and Climate Risk Management
SDVP	Sustainable Development Village Plans
DKIF	Data Knowledge Information System
CCPP	Child Care and Protection Policy
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
NSC	National Security Committee
SPWAN	Samoa Police Women's Advisory Network
SNSP	Samoa National Security Policy
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
WMD	Weapons Mass Destruction
NCPS	National Crime Prevention Strategy
ICT	Information Communication Technology
NCSS	National Cyber Security Strategy
COP	Child Online Protection
GBV	Gender-Based Violence

UNSG	United Nation Secretary General
GANHRI	Global Alliance of National Human Rights
NMRF	National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up
NUS	National University of Samoa
IPPWS	Increased Political Participation of Women in Samoa
ISPs	Internet Service Providers
PSET	Post School Education and Training
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
STI	Sexually Transmitted Disease
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Viruses
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
PSC	Public Service Commission
ACC	Accident Compensation Corporation
SNPF	Samoa National Provident Fund
SCPF	Samoa Citizens Benefit Fund
NBS	National Bank of Samoa
CBS	Central Bank of Samoa
PICs	Pacific Island Countries
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
HIES	Household Income & Expenditure Survey
UNV	United Nation Volunteers
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
NOLA	Nuanua ole Alofa

Glossary

Au'afamau	A centralised crime statistics database
Ie Samoa	Fine Mat
Siapo	Cloth made from tree bark (Tapa)
Nofotane	Wife living with her husband's family
Elei	Printing of traditional designs onto fabric
Sui o le Nu'u (SN)	Village Men Representative
Sui Tama'ita'I o Nu'u (STN)	Village Women Representative

Introduction

This report is the National review of Samoa's progress on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration for Action in September 1995.. This review includes an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action especially in respect to national efforts towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and its contribution towards the full realisation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In order to compile the report we undertook wide consultation with government agencies, NGO's, civil society, village representatives and donor partners. We also took advantage of the process of preparing and presenting our 6th Periodic Report under the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. This document brings together both the 12 critical areas of concern from the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development targets.

Beijing Platform for Action (12 critical areas of concern)	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (targets under SDG 5)	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (gender-specific targets under other SDGs)
A. Women and poverty	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Poverty (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1b) Zero hunger (2.3) Good health and wellbeing (3.7, 3.8) Quality education (4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4a) Decent work (8.3, 8.5, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9) Reduced inequalities (10.2) Sustainable cities (11.7) Climate action (13b) Peace, justice and strong institutions (16.1, 16.2, 16.7) Partnerships for the goals (17.18)
B. Education and training of women	5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls	
C. Women and health	5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices	
D. Violence against women	5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work	
E. Women and armed conflict	5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels	
F. Women and the economy	5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights	
G. Women in power and decision-making	5a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources	
H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women	5b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology	
I. Human rights of women	5c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality	
J. Women and the media		
K. Women and the environment		
L. The girl-child		

This report is divided into four (4) sections: A) Priorities, Achievements & Challenges; B) Progress across the 6 Areas; C) National Institutions & Processes; D) Data & Statistics.

Context

Geography and Economy

Samoa is a group of ten volcanic islands situated in the South Pacific Ocean. The inhabited islands are the two main islands of Upolu and Savaii and the smaller Manono and Apolima supporting village communities. Samoa has the smallest EEZ in the Pacific at 98,500 km². The total land area is 2,820 square kilometres with 43 percent arable land. Samoa's climate is tropical with the cool drier months normally from April to October and the wet and cyclone season months from November to March. The capital Apia, is situated on the main island Upolu.



The economy of Samoa is based mainly on the agriculture and fisheries sectors, and is reliant on development aid and workers' remittances. Samoa has a relatively open economy with a very narrow export base and a persistent and sizeable trade deficit. Samoa also has a narrow tax base and depends mainly on external financing for its budget. Sustaining its development currently greatly depends on enhanced budget support¹.

¹ Strategy for the Development of Samoa, 2016-2021, Ministry of Finance, Government of Samoa: Apia

Samoa is a low middle income country with GDP per capita estimated to have fully recovered in 2014/15 to the level of US\$2,751 recorded in 2011 following the declining trend during 2012/13². Since 2010 Samoa has been adapting to the opportunities and challenges from joining the World Trade Organisation in 2012 and official graduation from LDC status in 2014. In 2011, a Joint Policy Matrix was developed by the Government of Samoa and its major development partners to ensure a more coordinated approach for the delivery of performance linked aid.

The 2016 hardship and poverty report³ indicates that the average incidence of basic needs poverty in rural households nationally has improved to 18.8% in 2013/14 when compared to 26.9% in 2008 and 22.9% in 2002. The incidence of food poverty at the national level has been declining given the proportion of population affected has dropped to 4.3% in 2013/14 compared to 4.6% in 2008 and 10.6% in 2002. In terms of inequality, there is a widening of the income distribution gap reflected by the worsening of the overall Gini coefficient from 0.43 in 2002 to 0.56 in 2013/14.

People and Culture

The 2016 Government census recorded a total population of 195,843, with 51% of population male and 49% female. Around 43% of the population are in the 0-14 and 65+ age group while 1% of all persons 5 years and over have lived with some form of disability⁴.

In the last five years (2011-2016), the population has increased by 8,023 people. This is an increase of 4.3 percent making an annual growth rate of 0.9 percent per annum or an addition of 1,605 people per year⁵.

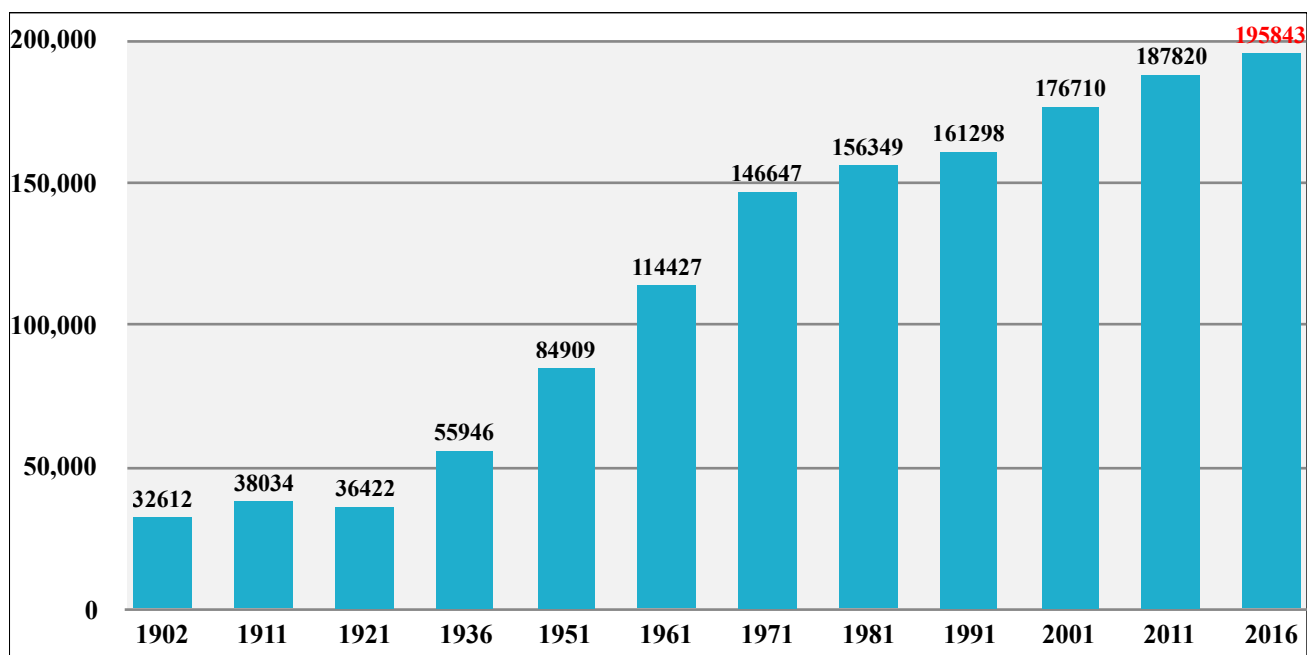
² World Bank Country Profile, accessed 2019.

³ Samoa Hardship and Poverty Report: Analysis of the 2013/124 Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2016. UNDP/ Samoa Bureau of Statistics.

⁴ Samoa Census 2016, Samoa Bureau of Statistics, Government of Samoa: Apia

⁵ *ibid*

Population Size and Growth 1902 – 2016



The Samoan population has always been concentrated in the Apia urban area and North West of Upolu. These regions are closer to centralised services as well as schools, employment and other social and economic opportunities. English and Samoan are the official languages of communication and are taught widely in schools⁶.

Population by Main Work Activity

Cash employment accounted for 13 percent of the people working for salary/wages (employees), 1 percent of people as hired workers (employers) and 3 percent of self-employed persons making up 17 percent of persons engaged in wage-employment⁷.

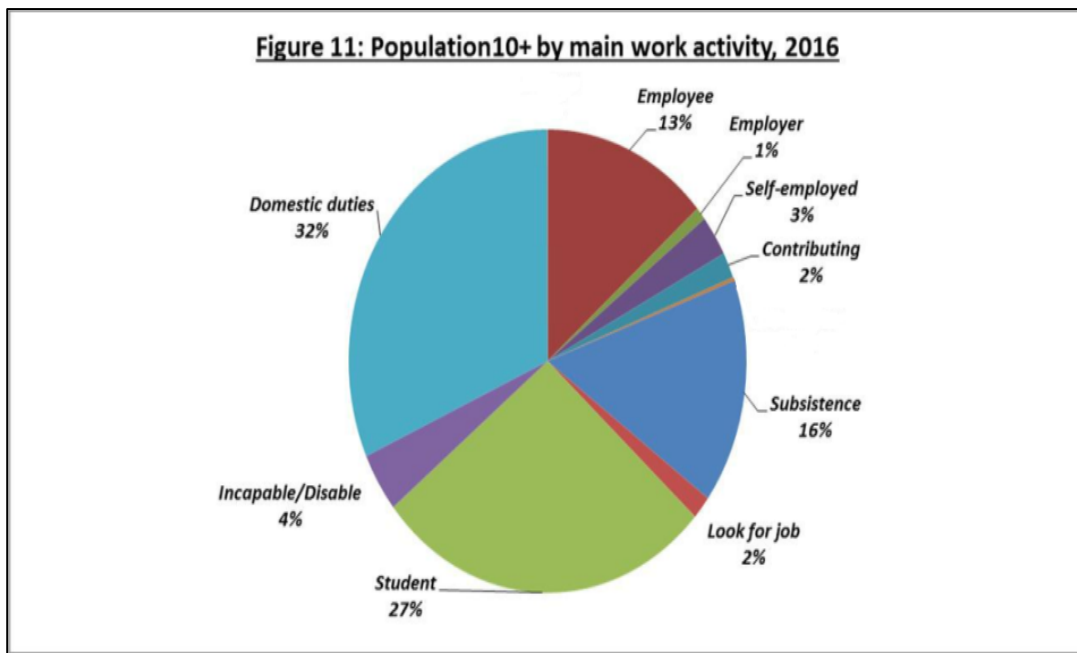
Subsistence employment comprising 16 percent included all work related to agriculture, fishing and handicraft at home, either for sale or for consumption purposes.

Other work activities comprising three quarters of the working population are not engaged in paid employment but contributed significantly to the daily activities of families and villages⁸.

⁶ Samoa Census 2016, Samoa Bureau of Statistics, Government of Samoa: Apia

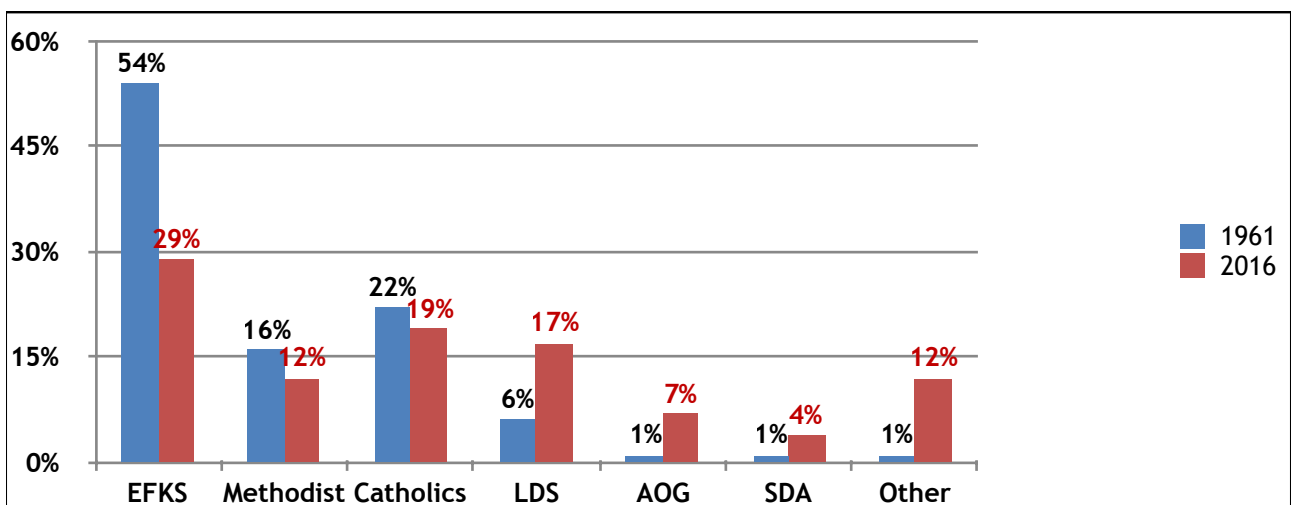
⁷ ibid

⁸ ibid



Religious Affiliation 1961 – 2016

Religion has a significant role and influence in the lives of Samoan people and culture. Samoa is predominantly Christian with people belonging to various denominations. According to the most recent 2016 census, the major religious groups in the country include: Congregational Christian Church 29%, Roman Catholic 18.8%, Latter Day Saints: 16.9%, Methodist 12.4%, Assembly of God 6.8%, Seventh Days Adventist 4.4%, Other churches 11.6%. Groups that constitute other churches include Jehovah’s Witness, Congregational Church of Jesus, Nazarene, Baptist, Worship Centre, Samoa Evangelism and Anglican⁹.



⁹ ibid

Section A: Priorities, Achievements & Challenges

The Government of Samoa remains committed to its gender equality and women's empowerment agenda. This section highlights six areas of achievement since our last report in 2014. These are further explored in Section B of this report as we answer the set of questions. This section is divided into three sub-headings.

1. Achievements in the last five years
2. Challenges
3. Priorities for next five years

What have been the most important achievements, challenges and set-backs in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women over the past 5 years?

Achievements

Legislative Compliance Review

The first comprehensive legislative review of eliminating discrimination against women was carried out as part of Samoa's obligation under CEDAW. The Samoa Law Reform Commission finalised the report in 2016, and concluded that overall Samoa was compliant with CEDAW but with room for improvement. Some of these achievements are:

- The constitutional amendment in June 2013 introducing the 10% quota of women representatives into the national Legislative Assembly, this was reported in our last Beijing PfA report.
- The 2016 General elections saw a record number of women running as candidates and the highest number ever to be elected to parliament. Four (4) being elected directly and one (1) selected through the quota system. The first female Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Leader of the ruling political party was appointed after these elections. In addition to the Family Safety Act passed in 2013, and the Family Court of Samoa in 2014, Samoa established the Drug and Alcohol Court in 2015 which receives support from the gender programme to fund officers of the court. Both the Family Court and Drugs and Alcohol Courts are presided over by female Supreme Court Judges.
- The Community Law Centre Act was passed by parliament in 2015 and commenced on 1 February 2016 and serves to provide legal assistance in the form of legal aid granted under the Act. However due to budgetary constraints it has not been fully implemented. Functions of the centre headed by the Public Advocate appointed under the Act, includes providing public awareness and education programmes on legal rights, obligations and services. There were Legislative amendments ensuring gender neutral language in all legislation.
- Review of the Family Law legislation being carried out by the Samoa Law Reform Commission.

