

Questionnaire for the Content of National Reports on Beijing +25

Tonga response

Section One: Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks

1. The most important achievements, challenges and set-backs in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women over the past 5 years in Tonga.

Tonga's Revised National Policy on Gender and Development (RNPAGD) 2014-2018 was an important document that re-emphasized Tonga's vision for "Gender Equity by 2025". This has been Tonga's vision since the year 2000, that all women, men, girls and boys and the family as a whole achieve equal access to economic, social, political and religious opportunities and benefits". It was Tonga's policy aimed at advancing gender equality in Tonga and ensuring the active contribution and meaningful participation of women and men in all spheres and at all levels of development and decision making for the well-being of the family and the benefit of the whole society. It identified the Women's Affairs Division (under the Ministry of Internal Affairs) as the National Machinery for gender playing the leading role of coordinating, monitoring and providing advisory services in respect of the Policy. The Policy identified 6 priority outcomes which included:

- 1) Enabling familial and social environment for gender equality
- 2) Equitable access to economic assets and employment
- 3) Increased women's leadership and equitable political representation
- 4) Create equal conditions to respond to natural disasters and environmental and climate change
- 5) Increased focus on addressing the additional vulnerability experienced by female headed households, women with disabilities and women in rural areas, especially in the outer islands; and
- 6) Enabling environment for mainstreaming gender across government policies, programs and services

The Policy also included a Strategic Plan of Action which contained key outputs and actions under each priority outcomes. It further identified the relevant stakeholders for implementation purposes.

The Policy is further consistent with Tonga's Strategic Development Framework 2015-2025 (TSDF II), National outcome 3 for "a more inclusive, sustainable and empowerment human development with gender equality. This Policy (including its further revised version) is the mechanism for achieving the National Outcome and 'ensuring a more balanced and effective engagement by both men and women in decision making and social, economic and political institutions.

A major challenge faced in coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Policy was that the National machinery charged with the responsibility was understaffed and under-resourced for most part of the term of the Policy. This caused delays in many of the works required and also the completion of various documentation that would assist in the works which was a set-back. For example, the delay in completing the Gender Mainstreaming Handbook which was seen essential to achieving priority

outcome 6 and proposed entry points for mainstreaming gender through government’s governance and processes and targeted to be used by decision makers in Government Ministries and others. Another challenge was the inconsistency and equal spread out of outreach on gender to the rural areas and in the outer islands was poor due to financial and transportation barriers.

In 2016, a Family Protection Coordinator was recruited and in 2018, 2 other senior technical officers were further recruited; a Policy and Legislation Officer and the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. This was the first time for the National Machinery for gender to be technically skilled in these areas.

In 2019, the National Machinery for gender launched 3 important publications that would assist in further progress gender equality and the empowerment of women in the years ahead. This included:

- 1) The National Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga (WEGET) Policy and Strategic Plan of Action 2019-2025 (outcome of the RNPAGAD 2014-2018 review)
- 2) Gender Equality: Where do we Stand? Tonga statistical report providing the most updated statistics disaggregated by men, women, boys and girls on their social, economic and political opportunities and participation and mainly based on the 2016 Tonga Census; and
- 3) Gender Mainstreaming Handbook.

In the same year, a Rights, Empowerment and Cohesion (REACH) project was piloted in Tonga the goal being to take government services and share information (awareness) to the remote and rural communities. To allow even the most marginalized and vulnerable groups to access much needed government services. Spearheaded by the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division, a total of five government Ministry services and one Legal Aid Centre (operating under the Ministry of Justice) were invited to conduct the exercise. The pilot was conducted in sixteen (16) villages, seven in the Eastern districts on the main island of Tongatapu and nine to rural villages on the island of ‘Eua; a total of 2,715 participants (1,695 women, 4 person with disability and 1,016 men) benefitted from the services and information. The project report is available at the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The findings following the review of the RNPAGAD 2014-2018, identified other important achievements of the progress of gender equality and empowerment of women for the period. They are summarized in the table below adopting the sequence of the priority outcomes as set out under the RNPAGAD 2014-2018 following the conclusion of its review in 2018:

Priority Outcomes of RNPAGAD 2014-2018	Achievements	Challenges	Setbacks
1. Enabling familial and social environment for gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014: Enforcement of Tonga’s Family Protection Act 2013 (FPA 2013) which provided greater protection to victims/survivors against family violence • 2017: Opening of the 24 hour 7 days counselling free helpline under the NGO Women and Children Crisis Center for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No gender budgets in corporate plans – as such, works, programs and activities to progress gender equality and empowerment of women relied on donor funded projects. When said projects were implemented the timeframe given at most times were insufficient to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015: withdrawal of Tonga’s commitment to ratify the Convention to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) – after Tonga’s commitment to ratify CEDAW, it was later withdrawn due to public protests

	<p>victims/survivors of family violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017: Government activated the Family Protection Trust Fund established under the FPA 2013 • 2018: Establishment of the Family Protection Legal Aid Center that provided free legal representation and legal advice for victims/survivors of family violence • 2018: consistent meetings of the Family Protection Advisory Council established under the FPA 2013 	<p>produce the intended outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understaffed and under-resourced of the national machinery for gender • Lack of institutionalized data collection especially disaggregated data by relevant ministries • Local government leaders lacking basic understanding on gender • Contradictory cultural practices and religious beliefs • Lack of coordination between stakeholders conducting programs and activities on gender equality and empowerment of women. This caused confusion, delay and unnecessary duplication of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discriminatory law preventing women from having control over their bodies. For example, women required their husband's consent regarding their reproductive health. • Laws that conflicted with the strategic plan of action under this priority outcome for example, definition of rape not including penetration by objects other than the penis, marriage allowed with consent for children at the age of 15
<p>1. Equitable access to economic assets and employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017: Government grant for economic empowerment of women. This allowed registered women's development groups and NGOs to participate in regional and international handicraft expos and other different projects initiated by the groups in the areas of handicraft, agriculture and trade • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same challenges as above in (1) • Stringent administrative and financial procedures by financial institutions providing micro loans. As such, women's successful access to micro loans are limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unequal access to land by women where the laws in Tonga only permitted outright ownership of land to males whereas women could only access land via a lease
<p>2. Increased women's leadership and equitable political representation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014: Practice Parliament for Women carried out as an initiative to encourage women's participation in parliament and inspire wider participation in the law making process and geared to help participants understand parliamentary processes. Following the exercise, there was an increase in number of women that registered as candidates for the 2014 national elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same challenges as above in (1) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016: Candidacy training as part of the national marking program for International Women’s Day (IWD) in Tonga. This resulted in the highest ever number of women registered as candidates for the local government elections and the first ever female District and Town Officers were elected • 2018: Practice Parliament for Youth carried out as an initiative to encourage youth participation in parliament and inspire wider participation by youth in the law making process and geared to help youth understand parliamentary processes 		
<p>4. Create equal conditions to respond to natural disasters and environmental and climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017: Government launched the Trust Fund for Climate Change (CCTF) under the Ministry of Meteorology, Environment, Information, Disaster Management, Energy, Climate Change and Communication (MEIDECC) • Inclusion of Gender components in policies, major plans and projects involving climate change, disaster risk reduction and resilience building. For example, Tonga’s Climate Change Policy 2016; Tonga’s Joint National Action Plan II on Climate Change (JNAP II); Outer Islands Renewable Energy Project (OIREP); Nuku’alofa Urban Development Sector Plan (UNDSP); • Establishment and participation in the Safety and Protection Cluster; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster (WASH) and other relevant cluster under the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) under the Ministry of MEIDECC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same challenges as above in (1) 	