Restructure of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development

To enable the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development to respond in a more meaningful manner to the needs of the community the focus of its work was restructured during 2016-2018.

The restructure moves the Ministry's focus from individual groups to thematic areas: social development, economic empowerment, governance and leadership. This involved mainstreaming of women, gender, children, people living with disabilities into all the focal work areas of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development. The key to the change is to ensure improved integrated planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting so that there is more effective responses to the needs of our people.

The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development have developed new programmes in the last 5 years that demonstrate this new approach, some of which include the following:

- While the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development continues to lead on the implementation of CEDAW, CRPD and CRC, the government continues to exercise a "whole of government" approach where there is strong recognition that gender equality and women empowerment cannot be achieved by one Ministry alone. The Ministry of Finance, as the lead agency for sector planning across government, has further refined a policy mandate through the development of sector planning guidelines, that include the instructions to mainstream gender and disability in all sector plans and documents.
- This mandate to include mainstreaming of gender and disability and other cross cutting issues extends to the execution of all Aid-funded development initiatives and defines engagement with all our development partners. The Cabinet Development Committee (CDC) has introduced gender analysis as a requirement for any aid projects proposal. This represents a positive step in enhancing the role of women and promoting gender issues in all Government policies and resource allocation decisions.

Inclusive Governance & Community Development

As reported in our previous report, a key feature of the inclusive governance structure in Samoa are the community village representatives who are selected by their village to represent them in national government matters and then report back to the village community news and information they have been given by the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development or any other government agency. This involves each village in Samoa appointing one or two representatives (a woman and a man) to represent their village at government events. This structure has been strengthened with the establishment of the District Development Planning programme.

The District Development Planning programme was established by the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development as a mechanism for village leaders to lead the development in their own village. The process uses the current structures at

the village governance level and brings the leaders together at the District level. The planning process focuses on inclusiveness through ensuring that all groups of the village community are involved especially women, youth, people living with disability, and church leaders from each denomination within the district.

The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development promotes active engagement of all stakeholders to drive gender equality and social inclusion change at the village level and to ensure a better chance of improving women's empowerment in the areas of economic, governance and leadership, protection from all forms of violence, better health and education opportunities.

What makes this strategy different to previous programmes, is that the planning and decision making process is driven by the community leaders, including the Member of Parliament, village councils, STN and SN, church leaders, village women's committees, persons with disabilities, youth and children groups.

This is the first time there is a clear focus of efforts towards inclusion of women and persons with disabilities, youth and children as equal partners in the development dialogue. In 2018 seventeen (17) out of forty-nine (49) district planning processes occurred with strong female representation, and four (4) committees are currently chaired by women¹⁰.

This District Development Planning Programme uses the electoral districts, thereby giving the district a mechanism to be directly involved with their Member of Parliament. The district committee structure will now be the mechanism whereby all community development initiatives will be delivered to the villages, ensuring an inclusive and equitable pathway for access to services in areas such as health, environment management, disaster risk reduction, education, security, safety and economic development.

Economic Empowerment of Women

The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development have facilitated livelihood support for vulnerable families on the basis of the community development approach. Out of a vulnerability assessment conducted by MWCSA, a program of entrepreneurial skills training for women was developed, which were funded by the Government of Australia, and similarly one for youth with UN support.

The training primarily focuses on creating a business plan for initiatives commensurate with skills and talents such as elei printing, carving and handicraft making, siapo (tapa making), cut flowers and floral arrangement, vegetable gardening, farming, poultry and financial literacy training.

The Government-led program for the revival of the "Ie Samoa" (fine mat) provides opportunities for women to generate income given the cultural value of the item and also indirectly addressing social related issues within families¹¹. This initiative was

¹⁰ Samoa's Reply to the List of Issues for CEDAW, August 2018. Government of Samoa. Apia.

¹¹ Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development Annual Report FY 2017-2018. MWCSA. Apia.

implemented by the Ministry of Women community and Social Development (when?). The program aims to revive the weaving of the Ie sae or the fine mats and tapa cloth that are used in all high level traditional exchange of the Samoa culture. The weaving of the fine mats is a laborious and time-consuming activity and requires special skills.

The promotion of the Ie Samoa depicts and showcase the role of women in Samoan communities. The Fuataga Ie Samoa in 2018 involved 3000 women and 50 women's committees on Savaii and 52 in Upolu. Thirty two (32) women's committees were awarded monetary prizes. There is a growing number of fine mats that each woman produced in 2018 compared to their first inception in 2013¹².

The Government of China also delivered training for women on sewing skills as part of the Small Business Without Walls Incubator programme. This sewing training conducted by the Chinese experts involved about 50 participants (all of them women with one male). A basic training for was conducted in the District of Gagaifomauga at the village of Safotu Savaii using the domestic sewing machine. Another training course was held in Apia targeting beginner sewers. Follow up visits revealed that that most of the women participants have been able to use their skills they had gained to earn money from sewing products for customers¹³.

In addition to small business development, women were also supported through employment pathways provided by the Ministry, through Internship programs, skills-matching, or scholarships to continue technical vocational training. Other training provided that also targeted women focused on kitchen-hands, chefs and waitresses in the promotion of culinary skills using traditional practices. Young female cocoa farmers were also supported through a local cooperative to supply cocoa beans for Whitakers' Chocolate Factory in NZ¹⁴.

Ending Violence

The Government of Samoa remains committed to combating all forms of violence against women and children, and is promoting safe families and communities at all levels. A summary of the key achievements in how we have addressed violence against women and violence in the family is discussed in this section.

Two important studies have been carried out that will be critical to addressing violence against women and violence in the family. The Samoa Family Safety Study in July 2017, commissioned by the Ministry reported a high prevalence of violence in the family and in particular against women, children, the elderly and people living with disabilities¹⁵. The Samoa Family Study made strong recommendations towards the need for stepping up leadership through the proactive engagement of village councils and church leaders in the prevention of violence against women, children and persons

¹² Fuataga and Siapo Report 2017/2018, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development: Apia

¹³ Final sewing report 2019, Division for Economic Development, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development: Apia

¹⁴ YEP Project Report, 2018. Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development: Apia

¹⁵ Family Safety Study, 2017, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, Government of Samoa: Apia

with disabilities. The Safe Families, Stronger Samoa Policy and plan of action is informed by this study.

The National Human Rights Institute under the Office of the Ombudsman conducted a National Inquiry into family violence over the two years (2016-2018) and the report was released in October 2018. This NHRI inquiry was the first of its kind in Samoa and the Pacific Region. It provided a platform for public discussions of violence at all levels. The inquiry findings reaffirmed calls for more proactive leadership by village councils and village leaders, church leaders, and government agencies to reduce the prevalence and improve our responses to gender-based violence. The inquiry also highlighted that the principles contained within the Samoan culture (*fa'asamoa*) faith and human rights are complementary and are central to addressing the elimination of violence in families.

As part of the 16 Days of Activism against Violence Campaign in 2017 the MWCSA Safer Families, Safe Villages campaign saw 30 villages and groups across Samoa participate in village-led initiatives to highlight awareness of domestic violence in our communities with objectives such as changing mindsets and zero tolerance towards violence. The initiative was well attended and supported across the country¹⁶. Other NGOs focused on their districts promoting the same objectives.

Women Health and Climate Change

The Ministry of Health have tailored the World Health Organisation- Package of Essential non-communicable (PEN) disease interventions protocol in an effort to reduce NCDs in the country. The primary prevention program is called (PEN). The program mobilises communities for implementation at the primary care level in low resource settings and is driven by the village women's committees who have been trained by National Health Service (NHS)/Ministry of Health (MOH) to provide important non-communicable disease (NCD) screenings and health interventions as part of the early intervention work. The program is working in 8 rural villages, and has screened over 1,000 people with referrals made to district hospitals.

Sexual and reproductive health services and information, especially for young people, have always been considered a sensitive issue for both youth and parents alike. In the past months there has been a steady increase in the number of young people accessing the services of health clinics and youth drop-in centre provided by Samoa Family Health (SFH).

Government in partnership with Samoa Red Cross, SFH supported-peer educators who work in the township managed to reach people and conducted conversations on issues around SRH and GBV awareness¹⁷.

The Ministry has incorporated family planning, safe sex practices and SRH issues into village awareness programs/educational support programs targeting church youth groups. For example as part of National Youth Week celebrated in August 2018, a

¹⁶ Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development Annual Report FY 2017-2018. MWCSA. Apia.

¹⁷ Samoa's Reply to the List of Issues for CEDAW, August 2018. Government of Samoa. Apia.

sexual reproductive health (SRH) and elimination of gender based violence awareness outreach was conducted in the whole of Apia.

The Samoa Integrated Mobility Device Services is a project under the National Health Services that focuses on increasing the participation and engagement of persons with disabilities in all aspect of society through the provision of walking aids, wheelchairs, orthotics and prosthetics. The project is funded by the Government of Australia and was instrumental in highlighting the importance of implementation of the Samoa Disability plan developed since the government became signatory of and ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

To date the program has produced; Service provision for walking aids, wheelchairs, prosthetic and orthotic with a total of 1,288 clients (47% of who are females, with the highest female beneficiaries' senior citizens) receiving 1,809 devices. A total of 3,163 mobility devices have now been procured by the project. Key findings on how these devices are supporting the engagement of women show that many clients are achieving a high level of function and independence using their device¹⁸.

The Disaster Management Office under MNRE has developed new policies that address the vulnerability of women and girls and persons with disabilities during, and in post-disaster situations. The new policies, called Gender in Disaster Risk Management, and Persons with Disabilities in Disaster Risk Management have been endorsed by the Disaster Advisory Committee. These policies apply to both rural and urban settings as well as national and grassroots level. There are other environmental and climate change projects that have impacted on women and the community in Samoa, these are outlined in Area 6 in Section B of this document.

Participation in Political Processes and Decision Making

In terms of participation of women in political and public decision making, as mentioned earlier in the report, the first female Deputy Prime Minister was appointed and there is an increase in number of females represented in parliament. Statistics also show the increase over the last five years of women holding management level positions at the CEO and Assistant CEO level for government ministries. As reported, around 60% of these management level posts are held by women. There are two Cabinet Ministers and two female members of parliament chair two parliamentary committees, the Public Accounts Parliamentary Committee and the Social Sector Committee of Parliament.

Samoa has appointed three more female judges, increasing the numbers from one to four; two as Supreme Court Judges and two as District Judges. There are also two Lands and Titles Court judges.

The Increasing Political Participation of Women in Samoa (IPPWS) programme was implemented before the last general election and have achieved much of its

¹⁸ SDP Annual Report 2018, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development: Apia

objectives¹⁹. As a result a follow up project was launched in April 2018; Women in Leadership in Samoa (WILS) Project. This project has linkages with the national, regional and global development strategies and agendas such as the SAMOA Pathway, Agenda 2030 and SDGs SDS and the Community Development Sector Plan (2016-2021)²⁰. These two projects are outlined in more detail in Area 1 in Section B of this document.

Institutional Mechanisms and International Reporting Obligations

Since the last Beijing Platform for Action review report in 2014/2015, Samoa has submitted several National reports on Human Rights. These are listed below:

- UPR- Samoa presented its Universal Periodic Review Report on 3 May 2016,
- CRC- Samoa submitted its second to fourth periodic report in May 2016 and the CRC Committee adopted the concluding observations in June 2016²¹ and ratified the optional protocols..
- CEDAW- Samoa submitted its 6th CEDAW report in 2017 and presented to the CEDAW committee via video conference in October 2018. Concluding observations were released on 14 November 2018²².
- CRPD- Samoa ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability in 2016 and the first report is currently being prepared and is due in 2019
- Samoa has since acceded to the Convention against Corruption (Aug 2018), and the Convention against Torture (March 2019)

Working Group Visit to Samoa

As part of our international obligations Samoa was the first country from the Pacific to welcome the visit in August 2017 of the Working Group on the Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice. The Government of Samoa supported the visit as it provided an opportunity to discuss and demonstrate some of the efforts underway, as well as to understand the context and assess Samoa's progress on such an important priority issue. The Working Groups' report²³ was presented at the Human Rights Council meeting in June 2018 and Samoa was present to deliver its response.

The Working Group's report rightly highlighted that Samoa made important strides in putting in place critical legal and policy frameworks that comply with international human rights obligations, with regard to the elimination of discrimination against

¹⁹ Terminal Evaluation of the Increased Political Participation of Women in Samoa (IPPWS) Project, 2016. UNDP: Apia.

²⁰ Women in Leadership in Samoa (WILS) Project Document, 2018. Government of Samoa, DFAT, UNwomen, UNDP: Apia

²¹ National CRC Report Samoa, 2016: Government of Samoa: Apia

²² National CEDAW Report Samoa, 2017: Government of Samoa: Apia.




²³ Working Group on Discrimination against women in law and in practice Report, 2018.

women. Several initiatives are ongoing that are important for progress, particularly, genderbased violence and economic empowerment.

In particular, efforts are being made to encourage intergenerational dialogue and community-government partnerships to address some of the root causes of gender-based violence. Dialogue and partnerships have provided platforms for violence to be discussed openly and publicly with the aim to removing some of the stigma associated with violence. The Working Group report also reaffirmed Samoa's calls for proactive leadership by village councils, church leaders and Government to prevent the occurrence and improve the response to violence against women, children and persons with disabilities²⁴.


Challenges

Samoa has made significant progress towards achieving gender equality since ratifying human rights conventions and adoptions of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. We list some of the challenges faced in the last 5 years of the implementation of the Beijing PfA in Samoa;

-  Although the Strategy for the Development of Samoa states that gender equality is a cross cutting issue and all sectors must include it in their planning and implementation, it remains challenging for sectors to carry out gender mainstreaming. Each sector has a range of different priorities and outcomes and many sectors still place little emphasis on gender equality and social inclusion. Most sector plans do not mention Gender equality and social inclusion of women, children, people living with disability. However, there are specific mention on women and gender in their project documents and policies but no specific mention in the Sector Plan.
-  Misconception of women's rights, children's rights and human rights is one of the biggest challenges in achieving gender equality in Samoa. For instance, in the Samoa Sixth CEDAW Report 2016, stated that there is misunderstanding/misinterpretation by children of what their rights are and the adults have misconception around the rights of the child and also with women's and girl's rights. In addressing this issue, the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) continues to roll out its Education and Awareness Program for public awareness. This will be explored in the later section of this report.
-  Data Collection and Availability and Monitoring and Evaluation of Programs Implemented by sector partners. This has been one of the biggest challenges in trying to manage, collect available data on gender and human rights from programs implemented by sector partners. Recent development of the National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow up (NMRF) which soon to be launched is a mechanism that will help with data collection and sharing

²⁴ Government of Samoa Response to the Working Group on Discrimination against women in law and in practice Report at the Human Rights Council Meeting, June 2018.

between sectors and organisations on the implementation of human rights recommendations.

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 The governance structure of traditional villages in Samoa is comprehensive and allocates respective authority and roles of groups living within the village. Titled (Matai title holders) women and men hold supreme authority over village matters through the village council. The practice of banning women from holding Matai titles in some villages continues to be a challenge. Over the last five years there has been progress with some villages who have lifted this ban.

These challenges are addressed in our priorities for the next five years section and involve programmes that have already started.

Priorities for the next five years

While each of the areas outlined in the previous section will continue to be the focus, there are new key areas that address our challenges. Also included in this section is a brief outline of three major projects, which are vital in ensuring the incidence of intersecting discrimination for women living in remote areas, women living with disability, women living with HIV, younger women and older women, are included and not be left behind.

Which of the following does your country consider to be the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country for the coming five years through laws, policies and programmes?

- ★ Poverty eradication, agricultural productivity and food security: the body of work is spread across several sectors and most particularly the DDP programme and inclusive governance programmes
- ★ Eliminating violence against women and girls, and changing negative social norms and stereotypes. This includes all the work under the framework of the National Family & Safety Policy and Strategy,
- ★ Access to affordable quality health care, including sexual and reproductive health services and reproductive rights and includes the Demographic Health Survey being carried out this year (2019).
- ★ Political participation and representation. This priority will be carried out by the WILS project as outlined later in this document.
- ★ Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises. This includes work under the National Community Economic Development Policy and Strategy- "Tua i le Vao Ola Strategy" which focuses on assisting the most vulnerable families through the small business incubator and the *Supporting People Into Jobs* programme,
- ★ Strengthening women's participation in ensuring environmental sustainability. The National Environment Sector Plan (NESP) integrates gender and vulnerable

group's needs. In addition The "Gender in Disaster Risk Management Policy" focuses on gender equity ensuring that women are involved across all phases of DRM. The policy was developed to help and support the sectors in considering Gender-mainstreaming as one of the core agendas in their plans.

- ★ Gender-responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience building. The Samoa National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2017–2021 brings together all the work in relation to disaster risk management, preparedness, relief and response and recovery. The main aim is to empower communities to address their risks through the development of capacity and knowledge (traditional and scientific) and through the provision of support for local involvement in developing and implementing risk reduction and disaster risk strategies.
- ★ Gender Mainstreaming. To address the challenges noted previously, the development and launch of a National Gender Equality and Social Inclusion framework is planned this year. To assist with the capacity building for government agencies and sectors to better understand their role in Gender Mainstreaming.
- ★ Gender data collection and management linked to comprehensive impact monitoring and evaluation activities— this is to address the challenges noted. The Samoa Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development will continue their partnership to improve the management of gender related data and the link with National regional and global indicators.

In explaining the priorities for the next five years, we have included below brief outlines of the main projects that are supported by donor partners. The programmes outlined here provide the overarching framework with the implementation of activities being carried out across government, non-government and community led agencies, and cover the key priorities for the next five years.

Multi-Year Projects

Samoa Women Shaping Development (SWSD) Programme

The Government of Samoa with assistance from the Government of Australia developed a multiyear gender programme called Samoa Women Shaping Development (SWSD) in support of Samoa's gender goals starting in 2015. The objective is to improve gender equality in Samoa. There are seven (7) key areas²⁵:

1. Enhanced knowledge and evidence to inform policy and practice
2. Strengthened women's groups and coalitions
3. Positive changes in social norms, values, practices and attitudes towards gender equality and women's agency
4. Improved women's leadership and decision making opportunities

²⁵ Samoa Women Shaping Development Programme Document, 2015.

5. Increased economic opportunities for women
6. Reduced violence against women and expanded support services
7. Improved gender outcomes in education and health.

The programme coordination is led by the Community Development Sector Division:

Expected Outcomes

1. *Increased women's economic empowerment,*
2. *Increased participation of women in public life and decision making,*
3. *Reduced incidence of gender based violence,*

Enabling Outcomes

4. *Increased capacity and stronger institutional mechanisms across society for gender equality,*
5. *Increased capacity of the MWCSO and its' partners to effectively implement the Community Sector Plan and the SWSDP*

Samoa Disability Project (SDP)

The Government of Samoa ratified the CRPD on December 2016 and with assistance from the Government of Australia developed a multiyear project called Samoa Disability Project (SDP). The long-term development goal of the SDP is to: *"Contribute to a human-rights based, inclusive and barrier free society which advocates for and empowers people with disabilities"*. Specifically to support the Government of Samoa to achieve disability-inclusive policy and implementation across all agencies, disabled people and service provider organisations.

The focus is on introducing a range of Government wide policies, systems and processes; raising awareness of the needs and rights of people with disabilities at community and national level, and on strengthening inclusive and disability-specific services. The expected outcomes are:

1. Government of Samoa programmes and policies are increasingly compliant with the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD);
2. Deeper community awareness of, and support for, the rights of all people with disability and their increased social inclusion;
3. Increased accessibility to services for persons with disabilities, and
4. Increased participation by women and men with disability in livelihoods opportunities and employment.

In addition, SDP project staff are placed within the MWCSO Sector Division. The project also provides for the annual salaries of six full-time Nuanua O Le Alofa (NOLA) staff, the NGO that focuses on people living with disability.

One of the achievements was the CRPD Costed Implementation Plan and Legislative Compliance Review (LCR) which was endorsed by Cabinet on 24 November 2016.

The review of the National Disability Policy (2013-2015) was carried out in December 2014. This review recommended that greater attention be given to:

- i. Women with disabilities;
- ii. Creating economic opportunities for PWDs;
- iii. Improving access to services;
- iv. Strengthening policy coordination and partnership mechanisms, and
- v. Improving collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data as the basis of program design and evaluation²⁶.

In response to these findings, the SDP has a specific focus on increased participation and opportunities for PWDs in all programs across sectors. NOLA will have completed outstanding awareness programs on disability rights and increased social inclusion for PWDs and a number of policy coordination efforts are included in this Plan.

Youth Employment Project

The One-UN (Samoa) Youth Employment Programme (1UN-YEP) is a comprehensive response by the United Nations Country Team to the request from the Government of Samoa to provide assistance targeted at tackling youth unemployment. The specific objective of the YEP is to develop the knowledge and skills required for entry into the labour market, and to provide youth with additional support services needed to secure decent work opportunities in either the formal wage employment or in micro and small businesses, which are the backbone of the economy.

The implementation modalities of the YEP combine the different strengths and technical capacities of the UN agencies in Samoa to deliver as 'One-UN', thereby maximising the positive impact for the youth. UN agencies in this partnership include UNDP, ILO, FAO, UNESCO and UNV. The YEP activities are implemented with the close collaboration of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development. The programme has the support of a number of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and private sector organisations

Outcome 1 – Enhanced Employability of Youth

Outcome 2 – Enhanced job creation through entrepreneurship promotion

Some projects already having an impact include: the Savaii Koko (Cocoa) project, call centres, small business development, internship programme, scholarships for TVET, ILO award for the young weavers of fine mat programme, and labour mobility schemes.

²⁶ Mid Term Review of National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2011-2016, 2014, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, Government of Samoa.

Section B Progress across the 6 Areas

This section brings together the 12 Critical Areas of Beijing PfA and the Sustainable Development Goals into six (6) Areas:

1. Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work
2. Poverty eradication, social protection and social services
3. Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes
4. Participation, accountability and gender responsive institutions
5. Peaceful and inclusive societies
6. Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

Under each theme we will outline work carried out in the levels of legislation, policy, action plans, implementation and evaluation across all Sectors and Government Ministries and Agencies.

Area 1 Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

1.1 Inclusive Development

The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, in June 2017, launched District Development Plans (DDP). The DDP programme is a tool to drive gender equality and social inclusion change at the village level and to ensure a better chance of improving women's empowerment in the areas of economic, governance and leadership, protection from all forms of violence, better health and educational opportunities²⁷. The electoral districts are used for the programme thereby giving the district a mechanism for them to be directly involved with their Member of Parliament.

Critical areas of concern

- A. Women and poverty
- F. Women and the economy
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

As part of the implementation of the DDP programme each district establishes a District Committee consisting of both men and women to develop and manage their community priorities based on their development needs through a district plan. What makes this tool different to previous programmes is that the planning and decision making process is driven by the village representatives inclusive of village council (men and women who hold chief titles), church leaders, women (who are untitled), persons with disabilities, young men and women and children²⁸.

This is the first time there is a clear focus of efforts towards inclusion of women and persons with disabilities, youth and children as equal partners in the development dialogue. At the time of writing this report, thirty six (36) out of forty-nine (49) district planning processes have been completed, with strong female representation in all district committees. Four committees are chaired by women, some with women in key positions (secretary and treasurer) such as in the Vaa o Fonoti district.

This district structure will be the mechanism whereby all community development initiatives are delivered to the villages, ensuring an inclusive and fair pathway for access to all areas such as health, environment management, disaster risk reduction, education, security, safety and economic development, law and justice.

²⁷ Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development Annual Report 201.

²⁸ Samoa's Reply to the List of Issues for CEDAW, August 2018. Government of Samoa. Apia.

1.2 Paid work and employment

The Government of Samoa through its agencies has established its own laws and regulations as well as policies that fully prohibit discrimination in the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in the public and private sectors. The Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour (MCIL) has reviewed its Labour, Employment Regulation Act and they completed phase two²⁹. The reviews' aim was to address issues raised by the Government of Samoa (GoS), employers and workers concerning the application of the Act and a lack of clarity about its interpretation and hoping to be able to address the concerns, misinterpretation and gaps identified from the act. Phase 1 and 2 of the LERA review has already been completed, and amendment on the LERA Bill draft is now with the office of the Attorney General awaiting certification in order to be table to parliament. The 2013 Labour Employment Regulation Act fully highlights some of the issues regarding employees in public and private sector.

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?

The Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour (MCIL) delivers several programmes that advance the unemployed into employment: the Apprenticeship Training Scheme, and the Jobs Seekers Programme.

The Apprenticeship Training scheme³⁰ combines work and part time study which includes practical skills and understanding theory of trades and this to complete within three years. The end product of the training is awarding of certificates to those who have completed their training and competence in their chosen vocation/trade. This training offered subjects like motor mechanics, electrical, fitting and machining, plumbing, carpentry and joinery, welding and fabrication, refrigeration and air conditioning. For the FY 2016-17 the apprenticeship scheme had 106 registrations for training with 48 being new registrations, and 28 successfully completed their training and gained certificates³¹.

The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development have developed the National Community Economic Development Policy and Strategy- "Ia tua i le Vao Ola Strategy" which focuses on assisting the most vulnerable families through the small business incubator and the Supporting People Into Jobs programme. The Division for Economic Development takes the lead on this strategy and is supported by three (3) donor funded projects— Samoa Women Shaping Development (SWSD) and Samoa Disability Project (SDP), (Australia Government) and Youth Employment Project (YEP) (a One UN project).

²⁹ Samoa Reply to the LOI CEDAW, 2018. Government of Samoa

³⁰ This scheme is mandated under the Apprenticeship Act 2014 and the Apprenticeship Regulations 2015.

³¹ MCIL Annual Report 2016-2017

The small business incubator focus on increasing capacity and knowledge where training is provided by SBEC for those who are selected for each project to make sure that they have the ability to run their own businesses. In collaboration with its partners, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, co-ordinated and conducted trainings for different soft skills to be provided for the youth of the community and 73% of people trained are now employed. The different training conducted include the 12 participants trained by the Samoa Culinary Association and 11 of the participants are now employed, 4 participated pursued a Certificate in Business Operations, 60 youth participated in Computer Literacy training and 44 graduated from PSET Support trainings with 23 participants now employed³².

The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development developed a vulnerability assessment tool which assesses families identified as vulnerable within communities; this tool was used to select more than 200 families for basic business trainings from Upolu and Savaii. In collaboration and partnership with SBEC and DBS, 306³³ families were trained from Upolu and Savaii with Basic Business Training selected from the 262 families initially verified with the assessment tool³⁴. Additionally, 469 families were trained by the Development Bank of Samoa through the Micro Credit Scheme in which 406 families received loans to start small businesses. The SBEC Women Entrepreneurs Training and support Initiative also trained 126 females³⁵. Business management support was also provided to 56 grant recipients to sustain their micro businesses. Procurement of resources was implemented for 549 families who participated in business trainings to start businesses of their own³⁶.

The Supporting People into Jobs programme, is noteworthy as it provides training, internships and a centralised system of information on existing employment for the community³⁷. The Internship Programme and the Centralised Database for Employment are great achievements for MWCSO as it assisted youth and vulnerable families get the work experience needed to get jobs and provide employment opportunities for these participants. In the 2017-2018 financial year, 139 participants were part of the Internship Programme and the database is updated daily with vacancies from PSC Circular, newspapers and social media³⁸. The Job seekers programme, based at MCIL, involves job seekers registering their personal details, qualifications and experience in the labour market information system, so the employers can search for suitable job seekers to fill any position they have. The MCIL team works in partnership with the Samoa National Youth Council (SNYC) with an

³² Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development Annual Report FY 2017-2018. MWCSO. Apia.

³³ Including those trained through the YEP and SWSD as well the last 100 trained of the pilot DDP districts (2018)

³⁴ Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development Annual Report FY 2017-2018. MWCSO. Apia.

³⁵ *ibid*

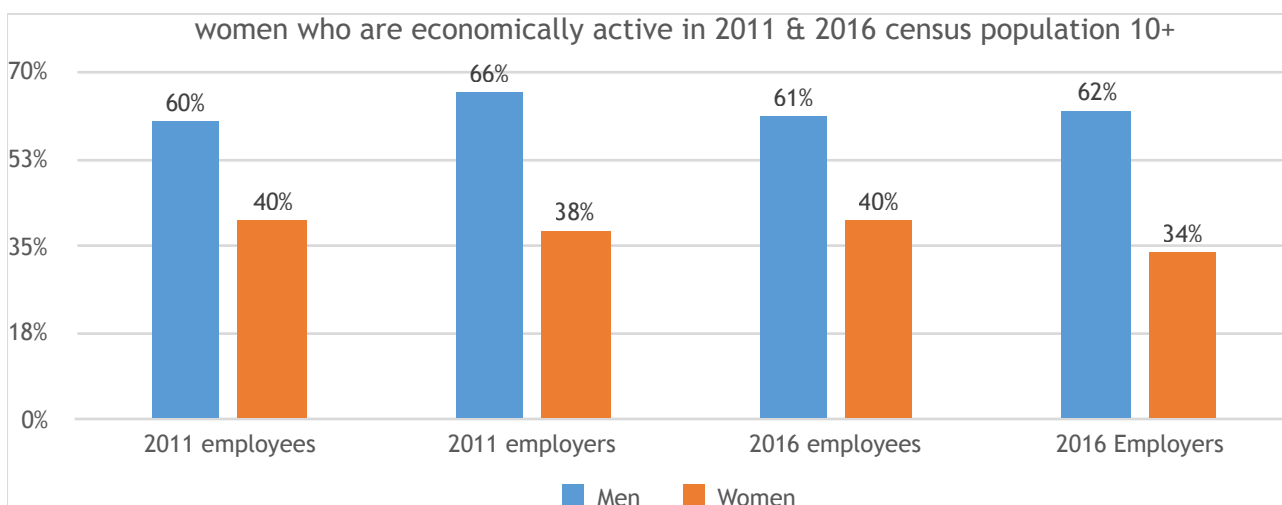
³⁶ *ibid*

³⁷ National Community Economic Development Policy and Strategy- “Tua i le Vao Ola Strategy”, 2018 (working draft)

³⁸ Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development Annual Report 2017-2018, Government of Samoa

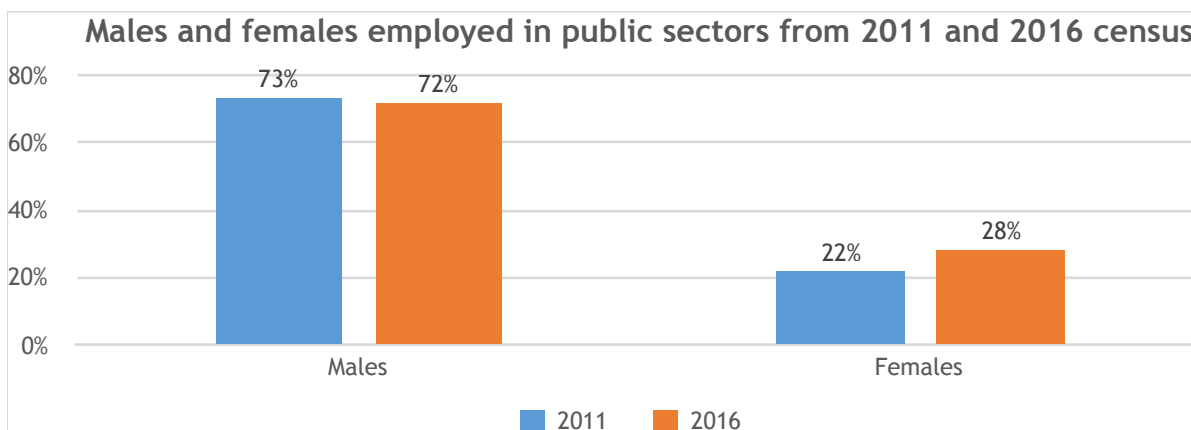
effort to increase the level of youth employment. Similar services are provided by the MWCSO division for youth.