<p>5. Increased focus on addressing the additional vulnerability experienced by female headed households, women with disabilities and women in rural areas especially in the outer islands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014: Approval by Government of the National Policy on Disability Inclusive Development 2014-2018 • 2015: Establishment by Government of the Social, Protection and Disability Division under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Their main mandate “to eliminate, reduce and minimize risk to vulnerable people by designing, developing and implementing social policies, social programs and protection mechanism to safeguard the vulnerable”. • 2015: Establishment and operation of the Tonga Disability Taskforce to monitor the implementation of the Policy and decide upon the necessity of a review at the mid-point in the life of the policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same challenges as above in (1) 	
<p>6. An enabling environment for mainstreaming gender across Government policies, programs and services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016: First National Stakeholders Forum on Gender which resulted in the production of a matrix capturing women’s empowerment and gender equality initiatives in Tonga • 2017: Gender Audit of the Public Service Commission (PSC) as the central agency of Government. PSC is identified as a key partner for gender mainstreaming in the implementation plan of the RNPAGAD 2014-2018. The Audit was carried out based on PSC’s request and support provided by UNDP with the view to identifying avenues for promoting gender equality in the long term through the existing mandates of the Commission. PSC also looks to support the achievement of Tonga’s Strategic Development Framework II 2015-2025 (TSDF II) and Government’s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same challenges as above in (1) • Lack of political will to address gender issues. As such progress on gender has mostly been through donor funded projects e.g. multi-year community based Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (CC-DRM);GESI, OIREP, JNAP II • Public service lacking awareness on mainstreaming gender and lacking the relevant capacities to implement 	<p>Unstable leadership with the constant changes to the accountable Minister and delays in recruitment of a substantive CEO for the responsible Ministry (Ministry of Internal Affairs) during the period. This resulted in the desired progress being stagnant.</p>

	<p>commitment to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs by addressing the policies and practices in place and staff approaches and capacities to promote gender equality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018: consistent meetings of the National Advisory Committee on Gender and Development (NACGAD) • 2016-2018: Awareness on the RNPAGAD 2014-2018 and FPA 2013 conducted throughout Tonga including the outer islands 		
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2. TOP FIVE priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in Tonga over the past five years through laws, policies and/or programs.

I Eliminating Violence against women and girls

The enforcement of Tonga’s Family Protection Act 2013 provided greater protection of women and girls from domestic violence in addition to other forms of violence recognized under Tonga’s Criminal Offences Act 1926. The Revised National Policy on Gender and Development 2014-2018 priority outcome 1 recognized the need to eliminate violence against women and girls. The establishment of a Family Protection Legal Aid Centre in 2018 and the new office for the Domestic Violence Unit with a safe space for children at the Police station contributed to providing support for victims/survivors of domestic violence. Close collaboration and coordination of programs with relevant stakeholders were carried out between 2014-2018 to provide awareness on eliminating violence against women and girls. Annual Government Grants to NGO Crisis Centres continued in this period 2014-18. In 2017, the Family Protection Trust Fund for organisations working on the implementation of the Family Protection Act was activated.

II Access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights

In 2018, UNFPA with the Ministry of Health and in partnership with the Tonga Family Health Association conducted a one week National Peer Education Training for the Trainers of Peer Educators on Comprehensive Sexuality Education including STIs/HIV, GBV, Youth Leaders, Health Service Providers and Community Educators from across Tonga. They were able to learn basic concepts and fundamental guidelines in dealing with all Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (ASRHR). A 2017 Family Life Education initiative to include modules in the education curriculum to include gender and human rights.

III Political participation and representation

In 2014, a Practice Parliament for women exercise was carried out followed by a Practice Parliament for Youth in 2018. These exercises were carried out as an initiative to encourage women and youths participation in parliament and inspire wider participation in the law making process and geared to help participants understand parliamentary processes. For the 2014 exercise, there was an increase in number of women that registered as candidates for the 2014 national elections. In the 2016 national marking of International Women's Day, a candidacy training for women was also carried out to encourage their registration for the District and Town Officers election scheduled for the following June 2016. As a result the first ever female District Officer was elected in the outer island of 'Eua and a female town officer was elected in the main island of Tongatapu for the Havelu village.