In addition to women in paid work and employment, the Census 2016 and 2011 shows a clear indication of how economic development for women as employees and employers. The graph shows that in 2016 census for employees there is a big difference in the number of males and females as employees. In 2011 census the number of female employees is 40% which is still the same in 2016 census which is 40%. The number of males who become employees in 2011 is 61% but was decrease in 2016 by 1% which is 60%. It shows that males are still dominants as employees in Samoa.



GRAPH 1 WOMEN AND MEN WHO ARE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE

For employers in 2011 the percentage of females is 34% but increased in 2016 by 38% however males are still dominant from the 2011 census by 66% and in 2016 was 62%. This shows that females still have low participation in economic development and in paid work and employment as seen in these figures given from the census 2011 and 2016. The graph two (2) shows the number of males and females employed in the public sectors which is also indicated in the census also shows that males is also dominant. In 2011 females it was 22% and increased in 2016 by 28% and for Males it was 72% but increased by 1% in 2016 to 73%. (too many but in this sentence....)



GRAPH 2 WOMEN AND MEN EMPLOYED IN PUBLIC SECTOR

Rural based businesses have been supported in 2018, by the launch of a new platform called *Maua* by a local business Skyeeye in partnership with one of Samoa's telecommunication companies Digicel. The Maua Application will be used to enable rural businesses and communities to participate in a national marketplace³⁹.

1.3 Unpaid care and domestic work

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

While the Government of Samoa increased its emphasis on training and increasing skills for women to improve their economic empowerment, the unpaid care and domestic work carried out by women continues to be high compared with men. The 2016 Census actually showed an increase of women in domestic duties from 2011 Census. This is a reflection of the distribution of work according to light work to women which are performed close to or within the home. The Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG) launched their *Nofotane* program which aims to improve economic empowerment of women married into the community and encourage their participation in domestic and community matters in order to raise their standing and acknowledge their contribution to the village community. The programme has reportedly trained 5000 women through 237 villages, resulting in 500 new small businesses being established⁴⁰.

1.4 Public expenditure

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

Samoa has undergone fiscal consolidation measures in the last ten years in order to prioritise public expenditure particularly after natural disaster events - when reconstruction and rehabilitation required urgent attention. The post disaster events usually results in employment creation with the restoration of services and utilities. The closure of the biggest manufacturing plant in 2017 impacted on employment particularly on the predominantly female work force. Since then, most of the 1000 workforce have found employment in three new companies who started operating in Samoa.

The Ministry of Finance placed focus on each sector to track their own gender spending, and through the Public Investment Strategy ensures that overseas assistance covers the areas of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI). The Public Investment Strategy includes the planning tools for the key investment programmes of the Government of Samoa to ensure local and overseas funds are utilised

³⁹ Samoa observer, 13 December 2018

⁴⁰ <https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/362277/programme-that-helped-thousands-of-samoan-nofotane-winds-up>

effectively and are harmonised across the sectors⁴¹. The Public Investment Strategy states seven key features of a project, one of which is related to GESI: “*that the project accounts for gender equality issues when implemented if applicable*”.

Area 2 Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

2.1 Poverty

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

In order to measure the relative hardship being experienced by those in low income families, the MDG and SDG Goals have therefore been “localised” by the development of our own national basic-needs poverty or hardship indicators. These indicators have been derived from an analysis of the household survey data⁴². For instance, the estimated average weekly costs for each person and for average size families in the poorest thirty percent of the population. The HIES 2013/14 states that the cost per person per week to meet a minimum living standard in Apia Urban Area is SAT69.27 and SAT56.13 per person per week for a minimum living standard in Savai’i. For the average size of household in the poorest thirty percent of households in Apia Urban Area, this means it cost SAT649.07 per week to purchase all the necessary food and non-food items required for a basic standard of living for the whole household. In Savai’i the cost would be SAT470.80 per household per week. Other indicators also show that economic growth has been shared more equally and the level of inequality has been falling.

Samoa acknowledges that the government has implemented several initiatives in the past few years to help reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labour market programs, strengthening social support/protection, diminishing people’s exposure to risks and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against hazards and interruption or loss of income. Public works and public employment programmes has proved to be very effective safety nets in response to shocks and contributed to poverty reduction⁴³. For instance, the Labour and Employment Regulations 2016⁴⁴ covers employment for women and children, and specifies prohibition of discrimination against women and children in the workplace, as well as provisions for improvements to hire or that they become employable in the workplace⁴⁵. Awareness programs have been carried out through mass media to increase the public’s awareness, particularly

Critical areas of concern

- A. Women and poverty
- B. Education and training of women
- C. Women and health
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

⁴¹ Public Sector Investment Programme 2015/ 16-17/ 18 , Ministry of Finance, Government of Samoa.

⁴² *ibid*

⁴³ *ibid*

⁴⁴ Labour and Employment Regulation 2016, MCIL.

⁴⁵ Samoa Replies to CEDAW 2018.

those in the informal sector, that even if they work as babysitters, grounds men, housekeepers, their employers should pay their SNPF and ACC contribution.

MCIL has launched two of their initiatives, Samoa National Employment Policy (SNEP) and Labour Market Information System (LMIS) in 2016⁴⁶, with the purpose to increase employment opportunities for all Samoans. The S.N.E.P. is a comprehensive document that provides a framework to improve the quality of life through productive employment. The L.M.I.S. is an electronic jobseekers service, collecting, evaluating and providing market information to respond to the labour market demand and supply. The system allows jobseekers to register their details, experiences and qualifications such as personal information, CV and references and employers can then seek for employees to fill positions. Furthermore, the e-hub platform with the Samoa National Youth Council will provide the link with the LMIS to ensure the transparency on the supply and demand market and fast access to job offers. If people have access to the right information about available jobs, they are more likely to gain employment. If more people find jobs, the income increases, the standard of living increases and therefore the well-being of society improve. With the Samoa National Employment Policy we have a roadmap to deal with employment issues and with Labour Market Information System we have a tool that provides us relevant and specific information.

The MWCSO secured funding support through the SWSD, SDP and YEP to promote entrepreneurship and job creation opportunities for women, young people and people with disability. Some of the key achievements of the SWSD program since 2017, was an increase in the number of vulnerable women (dropped out of school at very early age, unemployed or experienced domestic violence) that have acquired basic financial literacy skills and knowledge and have accessed start up finances to establish their micro-businesses. A high number of new individuals trained are women, and there has been an increase in the number of women trained on entrepreneurship and business management. 138 micro-businesses were established of which most of them are managed and owned by women. The combination of skills, knowledge acquired and access to finances enabled the vulnerable individuals supported; to improve their social wellbeing and have changed their perspective about life.

Similarly, since 2016, 50% of the participants who attended training funded by YEP are young women aged 18-35 years⁴⁷. To address youth unemployment, a directory of employment was established and 50% of young people registered are females. A total of 12 trainees (58% of whom are females) have secured employment at the Samoa Culinary Association Training. An E-Platform is also in the pipeline for market training to provide relevant skills and experience leading to employment for young job seekers. The Chamber of Commerce facilitates access to career development services through an internship program, where 65% of participants are female compared to 35% of males.

⁴⁶ MCIL AR 2016/17

⁴⁷ Samoa CEDAW Report 2016

The implementation of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2020 headed by CBS, involves the establishment of the Inclusive Development Credit Facility, a facility bundled with an insurance component, specifically focused on women and youth within the Development Bank of Samoa. To date, 778 clients are beneficiaries (558 female, 220 male). In addition, SPBD provides micro-finance services to support their client's entrepreneurship and business development activities, the majority of whom are women.

More importantly, with only 39% of the population having any form of access to financial services, the recently launched EziBank product could be key to reducing Samoa's unbanked population. EziBank combines NBS basic banking services with other payment services available through Digicel Mobile Money. Funded through a grant from the UN PFIP, the product allows customers to check their bank account balance, receive remittances straight into their bank account, and make deposits and withdrawals between their Digicel and NBS accounts⁴⁸. In addition, the Supply-Side Survey by CBS, states that Samoa has a relatively higher number of bank branches per capita compared to other PICs, but when geographical disbursement is considered it can be seen that Samoa has a more centralised sector. Further, a demand-side survey in Samoa has shown that 39% of Samoan adults have bank accounts, and another 12% use other formal financial services such as credit unions, micro-finance institutions and the Samoa National Provident Fund, or hold investments (such as stocks, bonds, unit trusts) or have insurance⁴⁹. Never before has there been a rise in the use of technological advancements to enhance access to services and markets.

The existing legal aid scheme under Ministry of Justice, Courts and Administration (MJCA) is available for both females and males and is either in the form of legal representation or advice in relation to criminal matters. The types of cases in which women seek assistance in maintenance and custody issues which are mostly family issue cases. More women who experience gender based violence, are becoming more aware of legal protection services such as a protection order (restraining order) and the courts are mandated to immediately execute the order within 24 hours of filing. To assist women and encourage accessibility, the orders can be applied through the Ministry of Police or NGOs such as Samoa Victim Support Group⁵⁰.

2.2 Access to social protection

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

Social protection for Samoa is in the form of age old pensions, social assistance, labour market policies, health insurance and compensation for injuries at work. The government has a monthly pension payment for all citizens 65 and older. The SCBF

⁴⁸ GSMA Intelligence: The Mobile Economy Pacific Islands 2019.

⁴⁹ Financial Services Demand-side survey by PIFP for Samoa 2015, CBS.

⁵⁰ Samoa Replies to CEDAW 2018

was established in 1990 pursuant to section 71 of the SNPF Amendment Act 1990⁵¹. This scheme is fully funded by the government and is administered by SNPF. In 2016, about 12, 000 pensioners were in the scheme⁵². It is important to note that as part of this scheme, the pensioners also receive free travel on government inter-island ferries, free medical treatment and medication at government hospitals. This free treatment would also apply in 6 district hospitals and 5 health centres in both Upolu and Savaii.

The government recognises the need to improve its social protection systems to better target disadvantaged and marginalised groups including women and girls. The most disadvantaged households are those with least access to cash incomes from paid work, remittances, or farm production⁵³.

Samoa acknowledged the important link between social protection and education when the government introduced the School Fee Grant Scheme in 2010, making it free for primary school children to go to school, including children who could not previously attend because their families could not afford it. This has now rolled out to Secondary schools. The School Fee Grant Scheme addressed a key obstacle preventing disadvantaged Samoan children from continuing their schooling. Without the loss of family income, those otherwise unable to afford school, could now attend. The scheme is now a Government priority helping Samoans access free education in both primary and secondary levels.

In addition, Samoa also recognised the important link between social protection and health when the government introduced the Medical Treatment Scheme, supporting the costs of treatments in NZ and Indian hospitals for Samoa-based patients with life-threatening medical conditions but with a good prognosis for recovery. This scheme is fully funded by the government which also includes travel and hospital visits overseas⁵⁴. For instance, the government committed SAT\$6million to fund the overseas medical treatment scheme for this financial year (2018/19)⁵⁵.

Samoa instituted a compulsory social insurance scheme for all employed persons. The SNPF provides for retirement in a system where employers and employees pay an equal contribution as part of their contributory schemes. When they reach age 55 years, or decide to move overseas they are entitled to their payouts. The SNPF also provides support for members' dependents in the event of early death or incapacity. The assistance provided by the SNPF is commendable, and the fact that there has

⁵¹ Walter. Sasa'e Fualautoalasi. *A Review of the Social Protection Programmes in Samoa since 2009*: The Journal of Samoan Studies, Volume 6. National University of Samoa 2016.

⁵² Cash Transfer Programming in the Pacific, *A feasibility scoping study*, CaLP and DFAT 2016.

⁵³ Samoa Hardship and Poverty Report, Analysis of the 2013/14 Household Income and Expenditure Survey. UNDP-SBS 2016.

⁵⁴ Walter. Sasa'e Fualautoalasi. *A Review of the Social Protection Programmes in Samoa since 2009*: The Journal of Samoan Studies, Volume 6. National University of Samoa 2016.

⁵⁵ Approved Estimates of Receipts and Payments of the Government of Samoa for the Financial Year Ending 30th June 2019: Parliamentary Paper 2018/2019 No. 2. Legislative Assembly of Samoa.

always been an increase in SNPF contribution from both employer and employee every year shows government commitment to better its service in this area. For instance, this increase from 6% to 7% was effective in July 2017 and is expected to increase again to 8% in July 2019. In the financial year 2016/17, the SNPF had 32, 548 active members, equivalent to 16.7% of the total population⁵⁶.

Another example of social protection is the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) which was established in the late 1980s. The ACC provides compensation for members who sustained injuries at the workplace, in sports or in road accidents. The ACC coverage not only provides payment for the compensation cost itself, but also others in the form of allowances to cover other damages which may result in death⁵⁷. The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour provides general supervision of this scheme and is administered by ACC.

In addition, recent developments are noted for benefits in the form of paid leave for employees in both public and private sectors such as sick, maternity, paternity, and bereavement. Conditions apply where full time employees must have been continuously employed with the same employer for at least 12 months to qualify for such leave. A medical certificate is required for an illness that lasts for at least 3 days, the employee must notify the employer in a leave form of the expected dates of departure and return from maternity leave, as well as paternity and bereavement leave. This program is administered by the PSC for the public sector and MCIL for the private sector.

2.3 Health outcomes

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

The Government of Samoa has adopted and is committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in order to improve human development for now and into the future. Several of these goals have particular relevance to sexual and reproductive health but specifically SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being. There is also commitment to the S.A.M.O.A Pathway: Section 75 Health and Non-communicable diseases (a) (b) (f) (g); Section 76 Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (g) and, the Apia Outcome.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is committed to ensuring the health of all people regardless of ethnicity, status, disability or gender, and in keeping with its vision of a “Healthy Samoa” formulated national policies, strategies and programmes for Sexual Reproductive Health. Policies include: National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy 2011-2016; National HIV and AIDS Policy 2011-2016; National Health Prevention Policy 2013-2018; National Infection Control Policy 2011-2016; Health Promotion Policy 2010- 2015; Child and Adolescent Policy 2013-2018; National Non-

⁵⁶ SNPF Annual Report 2016/17

⁵⁷ Samoa Report to CEDAW 2016.

communicable Disease Policy 2010-2015; Samoa's Climate adaptation Strategy for Health (CASH), and the National Food and Nutrition Policy 2013-2018⁵⁸.