IV Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises

In 2017, a Government grant targeted to be used for economic empowerment of women. This is available for women groups and NGOs. The grant is administered and monitored by the national machinery for gender equality and involves a process and conditions for applications. There is also funds available for women economic empowerment (through women's community projects) under the Climate Change Trust Fund administered by the Ministry of Meteorology, Environment, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communication. Tonga Skills, an NGO provides quality based and demand driven skills development in the areas of tourism, agriculture, fisheries, construction and handicrafts. In 2017, 2,665 clients were involved in 117 training of which 67% were women and 67 individuals were identified as having a disability. There is also the Tonga Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship that works with school leavers between 18-29 years of age who are unable to secure a job.

V Gender responsive disaster risk reduction and resilience building

Gender components and indicators are incorporated into major projects and plans involving disaster risk reduction and resilience building (e.g. Joint National Action Plan II on climate change, Outer Island Renewable Energy Project, Climate Change Policy, Nuku'alofa Urban Development Sector Plan). Psychosocial support is also being provided following TC Gita 2018 together with ongoing preparedness awareness programs every year prior to cyclone season. The National Machinery for gender is a member of the Safety and Protection Cluster under the National Emergency Management Officer of the Ministry of MEIDEC and provides gender perspectives and considerations in its preparatory works of when a natural disaster would hit the country.

3. Specific measures taken in the PAST FIVE YEARS to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple intersecting forms of discrimination

I Women with disabilities

The Revised National Policy on Gender and Development 2014-2018 prioritized increasing the focus on addressing the additional vulnerability experienced by female-headed households, women with disabilities and women in rural areas especially in the outer islands. The National Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga (WEGET) Policy 2019-2015 continues to recognize people with disabilities and vulnerable groups as being integral parts to the 5 priority outcomes identified (same priorities in the RNPGAD). The National Policy on Disability Inclusive Development 2014-2018

further ensures protection for women with disabilities and in 2015, the Ministry of Internal Affairs became the government focal point for the National Policy on Disability Inclusive Development with the establishment of the Social Protection & Disability Division. Extensive consultations have taken place (since 2016) in preparation for the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities signed by Tonga in 2007.

II Younger Women

The Talitha Project, and NGO, initiated a campaign “Let girls be girls” (2016) with support from the Ministry of Justice for the increase of child marriage age with parental consent from 15 years of age to 18 years of age. A Practice Parliament for Youth was also carried out in 2014 to create awareness for youth in Tonga of parliamentary and law making processes and to encourage them in participating in the same. The Tonga Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship (TYEE), an NGO provides programs for school leavers between the ages of 18-24 who are unable to secure a job.

III Older Women

A partnership between the Government of Tonga and NGO Ma’a Fafine mo Famili known as the Tonga Social Services Project (TSSP) and piloted in Tonga in 2012-2013. The project continues to date by Ma’a Fafine mo Famili in conjunction and collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Social Protection and Disability Division. It aims to provide services and care to some of the most vulnerable in the society and includes elderly people (60+ years old) whose families no longer have the resources to properly care for them and also young children (0-4 years old) with disabilities. The scope of services is as follows:

	Services	Eligibility criteria
1.	Aged Care Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 years or older • Official diagnosis or referral from approved medical doctor • Approval from Social Service Selection Committee
2.	Early Intervention Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-4 years old • Official diagnosis or referral from approved medical doctor • Approval from Social Service Selection Committee

The overarching goals and objectives of this project is:

- 1) Extension of the range of social services being provided to Tongan citizens
- 2) Improved care and support services for the elderly and young children with disabilities
- 3) Increased capacity of local CSOs to provide quality social services
- 4) Enhanced interaction between the government and the private sector in delivering social services to the populations
- 5) Practical experience for the Government of Tonga in the oversight and monitoring of social services.