Women's access to basic health services is mainly provided through private health care, primary health care and secondary health care institutions — namely private practitioners, public health facilities including national and district health hospitals, local community health centres and mobile clinics provided by Community Nurses and NGO's, such as the Samoa Family Health Association (SFHA). Obstetrics and gynaecology care is provided through specialised clinics at the national and district hospitals, private practitioners, community health outreach centres as well as through mobile clinics coordinated by Community Nurses and SFHA.⁵⁹

Sexual reproductive health services are provided by the National Health Service at the hospital, district hospitals and community outreach centres. Family planning services has been mainly outsourced to private clinics and NGOs while the Ministry of Health concentrates on monitoring and evaluation of the services. Private clinics and NGOs have fully taken on the responsibilities of family planning services in close collaboration with National Health Service. SFHA is the sole NGO health care provider of SRH services offering a range of services including family planning, ante natal care, sexually transmitted infections, counseling, referral and general health through their main clinics as well as through mobile clinics to rural areas and the prisons. Updated data from SFHA indicates that from April 2017–December 2017 the number of women that attended their mobile health clinics was 2050, and a total of 483 youth utilised their Youth Friendly drop in service⁶⁰. There is a Mental Health Unit located at the national hospital. Referrals are mainly through self-referral or by other professionals. Goshen Trust Services is a private Mental Health rehabilitation facility that takes clients who are referred from the Mental Health Unit at the national hospital, but also house some clients who are self-referred.

A community led primary health screening outreach program for reducing Non Communicable Diseases is being strengthened through the PEN Faasamoa. This community program involves the training of selected village primary screening teams to do basic screening using simple advisory/screening tools adapted for village based non clinicians, and referrals of at-risk people to hospitals for treatment and follow up⁶¹.

The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development has incorporated family planning, safe sex practices, SRH issues into village awareness programs/educational support programs for targeted groups identified activities including church youth groups. For example as part of National Youth Week celebrated in August 2018, a sexual reproductive health (SRH) and elimination of gender based violence awareness outreach was conducted. The program targeted young people in the vicinity of Apia

⁵⁸ National UPR Report Samoa, 2016

⁵⁹ Samoa Replies to CEDAW 2018

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development Annual Report FY 2017-2018. MWCSO. Apia.

Capital for that week. This was a collaborative effort by the MWCSO, Peer Educators from SFHA, Samoa Red Cross and villages. The program reached out to 300 young men and women in the town areas. Advocacy on safe sex practices and safe/healthy relationships from violence were also part of the messages disseminated by the peer educators. This program is supported under the partnership between Government of Samoa and UNFPA⁶².

The National Health Service (NHS) implements testing and counselling for HIV/AIDS for everyone however there is no target testing for female 'sex workers'. The Samoa Family Health Association is the leading NGO health care provider for sexual reproductive health services.⁶³ Improvements are noted with the availability of Information Packages to all pregnant mothers during their first antenatal clinic visits. These include counselling on STI symptoms, information on contraceptives for family planning, sexual relationships with partners, and protective contraceptives for unborn babies and mothers. HIV and AIDS screening is free of charge at the National Health Services.⁶⁴ The placement of diagnostic technologies in MT2 Hospital in Savaii during 2017 and additional equipment for TTM Hospital Apia increased the access of testing services. Additionally in 2016-2017, the HIV, STI and TB programmes up-scaled public awareness efforts via the T3 campaign in order to increase voluntary testing, promote dialogue on sexual health to reduce stigma, and encourage people to access treatment services.⁶⁵

The introduction of comprehensive sex education into schools is a very sensitive issue considerably in relation to young students and is being explored on how best teachers can deliver a curriculum in school settings. Furthermore, the Ministry of Health, Samoa Family Health Association, Samoa Red Cross, Ministry of Women in collaboration with UNFPA and some of its key partners/stakeholders have implemented Community outreach programs that relate to issues of sexual reproductive health in order to promote awareness and education on the services available, to meet needs as well as providing a safe space platform for parents and young girls to talk about sensitive issues that affect them and their families.

An initiative led by one of our most active NGO- Samoa Cancer Society called Pinktober was one of the most highlighted national events last year due to the spirited heart of a young women breast cancer survivor who championed the campaign. Raising public awareness and promotion on the need for early detection; resource capacity-availability, affordability of treatment services in country, addressing risk factors and coping strategies. About 99 new cases came through in 2017 of people who are suffering from cancer with 60% of them being women with breast symptoms. The campaign has resulted in free mammogram screenings for women and an expansion of the roll out of mobile clinics for promotion of breast cancer self

⁶² *ibid*

⁶³ Sixth Periodic Report of Samoa to CEDAW 2016

⁶⁴ Samoa UPR Report 2016

⁶⁵ HIV, STI and TB Bulletin 2018

examinations for women in the rural areas. While great advocacy work has resulted in some positive progress, there is still a long way to go to ensure Samoa's health care infrastructure caters for women's needs and having the adequate health care resources to prolong the lives of breast cancer sufferers.

2.4 Education outcomes

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

The Government of Samoa remains committed to ensuring education is accessible to all. Such is institutionally facilitated through amendments made to existing legislative and policy frameworks, to support Government's holistic approach to implementing activities (this sentence makes no sense..). Any student can legally access all levels of education without systematic bias or constraint, as specified in the Education Act 2009. The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC), continues to lead an array of initiatives as speculated under the Education Act 2009⁶⁶. Free education from year 1-11 is available in all but private schools. In addition Early Childhood Education (ECE) has been enforced⁶⁷.

Compulsory education has been a requirement of law since 2009; requiring children aged 5 to 14 years to attend school. Currently, considerations are made for legislative amendments to require that children aged 3 to 5 years, attend pre-schools or early childhood education. Further to this, the MESC has developed a National Safe School's Policy which aims to provide a positive learning environment for all children and students.

The National Safe Schools Policy has national guidelines which apply to all students, teachers, and staff members in all school settings. The National Safe Schools Policy extends to include a prohibition of violence which may involve students with regards to; bullying and more specifically cyber bullying, instances of sexual harassment or abuse, as well as removing stigmatisation of pregnancy amongst young women.

The protection of students who are expelled from being pregnant is a new addition to the policy and includes the school giving full support to the student during pregnancy as well as securing the return of the students to school after child birth⁶⁸. This policy direction follows advice from MWCSO in 2015, in its role to protect the interests of children and rights of women and girls.

School Inspectors and School Principals are given the responsibility to monitor the local implementation of this policy and report to the School Operations Division of the MESC. Schools are further encouraged to have a disciplinary policy in place to further guide teachers and strengthen the expressed prohibition of corporal punishment at school or during any activity organised by a school.

⁶⁶ Sixth Periodic Report of Samoa to CEDAW 2016

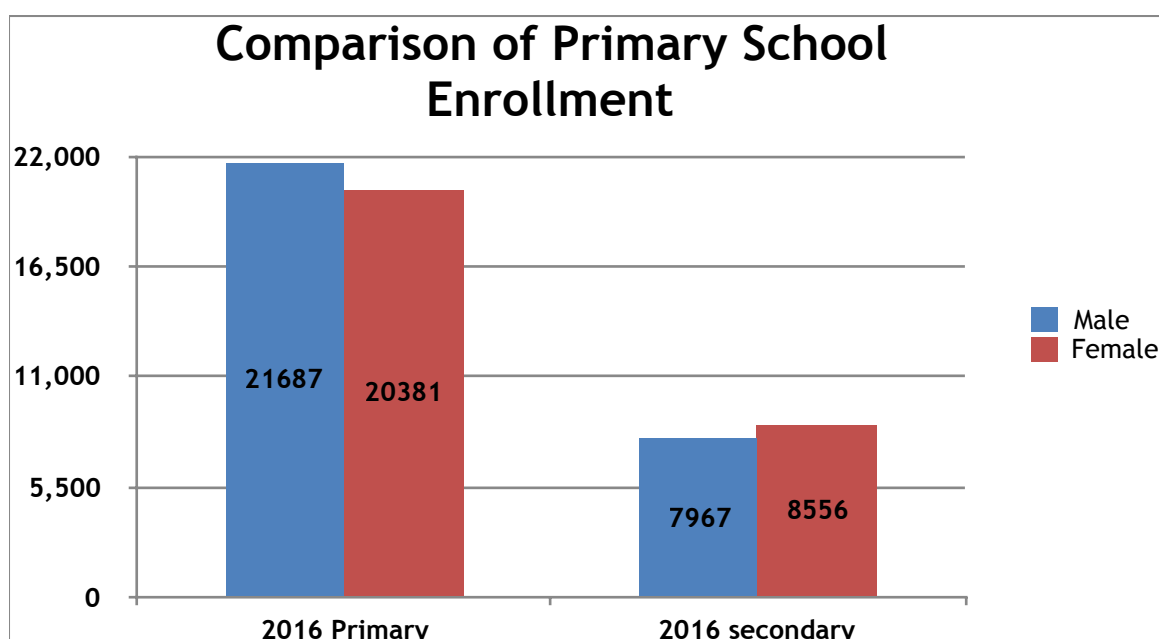
⁶⁷ ref pls

⁶⁸ Samoa Replies to CEDAW 2018

In addition the anticipated Child Care and Protection Bill (still in draft form) extends to also cover anti-violence initiatives with particular regards for protecting young girls and boys from sexual violence and abuse either within the confines of the schools or home with marked implications on an attending student on rural and urban villages across Samoa. Some sports organisations have developed child protection policies within sports environment.

Addressing social/cultural stigma about young pregnancies is a continuous undertaking that is approached through the conduct of community-based outreach programs and forums for parents and young girls which serve as platforms for discussing such issues but also as fitting avenues to create awareness for available and/or appropriate assistance with information and services as needed. Workshops and trainings on CEDAW and CRC are also conducted for awareness creation particularly with focus on health, education, economic empowerment, leadership and decision making, prevention of gender based violence and general well-being for the affected young girls and families. About 2,988 programs were conducted in the 2015/2016 Financial Year where women and girls participated⁶⁹.

The establishment of the Teachers Council in 2019 is another milestone of the MESC since the Teachers Act 2016. The Council has 13 official members who are long serving and high profiled educators of Samoa, where two-third of members are female teachers. This Council plays an important role in carrying out its functions and responsibilities laid out in the Teachers Act 2016. Pivotal to these responsibilities is regulating the registration of teachers and maintaining professional standards. This is an important initiative for the education sector's continuing pursuit for improved teacher quality and student performance⁷⁰.



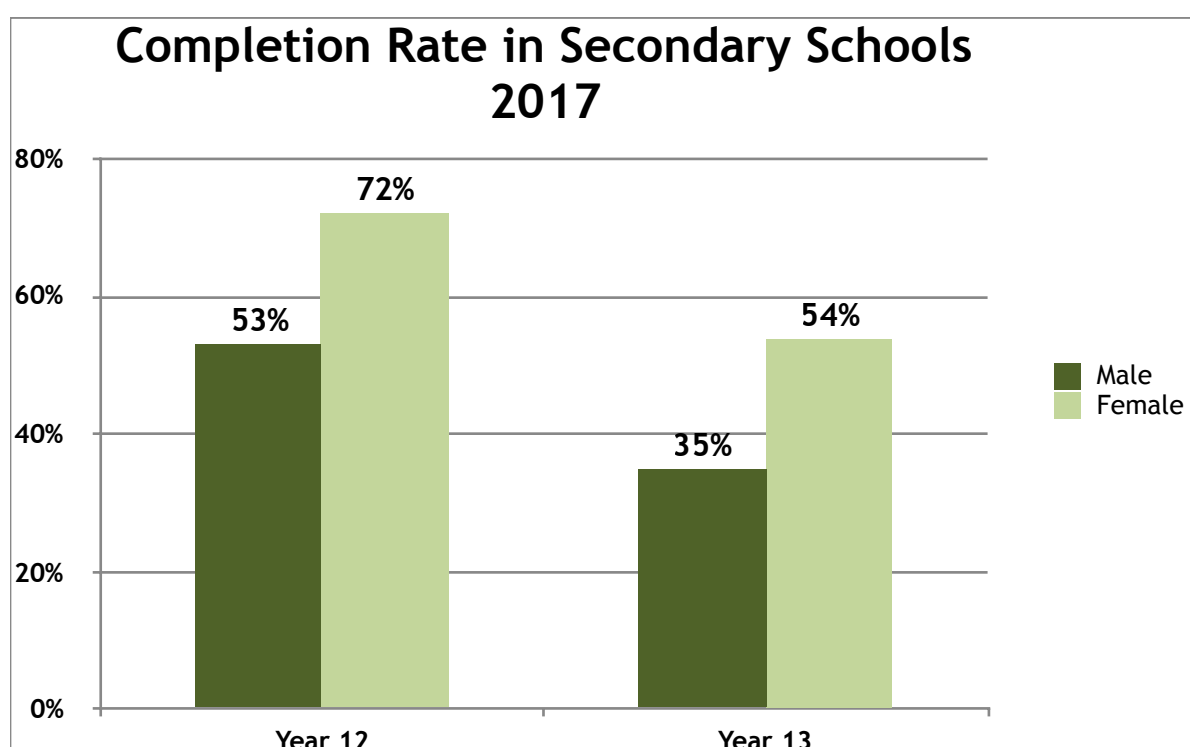
GRAPH 3 COMPARISON OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT

⁶⁹ Sixth Periodic Report of Samoa to CEDAW 2016

⁷⁰ MESC Press Release, Samoa Observer 15 April 2019

School enrolments for primary and secondary levels, are dominated at primary level by males but are dominated by females for secondary education⁷¹. Data shows that there is an increase in the number of students attending primary level education in 2017 compared to 2016⁷².

Graph 4 shows that females have the highest completion rate in secondary education compared to males, where 72.2% of females are able to complete Year 12 compared to 53.1% of males. About 37.6% did not complete Year 12 and while there is no information available, this data suggests that some of these students leave secondary education to either enrol in TVET courses and with PSET providers or stay home altogether⁷³.



GRAPH 4 COMPLETION RATE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL 2017 ⁷⁴

A concrete example of an initiative to improve learning outcomes of students is the Primary Maths and Science Project (PMSP) which was initially funded by Japan and rolled out in 2014. This project has now been successfully handed over to the MESC for continued implementation. The project aims to improve skills of primary school teachers and students in Years 4, 5 and 6 particularly in Maths and Science⁷⁵. To date, this project has progressed well, where the teachers, most of who are female, have created their own teaching plans and conducted demonstration classes including

⁷¹ Educational Statistical Digest 2017

⁷² MESC Annual Report 2016-2017

⁷³ Educational Statistical Digest 2017

⁷⁴ *ibid*

⁷⁵ MESC Press Release, Samoa Observer 18 Feb 2017

review sessions. Furthermore, teachers have been trained and received professional developments in various areas such as leadership and management, science and mathematics, as well as being enrolled in tertiary institutions to upgrade teaching qualification⁷⁶.

During the financial year 2016-17 school principals (from both secondary and primary government schools) attended a leadership training in 2017, primary teachers and secondary teachers trained in science and mathematics, and about teachers enrolled in the Savaii Upgrade DFL (Distance & Flexible Learning), NUS face to face and USP STAP 2 (Science Teachers Accelerated Programme phase 2). In April 2017 at NUS graduation, a total of 191 government teachers graduated with a BEd, BSci, Graduate Diploma in Education or Post Graduate in Education⁷⁷.

As part of the State of Human Rights Report 2015, consultations were carried out with schools, University and the National Youth Council Members which helped to identify human rights issues - not only for the purpose of the report - but it assisted in the planning process of human rights education and training in schools for Samoa⁷⁸. These consultations explored the views, knowledge and understanding of children and young people of Samoa of human rights. It clearly confirmed the need for human rights education and training to help address the misconceptions of human rights amongst children and young people.