A Government grant for the empowerment of women which supports outcome 3 of the WEGET 2019-2025 (formerly the RNPAD 2014-2018) and allows registered women's development groups (with MIA/WAD) and NGOs to participate in regional and international trade fairs and other different projects initiated by the groups for income generation, and mainly in the area of handicraft and others which are subject to a set of pre-set guidelines and conditions. All applications are finally endorsed by MIA CEO, and approved by Hon. Minister, MIA.

IV Women in Humanitarian settings

The establishment of the Safety & Protection Cluster where the national machinery for gender is a member provides gender considerations and perspectives in preparatory works for before, during and after a natural disaster hits the country. A training of trainers on the topic of Gender in Humanitarian was carried out in 2018 for members of the Safety and Protection Cluster to assist in mainstreaming gender among their members and further to the general public on any humanitarian crisis that takes place in the country but mainly for natural disasters of which Tonga is prone to. The establishment of the WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) cluster ensures access by women, men, children and elderly disabled persons to clean water and sanitation. Gender components and indicators have also been incorporated in major projects concerned with natural disasters, environmental challenges and climate change for example, the JNAP II, OIREP, NUDSP, and CC-DRM. Specific NGOs like the Women and Children's Crisis Center (WCCC), Ma'a Fafine mo Famili (MFF), Tonga National Center for Women and Children (TNCWC) and the Tonga Red Cross provide psychosocial support to those affected after natural disasters.

4. Has the increasing number of humanitarian crisis – caused by conflict, extreme weather or other events – affected the implementation of the BPfA in Tonga?

NO

5. The TOP FIVE PRIORITIES for accelerating progress for women and girls in Tonga for the COMING FIVE YEARS through laws, policies and programs.

I Eliminating violence against women and girls

- The Development of a National Service Delivery Protocol is in progress to improve coordination of stakeholders dealing with victims/survivors of GBV;
- Review of the Family Protection Act 2013 to address the conflicting provisions and practices since the FPA's enforcement in 2014 is also in progress;
- Establishing an official counselling framework for counsellors to victims/survivors of family violence to ensure they have the required skills and capacity and also ensure accountability
- Training on the use of Gender Mainstreaming Handbook to government officials to build capacities on Gender and what is involved to be mainstreamed in government programs, processes and services

II Access to affordable quality health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights

- Development of Tonga's Family Life Education to be incorporated into the education curriculum is in progress. It is grounded in the global evidence and informed technical guidance, which includes strong focus on gender, GBV, relationships, values, rights and culture both as standalone and infused topics across other areas of the curricula related to SRHR
- Support submissions to review discriminatory legislations that continue to be a barrier to SRHR for example, women's reproductive rights.
- Awareness outreach on SRHR to schools and communities

III Political participation and representation

- Revisit the Temporary Special Measures Bill for the allocation of reserved number of seats for women in parliament
- Develop a database on women in politics and in leadership positions in boards and in public and private sectors
- Conduct studies to identify obstacles faced by women who wish to run for election and to identify which factors influence voters choices to produce civic education initiatives for youth and adults to encourage importance of participation by ALL members of the family in important decision making

IV Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises

- Absorb and to run the Rights Empowerment And Cohesion (REACH) Programme in Tonga
- Prepare submissions to ease legislation, administrative and financial procedures needed to formalize micro-enterprises, enabling women small entrepreneurs to strengthen their enterprises
- Prepare submissions for government on a culturally appropriate model of equal land rights and equal ownership of productive assets for men and women.

V Gender-responsive budgeting

- Provide training on the Gender Mainstreaming Handbook to incorporate gender budgeting during Government corporate planning
- Including gender budgeting in corporate planning and strategic planning for government ministries

VI Gender responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience building

- Encourage gender in Humanitarian training by the Safety and Protection Cluster members to the communities
- Support the Climate Change division under the Ministry of MEIDECC to achieve the gender targets in their JNAP II
- Support initiatives to improve the management and conservation of natural resources notably of biodiversity, sustainable land use, water resources, coastal fisheries, and forests. Further, to build

the capacity of populations living in rural areas and in the outer islands to diversify or adapt their livelihood in an effort to increase their resilience to natural disasters and climate change

- Support initiatives to improve conservation of energy (in particular in relation to electricity consumption and transport), and promote technologies for renewable energy as a mitigation and adaptation measure, keeping in mind that energy services must serve the needs of the household and livelihoods.

Section Two: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

6. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEAR to advance gender equality in relation to women's role in paid work and employment

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

- i. Tonga's Employment Relations Bill 2013 (ERB): Further consultations on the Bill to all employees and employers in both the public and private sector concluded in 2018. Consultations had also extended to the outer islands. The ERB will be Tonga's first ever employment legislation and will provide fair minimum employment standards for both employers and employees. While the Bill will apply to all employers and employees in Tonga with some exceptions, the private sector employees stand to benefit the most as the public service employees are protected under the Public Service Act 2002. To date, the ERB has been approved by Cabinet and now is with the Legislative Assembly for discussions.
- ii. 2018 Gender Audit of the Public Service Commission (PSC): The PSC is a central agency of the Government and has been identified as a partner for gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the Revised National Policy on Gender and Development 2014-2018 that contains a priority outcome for equitable access to economic assets and employment. The Audit was PSC's action to assess its readiness to support gender mainstreaming. The audit exercise was supported by UNDP with a view to identifying avenues for promoting gender equality in the longer term through the existing mandates of the PSC.
- iii. Amendments to the Public Service Act 2002, Public Service Policy and Instructions 2010, Public Service (Disciplinary Procedures) Regulations 2003 and Public Service (Grievance & Dispute Procedures) and Regulations 2006: Various amendments have been made throughout the past 5 years to address concerns and bring up to standard the law, Policies, Instructions and Regulations governing the employment of public service employees. The review and amendments of these documents were made in collaboration between the PSC and the Attorney General's Office prior to it being passed by Parliament. The amendments can be viewed at <http://www.psc.gov.to/index.php/legislations>

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

- i. 2018 Gender Audit of PSC: identified definitions within the Public Service (Grievance and Dispute Procedures) Regulations 2006, for example, the definition of "employment

grievance” that was limited and did not provide sufficient guidance for employees of the public service on how to bring about. Gender based issues that could potentially take place in the workplace like gender based bullying or sexual harassment did not have specific set of guidelines in which employees of the public service could follow. As such a recommendation to ensure that these are included in the Regulations would strengthen the gender responsiveness of the needs of men and women in the public service.

- ii. Ongoing outreach and awareness on the RNPAGAD 2014-2018 and the FPA 2013): this measure has been taken to create awareness of the communities and the general public of priority outcomes of the RNPAGAD 2014-2018 and the main function of the FPA 2013 which extends to gender based issues like sexual harassment, including in the workplace. These outreach and awareness programs are made in collaborations with relevant stakeholders like the Ministry of Police, Tonga Family Health Association, Public Service Association and are carried out in person through village meetings or focus group meetings.

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

- i. Establishment of the Government Development Micro Finance Loan scheme and other loan schemes (ADB_JFPR Grant) with low interest rates available for women’s groups and administered by the Tonga Development Bank, a public enterprise fully owned by Government: Both loan schemes are both revolving fund facilities of different amounts (T\$500K and US\$200K respectively) with the former loan scheme intended for Women Groups to encourage the establishment of new and innovative businesses. The latter loan scheme is for the social protection of the vulnerable and as such is to empower the vulnerable in Tonga especially women in the outer islands and disadvantaged communities in Tonga.
- ii. Establishment of the Green Climate Fund (Climate Change Trust Fund under the Ministry of Meteorology, Environment, Information, Disaster Management, Energy, Climate Change and Communication): This fund is reserved for women’s projects and organizations and operates through applications submitted by women groups and is assessed against a pre-set of criteria under the said Ministry.
- iii. Establishment of the Government Grant for the empowerment of women: This grant is being administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division and operates through applications submitted by registered women groups with the Ministry and is being assessed against a pre-set criteria by the Women’s Affairs Division before endorsement is considered by the CEO of the said Ministry. The purpose is to empower self-employed women mainly in the area of handicraft although other areas can be considered provided that it could generate income and also be sustainable.