In 2016, the NHRI started the "My Rights Friendly School Program" for Samoa as part of the human rights activities work plan. The Program consists of human rights education activities targeting students of three schools covered in the previous consultations. The program aims to eventually cover all schools that were involved in the report consultations and extend to cover all schools in Samoa pending available resources and office capacity. The aim of this program is not only tackling human rights education for students but also to extend human rights education for teachers, parents and school committees to enhance the effectiveness of the program and promote better understanding to school communities of the value of understanding and application of human rights in school environment.

The "My Rights Friendly School Program" program will further include various activities which include the Schools MOCK UPR (Universal Periodic Review) competition which will be carried out in cooperation with OHCHR to raise students' understanding of UPR and what it entails. The aim is that the activities for the My Rights Friendly School Program will be carried out in cooperation with different organisations both international and local to encourage sharing a variety of knowledge and resources⁷⁹.

The NHRI also initiated the Basic Human Rights Education for police recruits, in cooperation with UNWOMEN during 2015. The aim was to provide police recruits with

⁷⁶ MESC Annual Report 2016-2017

⁷⁷ MESC Annual Report 2016-2017

⁷⁸ State Human Rights Report 2015, National Human Rights Institute Samoa.

⁷⁹ *ibid*

a better understanding of human rights and translating that knowledge into their behaviour while carrying out their job— to protect and uphold the rights of the public. Human rights education training will be continued alongside the promotion of the role of the office in public sector.

Area 3 Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

3.1 Violence against women

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

Critical areas of concern	
A	Violence against women
I	Human rights of women
J	Women and the media
L	The girl child

In the last five (5) years, Government's efforts to prevent the recurrence of Gender Based Violence (GBV) within Samoan homes have taken significant strides. Since the development and enforcement of the Family Safety Act (2013), a steady increase of reported cases of GBV are noted by the Ministry of Police and likewise increased the number of cases referred to the relevant Courts under the Ministry of Justice, Courts & Administration. The constant challenge however, has been the absence or lack of data available to the public or user-friendly data and information which can be used to advise on appropriate interventions and programs from various service providers, private sector entities, civil society groups or Government Ministries and donor partners.

As the lead government ministry driving action to eradicate GBV, the general ambition is to promote a zero-tolerance for all forms of violence calling for collective action from various sectors and facets of Samoan society to encourage discussion of the issue and normalise efforts to address them. The types of violence addressed, is cases victimising women, young girls, persons with disabilities or children more specifically. The Samoa Family Safety Study 2017 reiterates that the common forms of violence reported to have occurred within the homes are: physical assault, sexual abuse, emotional abuse including violence and abuse towards persons with disabilities and the elderly. It is important to note that until this survey, the only official source of national generic data on domestic violence with classifications of types of violence experienced by victims were noted in an earlier survey in 2007. The obvious need for an integrated approach to addressing GBV was identified.

16. 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)? 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?

The development of the Samoa Family Act 2013 in addition to the amended Crimes Act provides the fundamental mechanism of support for victims of violence

particularly by way of criminal assessments of cases reported to Police and heard by the courts or by way of facilitating the provision of protection orders or court services as required. Through the Law & Justice Sector Government's commitment to resolve family disputes has seen the creation of mediation processes, the provision of counseling services and availability of preventive services to assist those who go through the justice system and requiring specialist support. The establishment of the Family Court now hears cases of domestic matters which reduces the burdens of courts but more importantly provides an avenue which can facilitate/direct those who come before it, to the necessary services as appropriate.

In support of mechanisms for the justice system, is a significant focus on awareness raising driven by the Ministry of Women, Community & Social Development in collaboration with its key social sector partners. This has helped strengthen open forums and dialogue pertaining to violence or provided support for yearly national awareness campaigns such as; the 16 Days of Activism and White Ribbon Day. Further to this, is a structured effort by all partners to acknowledge the struggles of victims and seek an eradication of violence, by wearing orange on the 25th day of each month. All in all, these seemingly minor but consistent efforts are intended to bring the discussions on violence to the fore and transform societal behaviours to eradicate violence and appropriately address them.

3.2 Discrimination and Gender bias in the Media

17. 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?

In 2013, the already existing substantive law provided by the Samoa Crimes Act (2013) was amended to include a particular group of cybercrime acts, intended to align contemporary Samoan criminal law with the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime. In 2018 the Council of Europe ("CoE") through its Global Action on Cybercrime Extended (GLACY+) sent a mission to Samoa and provided the first steps towards accession to the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) further offering support work on cybercrime which canvass aspects of issues pertinent to violence against women and the girl child. The assistance from GLACY+ was inclusive of the provision of recommendations of action for continuation of engagement and development of capacity in the area. To date, Samoa will be the second Pacific nation to commence accession process to the Budapest Convention which will strengthen alignment to international mechanisms but further improve Samoa's own legal frameworks.

Whilst these specific strides are driven by the Office of the Regulator, the expectation for implementation and monitoring compliance is a role shared amongst key partners across the public and private sectors whose natural functions involve media or agencies whose mandated functions involve monitoring compliance. Several Government and Non-Government entities have conducted mass awareness relative to

cybercrime and cyber-security, particularly the Office of the Regulator (“OOTR”)⁸⁰ and the Ministry of Police individually or in collaboration with service providers. Such an approach reflects the holistic approach to collectively encapsulate the complexities and appropriately respond to addressing violence against women and girls facilitated by technology.

In addition, the Samoa National Cybersecurity Strategy 2016-2021⁸¹ stipulates aspirations of Government and the Information, Communication and Technology (“ICT”) sector in the push for awareness to include considerations of how women, girls and children may be portrayed in the media.

Since 2016 the OOTR took a collaborative approach in the implementation of a filtering system to prevent access to child sexual abuse material on the internet policy, commonly known as the Child Sexual Abuse Material (“CSAM”) Policy. This Policy had very important components:

- (1) establishment of a filtering system or filtering systems; to filter materials that sexual exploit children⁸², these filters were opted to be installed and implemented by Internet Service Providers (“ISPs”) and to be monitored by the OOTR (as per memorandum of understanding between the ISPs and OOTR). The filter scheme was intended to be piloted under 6 months, so to identify challenges and discover best way forward (noting that the committee was well aware that no filter is a 100% effective thus far)
- (2) performance of awareness and educational programs relative to online safety awareness – targeting or focusing on children, parents/guardians, teachers (which also affect females), as such a \$20k+ campaign was carried out in all local colleges, on tv and radio in 2017, the next campaign wave will focus on parents by targeting churches. Furthermore this year at the celebration of Girls in ICT day, the theme was in relation to safer internet, which raised awareness not only on the general participants but there was also a special competition in which girls were encouraged to develop videos relating to Internet Safety. The idea is not only so that they can be innovative, but they can familiarise themselves with tools available as well as research and become aware of the issues surrounding the topic so to become diligent and never be a victim to online sexual harassment, online stalking, and non-consensual sharing of intimate images (amongst other risks and dangers). In addition to this if they have become prey the information they come across can help them handle and deal with the situation in a positive manner⁸³.

⁸⁰<https://www.samoaoobserver.ws/category/samoa/13732> and <https://www.samoaoobserver.ws/category/samoa/29284> accessed on May 2019

⁸¹<http://www.samoagovt.ws/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/MCIT-Samoa-National-Cybersecurity-Strategy-2016-2021.pdf> accessed on May 2019

⁸²<https://www.regulator.gov.ws/images/Policies/Policy---Filtering-System-for-CSAM-APPROVED.pdf> accessed on May 2019

⁸³ Girls in ICT day 2019 competition video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwGHPMS3ZI4>)

Furthermore, Samoa now intends to amend current legislation and introduce new provisions to Samoan law inclusive of the criminal procedure, investigation of cybercrime in Samoa. The investigation of the new offences will include a suite of procedural powers that will later the way law enforcers will collect and obtain evidence. Furthermore the anticipated amendments will include laws to combat computer offences, computer related offences and child abuse (amongst other things). It is also expected that there will be improvements to the international cooperation regime through the amendment of the mutual assistance legislation along with procedural powers to facilitate a foreign States request for the preservation of traffic and content data in anticipation of a request for access to information pertinent to a matter.

Area 4 Participation, Accountability and Gender Responsive Institutions

4.1 Public Life and Decision Making

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

- Critical areas of concern**
- A. Women in power and decision-making
 - B. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
 - C. Human rights of women
 - D. Women and the media
 - L. The girl child

Samoa's Constitution was amended in 2013 to ensure 10% Quota of the parliament seats were held by women. With this reform, it guaranteed 5 Parliamentary Seats (out of 49 Parliamentary Seats) for women. While this event is a positive step in increasing the number of women in parliament there are still barriers to women running for public office. The MWCSO Women Matai and Leadership Survey 2015 revealed that 76% of women who hold matai titles participate in village council meetings.

In 2015, the Increasing Political Participation of Women in Samoa (IPPWS) was launched. This project was a UN Joint programme with UNDP and UN women working together with the Government of Samoa to promote the political participation of women in the country⁸⁴. The four objectives were:

- facilitate space for discussion and awareness at a community level on the importance of women participation in politics, gender equality and good governance.
- focus on capacity building for women in parliamentary processes and procedures in preparation for elections.

⁸⁴ IPPWS Programme document, 2015. UNDP/UN Women, UNDP Multi-Country Office, Apia.

- work with political parties by making available information and analysis on the constitutional amendments and strengthen their internal governance processes to support women candidates, gender equality and women's rights.
- following the 2016 elections, the project will provide mentoring support to all Members of Parliament on activities including responsive budgeting, preparation of gender sensitive legislation and more general aspects of the working of parliament.

The evaluation of the IPPWS programme found that the objectives were achieved to a very satisfactory way⁸⁵ and that the programme *"has effectively stimulated and improved the discourse around women's participation in politics through open and articulated dialogue and free of prejudices discussion, targeting all levels of Samoa population"*⁸⁶. One of the recommendations from the evaluation was the need to focus on the younger generation to address the deep roots of female marginalisation and exclusion from political participation. The follow up programme was launched in 2018 called Women in Leadership Samoa (WILS), this programme is outlined briefly later.

In the 2016 General Election there were 4 women elected by their constituencies, therefore it left one seat to be allocated from the women candidates who had the most votes. Thereby, to date, we have 5 women parliamentarians with 2 women holding Ministerial portfolios.

As noted previously in this report the District Development Planning process has been established as a mechanism and tool for village leaders to use to prioritise their development needs, as well as for Government and its agencies to use for their specific development programmes and projects. This includes increasing women's leadership and decision making at the village level⁸⁷.

Following the IPPWS project and the challenges faced by the project team and women were outlined in the Evaluation document as:

1. Limited pathways for women;
2. Women's leadership through village committees;
3. Perception about women's roles;
4. Financial Constraints and confusion over electoral rules versus actual practices;
5. Gaps in civic education/awareness;
6. The need for broader support for inclusivity⁸⁸.

Samoa has made significant advances in development and in promoting gender equality and building on lessons learnt from IPPWS Project, with the Women in Leadership Samoa (WILS) project. The progress and development of the project

⁸⁵ IPPWS Final Terminal Evaluation Report, 2016. UNDP.

⁸⁶ *ibid* pg47

⁸⁷ WILS Programme Document, UNDP, Samoa

⁸⁸ IPPWS Final Terminal Evaluation Report, 2016. UNDP.

involved the cooperation of MWCSO, UN Women, UNDP and other partners especially women and girls in the rural areas. Consultations and activities were carried out to develop the WILS project document and key activities. The WILS project aims to strengthen opportunities and more inclusive and effective participation of women in all forms of leadership and share knowledge of Samoa's experience in promoting women's political participation whether the setting is a village based or national one.

The initiative established by WILS Programme to strengthen women's leadership and gender equality in Samoa is in compliance with Sustainable Development Goal 5 which is to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life. This also collaborates with the UN Pacific Strategy 2018-2022 Outcomes 2 and 5: Outcome 2; *By 2022 Gender Equality is advanced in the Pacific, where more women and girls are empowered and enjoy opportunities and rights in social, economic and political spheres contribute to and benefit from national development and live life free from violence and discrimination.* Outcome 5; *Governance and Community Engagement - By 2022, people and communities in the Pacific will contribute to and benefit from inclusive, informed, and transparent decision-making processes; accountable and responsive institutions; and improved access to justice.*

The WILS project has three (3) expected outputs⁸⁹:

1. Strengthened opportunities for women's participation in leadership pathways
 2. Promoting political inclusivity and supporting women's political participation through a focus on development,
 3. Increased public awareness of and engagement in inclusive and effective political participation.
20. 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)?

Since 2016 the OOTR took a collaborative approach in the implementation of a filtering system to prevent access to child sexual abuse material on the internet policy, commonly known as the Child Sexual Abuse Material ("CSAM") Policy. This Policy consists of components:

- (1) **establishment of a filtering system or filtering systems;** to filter materials that sexual exploit children⁹⁰, these filters were opted to be installed and implemented by Internet Service Providers ("ISPs") and to be monitored by the OOTR (as per memorandum of understanding between the ISPs and OOTR). The filter scheme was intended to be piloted under 6 months, so to identify

⁸⁹ WILS Programme Document, UNDP, Samoa

⁹⁰ <https://www.regulator.gov.ws/images/Policies/Policy---Filtering-System-for-CSAM-APPROVED.pdf> accessed on May 2019

challenges and discover best way forward (noting that the committee was well aware that no filter is a 100% effective thus far)

- (2) **performance of awareness and educational programs relative to online safety awareness** – targeting or focusing on children, parents/guardians, teachers (which also affect females), as such a \$20k+ campaign was carried out in all local colleges, on tv and radio in 2017, the next campaign will focus on parents by targeting churches.

As a member of ITU, the Government of Samoa through the Office of the Regulator launched the “Girls in ICT Day” in April 2015 whereas prioritising Girls and young women have the potential not only to become ICT users, but also to become ICT professionals and creators. To celebrate the new initiative, OOTR in collaboration with its stakeholders and sponsors facilitated one-day workshop program which targeted College students by including them in different competitions that promoted ICT.

The workshop also featured presentations from prestigious female candidates from within Samoa. In addition, presentations from various ICT companies and other OOTR partners on various ICT projects they are currently used in order for them to explain to the girls first hand work at their respective companies. Participants are mostly girls from colleges around the country.

Girls in ICT has now become an annual event where OOTR spearheads the campaign to encourage, motivate and inspire Girls in colleges to consider ICT as a career option. Also, making girls aware of the many and rewarding opportunities that they can gain within the field of ICT.

Lastly UNWOMEN supported media training in 2015 which was attended by 21 NUS Journalism students, 22 NGOs/female candidates and 6 media outlets in effectively shaping public perceptions of what a leader is and the importance of women’s participation and representation in political processes as well as to ensure their reporting ahead of the election is gender-sensitive. Media coverage can, and often does, have an influence on voting communities in the lead up to the election

4.2 National Budget

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)?

The Ministry of Finance within the Government of Samoa has the pivotal role of handling the local and overseas funds needed for the government’s expenditure. As of the role mentioned in the question, No, Samoa does not track the quantity of the national budget used within the Government specifically on promoting Gender Equality and the empowerment of women. Therefore, a national gender responsive budget does not exist and the ministry does not assess and monitor funds allocated and used on these specific areas of concern.

Although we do not have Gender Responsive Budgeting or a tracking system, within the National Budget, MOF allocates the proportion of funds to MWCSO to lead the initiative of ensuring that Gender is mainstreamed at the national level. Hence, Gender empowerment is included in all development projects of all ministries, as it is a cross cutting issue and it is promoted at the planning level of any project. In place is a Cabinet Development Committee assesses and approves new projects amount to \$100,000 and above. One of the key criteria in which any project is assessed on is that there is an inclusion of Gender Equality and vulnerable groups must be recognised and prioritised. The institutionalisation of Medium Term expenditure frameworks and monitoring and Evaluation framework in every sector plan are mechanisms by which one can derive an analysis of the extent of gender responsive budgeting.

In 2015, a Stocktake of the Gender Mainstreaming Capacity was conducted for Samoa in partnership with SPC to analyse the degree to which there is enabling environment for gender mainstreaming to take place. The Report identifies the GoS has implemented most of the recommended strategies to improve gender mainstreaming from the Constitutions amendment(10%Quota) to workshops to strengthen the capacity of the workforce in Gender analysis, gender responsive planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation

According to data and information from the MPE as the regulatory body for 25 state owned enterprises indicates that 18 percent of board members are women. Furthermore, only 2 out of the 25 State Owned Enterprises are chaired by women. This is significantly low compared to the number of women who are excelling in other areas of decision making spheres⁹¹. The process for selection onto boards is merit based

4.3 National Strategy for Gender Equality

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

In the Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2016/17-2019-20, our government committed to "improve quality of life for all" and to achieve this the government has prioritised to mainstream gender, children and disability in policy development. Consequently, the National Women's Policy was radically changed into a new policy which was in compliance with the Sustainable Development Goal 5.

The National Policy for Gender Equality 2016-2021 provides a framework for government's commitment to gender equality and inclusivity of persons with disabilities in broad areas of Ending Violence, better access to health and educational information and services, equal economic opportunities for women including women with disabilities, increased women's participation in leadership, and enhancing gender

⁹¹ Samoa 6th CEDAW Report, 2017.

equality approaches for community resilience, climate change and promotion of gender equality.

The National Policy for Gender Equality 2016-2021 with Key Outcome 3: Increased economic empowerment, entrepreneurship and employment of women compliments the new Community Sector Plan 2016-2020 focusing on economic development for women and men focusing on individual household and village level economy will contribute to the achievement of the Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2016-2021 theme "Accelerating Sustainable Development and Broadening Opportunities for All".

This policy is a tool to drive the government to achieve key objectives that would address Gender Equality critically with actions in the forms of programs and activities that will achieve the policy outcomes in place. It reflects the priorities and concerns of all women and girls and thus identifies the key priority areas for the Government of Samoa.

Thus the New Policy goals was purpose created for the well-being of women and girls and that all women and girls have equal access to opportunities that guarantee their full participation in, and benefit from, the sustainable development of Samoa. This policy goal is consistent with the overall goal of the SDS which is 'improved quality of life for all' and the vision of the Community Development Plan, 'empowering communities for sustainable community development'.

The National Policy for Gender Equality 2016–2021 contains five broad priority outcomes:

1. Safe Families and communities including ending violence against women and children;
2. Healthy women and girls;
3. Equal economic opportunities for women;
4. Increased participation of women in public leadership and decision-making
5. Increased access to education and gender sensitive education curriculum.
6. Enhanced gender equality approaches to community resilience and disaster preparedness
7. Enhanced institutional mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality.

With these goals actions and measures were produced to be implemented by the MWCSO to achieve the policy goals. The Strategic Plan of Action 2016–2021

The 5-year Strategic Plan of Action summarises actions required to achieve the outcomes of the National Policy for Gender Equality 2016–2021.

The broad strategies of this action plan include the following:

- Sensitisation and training on gender issues at all levels;

- Putting in place mechanisms to enable policy dissemination, communication and implementation by all sections of society;
- Ensuring ownership of the policy by promoting public education and creating awareness of the responsibility of all stakeholders to address the specific gender concerns within their sector or jurisdiction;
- Establishing a system of gender-based and disaggregated data collection and analysis in relation to all sectors;
- Promoting women's economic empowerment as key to sustainable development;
- Establishing gender-responsive implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for development within government and other agencies;
- Advocating for gender equity at all levels

4.4 National Mechanism for Human Rights Reporting

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

The National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow Up (NMRF) committee is co chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Ministry of Women Community and Social Development. The committee comprises of the key line Ministries involved in reporting and implementation of Samoa's Human Rights obligations. The NMRF currently has a National Implementation Plan that is connected to an online WEBtool SADATA which now clusters all the recommendations and substantive articles of the Core Human Rights Conventions (the ones Samoa has ratified and the ones we aim to ratify). It also has the recommendations by the National Human Rights Institution and the Samoa Law reform Commission. In addition we have added the recommendations from Samoa's first and second UPR plus the recommendations from the visit by the Working Group on the Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice.

All together the NMRF is tracking and clustering 691 recommendations and articles as of May 2019 and have carried out a gap analysis of these recommendations so that there is focused and coordinated action on implementation of HR obligations. A roadmap based on reporting obligations has also been created and Samoa given its commitment to a human rights based approach to the implementation of its SDGs is exploring how to link where relevant the UPR and Voluntary National review process for the 2030 Agenda.

Is there a national human rights institution in your country?

The National Human Rights Institution, since its establishment in 2013 has been awarded GANHRI's "A Status" and remains the only A Status NHRI in the Pacific. It has submitted to Parliament three State of the Human Rights Reports and at the end of 2018 launched the first ever National Enquiry into Family Violence in Samoa.

This National Enquiry into Family Violence report is comprehensive and contains a wide number of recommendations that link to findings of other studies that addressing these issues requires a holistic approach whereby the Fa'asamoa or the Samoan way of life and cultural practices need to be discussed in an open manner and linkages made with the human rights and faith based approaches. The report also highlighted some of the underlying misconceptions related to the term human rights and the need for dialogue at all level to discuss issues such as the status of women and inequities present in the current way of life⁹².

NHRI Samoa functions to bridge the "protection gap" between the rights of individuals and responsibilities of the State (Samoa Government). This is carried out by:

- Monitoring Samoa's performance in meeting its international human rights commitments through its State of Human Rights Reports and Places of Detention Inspections Report;
- Review of existing and proposed legislation to ensure consistency with human rights law;
- Providing advice to the Samoan Government so that it can meet its international and domestic human rights commitments;
- Conducting visits to all public and some private places of voluntary and involuntary confinement or detention;
- Undertaking human rights education awareness and trainings programs for all sections of the Samoan community;
- Engaging with the international human rights community to raise pressing issues and advocate for recommendations that can be made to the Samoan Government;
- Participation in judicial proceedings as a friend of the court or as a party, where human rights issues arise (currently inactive);
- Receiving, investigating and resolving complaints of human rights violations (currently inactive);
- Providing information to the international human rights system, such as the Human Rights Council and other human rights treaty monitoring bodies through shadow reporting and submissions;

All of this is achieved through the celebration and protection of Samoan culture, dignity and respect ingrained in Fa'a Samoa.

⁹² National Enquiry and Public Hearings into Family Violence in Samoa, 2018, NHRI, Samoa.

Area 5 Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

5.1 Peace and Security

25. 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?

Critical areas of concern

- A. Women and armed conflict
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

Samoa has no regular military forces, doesn't belong to a military grouping and has only a small civilian police force, and its only defence and shield against threats of aggression is the rule of law and international justice. Samoa's cultural institutions and traditional chiefly system are key to maintaining peace and stability and a system that has served the people of Samoa for over three thousand years. Respect for the rule of law has been an integral part of Samoa's journey as an independent nation for more than fifty-five (55) years now.

Peace and security is a core part of the village governance structure which also includes the important role of the women committees and women who are part of the council.

Samoa this year celebrated 50 years since women joined the Samoa Police Service and women police officers have been an important part of Samoa's contributions to the UN peacekeeping efforts since it sent its first peacekeepers in 2000. Samoa has since deployed 39 female police officers for peacekeeping missions. The first ever Deputy Police Commissioner appointed is a female officer and the Samoa Police force saw an increase in the number of women with currently 177 active female police officers⁹³.

The Ministry of Police in collaboration with MFAT and NZ Defence will host this year the Women Peace and security in Samoa which also serves as a recognition of the continuous contribution of Samoa female police officers on this agenda in the region.

Samoa is the first small island State in the Pacific to launch its National Security Policy in 2018. The National Security Policy covers four key threats considered most critical to Samoa. This includes Border Security, natural disasters and climate change, cyber security and two aspects of human security which are gender-based violence (GBV) and health security are noted as main categories of risk to Samoa's security and stability⁹⁴. The Policy supports the timely implementation of the National Cyber Security Strategy 2016-2021 and the government is committed to the establishment of a government agency or mechanism to support the victims of GBV and continue to

⁹³ Ministry of Police correspondence, Jun 2019

⁹⁴ Samoa National Security Policy, 2018. Government of Samoa

work with relevant regional and development partners to share relevant experiences on eliminating domestic violence and helping victims.

In addition Samoa continues to be actively engaged on the peace and security agenda at the regional and international arena. In 2017 the Prime Minister of Samoa and the UN SG signed the Compact to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse which represents our ongoing commitment to addressing the issue and ensuring full support and implementation of the UNSG's Zero Tolerance Policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, especially in the view of our peacekeepers to the UN Peacekeeping Missions.

Samoa has also ratified all three Optional Protocol for the Convention on the Right of a Child (CRC), on the involvement of children in armed conflict (2000), the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography (2000) and on a communications procedure, 2014⁹⁵.

The National Cyber Security Strategy 2016-2021 has identified the need to develop a sub strategy on Child Online Protection (COP) and Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) Filtering Policy to promote the use of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) and implement precautions and protection of children users⁹⁶. In line with the development of these strategies, there is a need to establish a wider framework for child protection that includes online protection, this is being facilitated through the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development and the National Child Care and Protection Policy and Strategy that will further inform the Child Care and Protection Bill/Act⁹⁷.

In light of the Cyber Security Strategy 2016-2021, Samoa is taking steps towards the ratification of the Budapest Convention, a global treaty seeking to address internet and computer crime, through the harmonisation of national laws, improvement of investigative techniques and expansion of cooperation between states⁹⁸.

The National Crime Prevention Strategy (2016-2020) was developed as an enabling outcome to achieve one of the key outcome area which is 'Safer Communities' under the Law and Justice Sector Plan 2016-2020. The Strategy focuses on reducing crime rates and re-offending rates which will enhance safer and peaceful communities for all especially vulnerable groups such as women, children, elderly persons and persons with disabilities and the achievement of Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG): *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development*⁹⁹. In addition, work is in progress for the development of the Au'afamau Database, a centralised crime statistics database which will assist in making decisions and designing programs and intervention for the Strategy¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁵ MFAT press release, 7 May 2016, Samoa Observer.

⁹⁶ Samoa National Cyber security Strategy 2016-2021, Government of Samoa

⁹⁷ Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development Annual Report FY 2017-2018. MWCSO. Apia.

⁹⁸ Personal communication at Beijing +25 workshop, April 2019

⁹⁹ Law and Justice Sector Plan, 2016-2020

¹⁰⁰ National Crime Prevention Strategy, 2016-2020, MJCA

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

Samoa ratified the Arms Trade Treaty in 2014 and submitted a comprehensive report on its compliance with the UN Programme of Action Addressing the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2016. (SO, 01 May 2018). Furthermore, Samoa also ratified the Biological Weapons Convention later in 2017 in the context of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Samoa believes that small arms and light weapons in the wrong hands could cause instability, encourage criminal activities, disrupt peace and hinder sustainable developments.

In 2018, the Regional Pacific Island States Parliamentary Workshop was held in Samoa attended by Legislators from across the Pacific region to advocate for improved compliance with the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). The workshop also highlighted the significance placed on encouraging participation of female parliamentarians in Defence and Security. As a result, work is in progress for Samoa in the development of the Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) database administered by the Ministry of Police which is also aligned with the National Security Policy 2018.

Samoa celebrates International Women's Day every year to commemorate the evolution of women into areas that often been dominated by men such as in Police Force, Maritime and more. This year 2019, marks 50 years of women in Samoa Police Service and the Commissioner of Police acknowledged the strong contribution of women in the police force and committed in the empowerment and advancement of women to fulfil their potential and enjoy equal recognition in the Samoa Police Service¹⁰¹.

Moreover, the Samoa Police Women's Advisory Network (SPWAN) was established in 2001 to address issues that are relevant to their contribution to policing. In 2018, Samoa hosted the Pacific Island Chiefs of Police Women Advisory Network conference to ensure that there is equality in decision making within the police force and an opportunity to improve their services and stability to take up any challenges¹⁰².

Some of the key achievement of women's participation and representation in this area includes;

- > For the first time in Samoa, a female is appointed to the position of Deputy Commissioner for Ministry of Police

¹⁰¹ Samoa Police Service Newsletter, 2019

¹⁰² Press Release, Samoa Observer, 26 July, 2018

- For the first time a female was awarded the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Centre for Security Studies Alumnus of the year 2018 (Jennifer Key)¹⁰³. The award is in recognition of her contribution to the drafting of Samoa's first National Security Policy and also in the US Advanced Security Cooperation Course.
- The National Security Committee (NSC) comprises of Chief Executive Officers (CEO) for 17 Government ministries and organisations. Out of the 17 CEOs, 4 are women.
- Women police officers are deployed overseas on peacekeeping missions
- In the Financial Year 2016-2017, 30% of the total police force are females¹⁰⁴, this figure is increasing each year.

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

Human trafficking and smuggling of migrants are transnational crimes which are prescribed under the international law and under the Samoan law. Human Trafficking is treated very seriously in Samoa, and through the Crime Act 2013 a separate offence was created on human smuggling and trafficking with high penalties of a term of imprisonment not exceeding 14 years. Samoa has a low number of cases relating to human trafficking and smuggling of migrants¹⁰⁵.

Samoa is a party to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime but have yet to accede to the protocols of the convention¹⁰⁶. In line with this convention and the Crimes Act 2013, the Ministry of Prime Minister and Cabinet as the focal point for Immigration developed a policy guideline for trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants 2017. The guideline aims at building the capacity of Samoa in establishing a mechanism for coordinating government responses as well as to effectively protect and support victims of trafficking and management of information. To note some of the work in progress, the Samoa Immigration Act 2004 is currently reviewing ways to address human trafficking issues within Samoa's borders.

The constitution of Samoa remains clear that international law is not a source of law for Samoa. However, we have some of the highest courts directly applying relevant articles of the Conventions ratified by the Government. The Courts have over the

¹⁰³ Press Release, Samoa Observer, April 2019

¹⁰⁴ Ministry of Policy Annual Report 2016-2017

¹⁰⁵ Beijing Report consultation communication, 2019, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development

¹⁰⁶ Policy Guidelines 2017, Ministry of Prime Minister and Cabinet

years consistently been progressive in their approach to the Convention, applying the principles in their decisions as some have already domesticated into legislation¹⁰⁷.

In terms of illicit drugs in Samoa, the Samoa Law Reform Commission (SLRC) conducted a review of the Narcotics Act 1967 (Drugs Reform) to combat the increase prevalence of drug-related issues and the new developments in the evolving drug environment in Samoa. The review is also timely with the recent establishment of the Alcohol and Drug Court in 2016 which was designed to supervise offenders whose offending is driven by alcohol or drug dependency. The 2017 Review Report provides recommendations for way forward. This includes;

- ✓ Updating current provisions that are outdated and do not adequately serve the purpose of Samoa's Narcotics Act.
- ✓ certain matters to be further clarified and covered under the Regulations instead of including them under a new drugs framework therefore the need to make changes to the Narcotics Regulations 1967.
- ✓ The key stakeholders who are regularly involved in drug regulation will provide guidance on the efficacy of the proposed changes.
- ✓ The various terminology used in other jurisdictions to refer to 'illegal drugs' is noted in the report and the Commission will use the term 'illegal drug' or 'drug' instead of the term 'narcotic' as in the law to ensure consistency and relevant to other jurisdictions.
- ✓ The Commission recommended for the provisions from other legislations to be adapted and adopted in any new drugs framework for consistency and uniformity across laws in Samoa.
- ✓ Lastly the Commission recommended the need for training on a new drugs framework for law enforcement officers to ensure that they are up to date and well informed of the new changes in legislation and familiar with the rules governing their specific function in regulating illegal drugs to avoid any overlapping issues.

5.2 Rights of the Girl Child

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

In Samoa there is no specific treatment for girl child however all actions taken to eliminate discrimination against, violations of the rights and the protection of children including the girl child. For instance, the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development is yet to finalise the Child Care and Protection policy and National Action Plan 2019-2024 which aimed at preventing and addressing current and emerging

¹⁰⁷ Convention for the Rights of the Child Samoa Report, 2015

issues and challenges concerning the care and protection of all children in Samoa. The comprehensive policy sets out how the government and its partners including community will work together in the implementation of the policy and action plan. Moreover, the policy will strengthen and inform the current Child Care and Protection Bill 2017 in ensuring all children in Samoa are safe and receive proper care.

The Inclusive Education Policy was endorsed by Cabinet in 2015. The Policy helps to strengthen partnership with NGOs to support children with disabilities¹⁰⁸. Awareness of the Policy has been aired and promoted on national television to inform community of the services provided to children with disabilities.

The Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG) continues to provide support to the most vulnerable or victims of life's unfortunate circumstances in the community. They provide shelter for women and children survivors of violence and sexual abuse through the Campus of Hope. Moreover, the Campus provides education through the School of Hope which enables all children, including pregnant girls and young women to continue education without being exposed to public scrutiny. Nevertheless, the Government of Samoa provides assistance through providing salaries of the teachers at the school¹⁰⁹. In addition, the Ray of Hope Shelter in the Campus was specifically built to house pregnant survivors of rape and pregnant women out of wedlock who have been ousted from their families. It offers private clinical rooms for regular check-ups while providing protection for the pregnant women and girls from exposing them to public hospitals.

In 2016, the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) implemented the Friendly School Program as a direct result of the findings from the first State of Human Rights Reports in 2015. One critical finding highlighted that children's misunderstood and misinterpret what their rights are and also the adults have a misconception around the rights of the child. Therefore, the program aims to increase awareness and understanding of human rights in schools as a fundamental first step towards dispelling misconceptions about the child's rights. It further hopes to help instill the knowledge, respect and positive attitude that can foster better understanding of the rights of the child and its application. For instance, both teachers and students will respect, support and help create a safe environment for teenage girls impregnated while in the school system so that they continue to exercise their rights to education by completing school and continue to tertiary institutions. The program is an ongoing program in partnership with the Ministry of Police's Community Engagement Unit¹¹⁰.

Government of Samoa continues its commitment to compulsory access to education through creating a supportive environment through law and policy to strengthen the regulatory powers of Government in keeping young girls in school regardless of their circumstances. For instance, the Education Act 2009 stated that any student young or otherwise can legally access all levels of education without systematic bias or

¹⁰⁸ MESC, Annual Report 2015-2016

¹⁰⁹ Samoa Replies to the List of Issues, CEDAW Report 2018.

¹¹⁰ Samoa 6th CEDAW Periodic Report, 2017

constraint. At the policy level, the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture launched the National Safe School's Policy which aims to provide a positive learning environment for all students and now incorporates provisions to protect impregnated students from expulsion and that they are given full support by the school and family during pregnancy as well as securing their return after child birth. For that reason, this is to address concerns over instance whereby impregnated young girls have been expelled or prohibited from re-entering school during pregnancy or after child birth.

Area 6 Environmental Conservation, Protection and Rehabilitation

6.1 Gender and Environmental Policies

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

Critical areas of concern

- I. Human rights of women
- K. Women and the environment
- L. The girl child

There are many projects and programs carried out by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment supported by international partners which include gender perspective and concerns that are integrated at all stages of the project cycle, such as:

- > CLAC – Customary Land Advisory Commission serves as the main focal point in promoting customary land as the vehicle for improving the economic well-being of the country by opening up these lands for development purposes that will eventually help sustain the economy and increase the livelihoods of the people. In this regard, the CLAC primarily deals with the direct marketing of customary lands through the leasing mechanism in order to benefit the landowners which will assist to enhance the economic development especially of the rural community¹¹¹. The project is for seven years with the objective of promoting the economic use of customary lands for the benefit of landowners. Much of the Samoan lands are under-utilised given that customary land comprises 81% of the land¹¹².
- > IMPRESS- Improving the Performance and Reliability of Renewable Energy Systems in Samoa Project is focused on improved sustainable and cost-effective utilisation of indigenous renewable energy resources for energy production in Samoa. This will be realised through development of renewable energy and deep sea mining /Energy Efficiency policies and regulatory frameworks¹¹³,

¹¹¹ MNRE Annual Report 2015-2016

¹¹² *ibid*

¹¹³ <https://www.mnre.gov.ws/impress-project/our-activities/>

adoption of renewable energy based technologies in electricity generation and financing renewable energy, and Energy Efficiency investments in Samoa. Renewable energy sources are Solar, Biogas, Biomass, Wind and hydro..

- Rio Convention Project focuses on its 3 main components: 1) Biodiversity, 2) Climate Change, 3) Desertification. This was carried out through mainstreaming and promoting the 3 Conventions into sectoral development plans by way of strengthening of legislative and regulatory instruments, information systems and sector coordination. The 3 year project achieved multi stakeholder consultations and in house training and establishment of the DKIF design which has been validated and is ready to start procurement of the software and linking to the setup and improvement of overall IT MNRE Infrastructure¹¹⁴.
- Small Grants Projects- is a corporate program of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) since 1992 and is supported by the government. Its main objective is to provide financial and technical support to projects that conserve and restore the environment while enhancing people's well-being and livelihoods. Activities include community-based projects in biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, prevention of land degradation, protection of international waters, and reduction of the impact of chemicals, while generating sustainable livelihoods.
- SMSMCL- Strengthen Multi Sectoral Management of Critical Landscapes in Samoa (SMSMCL) The SMSMCL is a 5 year GEF-5 Project with the aim to strengthen local capacities, incentives and actions for integrated landscape management in order to reduce land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions and promote nature conservation whilst enhancing sustainable local livelihoods¹¹⁵. The aim is for communities and farmers to undertake and benefit from integrated land and water management on their customary owned lands composed of different ecosystems and agriculture, fisheries and livestock production systems and Strengthened national enabling environment to promote integrated landscape management through local households and communities¹¹⁶. The SMSMCL has a completed two series of SDVP consultations and workshops with a draft land management plan of Uafato village in place and is ready for validation with the community¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁴ <https://www.mnre.gov.ws/rio-conventions-project/>

¹¹⁵ MNRE Annual Report 2015-2016

¹¹⁶ <https://www.mnre.gov.ws/projects/>

¹¹⁷ MNRE Annual Report 2016-2017

6.2 Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction

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?

Disaster risk reduction and climate resilience remains a priority for Samoa. The Samoa National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2017–2021 combines all the work in relation to disaster risk management, preparedness, relief, response and recovery. The main aim is to empower communities to address their risks through the development of capacity and knowledge (traditional and scientific) and through the provision of support for local involvement in developing and implementing risk reduction and disaster risk strategies¹¹⁸.

One concrete example is the Community Disaster and Climate Risk Management Program that was developed to support the DMO's mandate. Its main goal is to increase the level of preparedness of each household and villages against disasters. In addition ensuring community leaders and community groups receive capacity building and new learnings of gateways and ideas of how to minimise the impacts of disaster and climate change on lives and belongings. ADRA has now increased its villages engaged in the CDCRM program to 27 with funding provided by different development partners. Trainings were carried out, surveys were collected, and awareness and workshop were done for all the villages to validate community preparedness as a priority.

The National Environment Sector Plan (NESP) integrates gender and vulnerable groups' needs. In addition The "Gender in Disaster Risk Management Policy" focuses on gender equity ensuring that women are involved across all phases of DRM. The policy was developed to help and support the sectors in considering Gender Mainstreaming as one of the core agendas in their plans.

1. Indicative costs for the full implementation of the NESP's five year programme are estimated at \$467 million Tala. An estimated 76 per cent (\$353 million Tala) of the sector's financing needs is secured through government funding and external grants. Total shortfall of funds is estimated at 24 per cent or \$111 million Tala.
2. **RIDGE TO REEF PROJECT:** The predicted effects of climate change on Samoa include: i) increased frequency and severity of extreme rainfall events; ii) increased frequency and duration of droughts; iii) rising sea levels; and iv) increased frequency of extreme wind events such as gusts and cyclones. The problem that the proposed LDCF project seeks to address is that Climate change is expected to result in losses to lives, livelihoods and assets for local communities in Samoa. The solution is to adopt an economy-wide approach to climate change adaptation in Samoa, allowing for increased integration of

¹¹⁸ The Samoa National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2017–2021, MNRE

climate change adaptation and disaster risk management into national development planning and programming across all sectors. Additionally, the climate resilience of local communities – including their physical assets and livelihoods – must be strengthened. Its main objective is to maintain and enhance the country's ecosystem, goods and services (provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural) through integrated approaches to land, water, forest, biodiversity and coastal resource management that contribute to poverty reduction, sustainable livelihoods and climate resilience.

3. **Economy Wide Adaptation to Climate Change (EWACC)** is another program that incorporates disaster risk management. This project is funded by GEF/ Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) with the purpose to enhance a more efficient integration and management of adaptation and DRR/DRM into national development planning and programming and the resilience of communities' physical assets and livelihoods across Samoa to climate change and natural disasters¹¹⁹. The project has a relatively good gender focus, including alignment of activities with the special needs of rural women in DRM, agriculture and handicrafts. The Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO) is focusing on small business incubators, with priority to women and youth. While the objective remains to include a diverse group there have been challenges with coordinating stakeholder groups and gender mainstreaming through the implementation¹²⁰. This program consists of different components carried out by government Ministries and NGOs.

¹¹⁹ EWACC Project Document, MNRE, <https://www.mnre.gov.ws/ewacc>

¹²⁰ EWACC_UNDP-GEF-MTR Samoa Final Report Oct 2017 Part 2

Section C National institutions and processes

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 Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development is the national machinery for gender equality and empowerment of women, also children, community, vulnerable families, and people living with disability. MWCSO is the government agency that manages the Community Sector Plan. There are 14 sectors, each with their own strategic and action plans which are linked to the Strategy for the Development of Samoa.

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)?

Yes the CEO of Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development is a member of the government SDG Committee.

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?

Yes there are mechanisms in place for the stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing PfA and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow Up (NMRF) as mentioned earlier in the report is key to the reporting monitoring and follow up of implementation of the HR obligations for Samoa. MFAT is also the chair of the SDG taskforce which has a membership representing the key line ministries and sectors for the three pillars of sustainable development and with the commitment to a HR approach to SDG implementation - the work of the two task-forces are linked and complement each other. Each Sector has been designated SDGs for implementation. The following groups participate formally in national coordination mechanisms established to contribute to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

- Civil society organisations/ Community based organisations
- Non Government organisations
- State owned Enterprises/ Government Corporations
- Faith-based organisations
- Parliaments/parliamentary committees

- Private sector
- United Nations system
- Development partners

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

Yes there are formal mechanisms in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalised groups participate in the planning and implementation activities. The National Youth Council is a stand-alone NGO that has young female and male representatives from all villages. As noted previously in this report the Village Representative structure involves a woman representative from each village community in Samoa, being selected to represent them and give voice to their concerns. The Village representatives are a formal mechanism that involves regular meetings, capacity building workshops, and consultations. These village leaders are the pathway for entering each village and giving and receiving information. Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development manages this mechanism through the Governance Division.

The majority of NGOs are members of Samoa Umbrella for NGO's (SUNGO) which is another formal mechanism to coordinate the NGOs in Samoa, most of which are urban based, but many have a rural outreach.

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

All relevant agencies, such as government ministries, NGOs, CSO were consulted and a workshop was held to go over each of the six areas. Seventy (70) participants attended the workshop and shared their experiences and challenges within each of the six areas.

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

Gender equality and empowerment is included as one of the top priorities in Samoa as the Samoa Development Strategy highlights that planning and budgeting processes are addressing the integration and mainstreaming of gender. There is focus by Government especially on the elimination of violence against women and girls and improving economic empowerment of women, and leadership and public decision making.

Section D Data and Statistics

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

Conducted new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialised topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)

- (a) Produced knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)
- (b) Engaged in capacity building to strengthen the use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)

As concrete example of (a), there have been two comprehensive national studies carried out on violence, these have been mentioned previously in this report.

The Samoa Family Safety Study in July 2017 commissioned by the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development reported a high prevalence of violence in the family and in particular against women, children, the elderly and people living with disability¹²¹. The Samoa Family Study made strong recommendations towards the need for stepping up leadership through the proactive engagement of village councils and the church leaders in the prevention of violence against women, children and persons with disabilities. The Safe Families, Stronger Samoa Policy and plan of action is informed by this study.

The National Human Rights Institute under the Office of the Ombudsman conducted a National Inquiry into family violence over the two years (2016-2018) and the report was released in October 2018¹²². This was the first of its kind in Samoa and the Pacific Region. It provided a platform for public discussions of violence at all levels. The inquiry findings reaffirmed calls for more proactive leadership by village councils and village leaders, church leaders, and government agencies to reduce the prevalence and improve our responses to violence against women, children, the elderly and people living with disability. The inquiry also highlighted that the principles contained within the Samoan culture (fa'asamoa) faith and human rights are complementary not opposite and are central to the addressing the elimination of violence in families.

An example of (b) is the Gender Statistics workshops that have taken place during the last five years.

- SPC workshop for Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development and other Public Service agencies in 2016.

¹²¹ Family Safety Study, 2017, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, Government of Samoa

¹²² *ibid*

- EPIC data tool, supported by UNESCAP, initiative started in mid 2018 and is ongoing. Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development is a part of this process.
- StaTact programme tool for data governance and monitoring SDG's. Ministry

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

of Women, Community and Social Development is a member of the first group to trial this programme tool together with Samoa Bureau of Statistics.

37. Out of the following which are your country's top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years?
- € 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
 - € Re-processing of existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics
 - € Greater utilisation and/or improvement of administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps
 - € Development of a centralised web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics
 - € Statistical capacity building of users to increase statistical appreciation on and use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)

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

Yes

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

€ Yes.

There is need for data and evidence-based planning, policy development and implementation has given rise to sectoral leadership in the collection, integration, analysis and reporting based on reliable data. The Samoa Bureau of Statistics (SBS)

in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Ministries with key mandates to report on Conventions governing Human Rights and the like, have begun to collect and compile data through awareness trainings, partnerships and collaborations to facilitate data availability. The work of the National Mechanism For Reporting (NMRF) attests to this in addition to the conduct of national surveys such as the DHS-MICS Survey, Disability Monograph & Census to name a few. The structure of these surveys, are based around SDGs linked to Samoa's own priorities for development speculated under the Samoa Pathway, Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS) and relevant Sector Plans.

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

- € National collection and analysis of official data is the mandate of the Samoa Bureau of Statistics. In the collection of information the key variables are;
- € Age
- € Sex
- € Geographic location
- € Marital status
- € Race/ethnicity

Where relevant depending on the survey undertaken, considerations for Education is taken into account. Significant strides have been made however in the collection of official disability data producing the Disability Monograph.

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