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

- i. Tonga Skills: A program invested by the Australian Government in Tonga focused in developing skills in Tonga that is linked directly to inclusive economic growth. Tonga Skills operates nationally and works closely with the Ministry of Education and the Tonga National

Qualifications and Accreditation Board (TNQAB). Their goal is “equitable access to quality based and demand driven skills development contributing to sustainable economic growth in Tonga. They provide training on demand driven skills development in the areas of tourism, agriculture, fisheries, construction and handicrafts. For more information at <http://tongaskills.com/>

- ii. Employment Relations Bill 2013 (ERB): The Bill covers and provides fair minimum employment standard for informal jobs as well such as babysitting, house maid duties that are carried out on a long term basis.

7. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation.

I Expanded support for frail elderly persons and others needing intense forms of care

- i. Tonga Social Services Project: A partnership between the Government of Tonga and NGO Ma’a Fafine mo Famili known as the Tonga Social Services Project (TSSP) and piloted in Tonga in 2012-2013. The project continues to date by Ma’a Fafine mo Famili in conjunction and collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Social Protection and Disability Division. It aims to provide services and care to some of the most vulnerable in the society and includes elderly people (60+ years old) whose families no longer have the resources to properly care for them and also young children (0-4 years old) with disabilities. The scope of services is as follows:

	Services	Eligibility criteria
1.	Aged Care Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 years or older • Official diagnosis or referral from approved medical doctor • Approval from Social Service Selection Committee
2.	Early Intervention Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-4 years old • Official diagnosis or referral from approved medical doctor • Approval from Social Service Selection Committee

The overarching goals and objectives of this project is:

- 6) Extension of the range of social services being provided to Tongan citizens
- 7) Improved care and support services for the elderly and young children with disabilities
- 8) Increased capacity of local CSOs to provide quality social services
- 9) Enhanced interaction between the government and the private sector in delivering social services to the populations
- 10) Practical experience for the Government of Tonga in the oversight and monitoring of social services.

- ii. Cash assistance of \$T75 for disabilities (A’u kiai): An initiative facilitated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Social Protection and Disability Division from 2015 with the support and assistance of Government targeted for persons with extreme disabilities. Identification of those eligible is determined by the Ministry of Health. It is distributed once a month (8th of every month). The cash assistance is disbursed by the Ministry of Finance to the relevant bank accounts of the recipients.

ALL RECIPIENTS IN A’U KI AI CASH ASSISTANCE

ISLANDS	Female	Male	Total
TONGATAPU	329	323	652
‘EUA	33	25	58
HA’APAI	42	46	88
VAVA’U	120	105	225
NIUA TOPUTAPU	2	4	6
NIUA FO’OU	1	4	5
RECIPIENTS OVERALL TOTAL	527	507	<u>1034</u>

Ages for All Recipients in A’u Ki ai Cash Assistance

Ages	TBU	EUA	HAAPAI	VAVAU	NTT	NF	SUB TOTAL
0-5	13	0	0	9	0	0	22
6-10	38	1	4	3	0	1	47
11-20	57	7	4	16	0	0	84
21-30	57	3	12	15	0	0	87
31-40	65	1	6	12	0	0	84
41-50	83	4	10	14	1	2	114
51-60	87	6	14	21	2	1	131
61-70	112	6	9	38	0	1	166
71-80	73	12	13	56	2	0	156
81 +	56	15	13	32	1	0	117
NO RECORD	11	3	3	9	0	0	26
TOTAL:	652	58	88	225	6	5	<u>1034</u>

In 2018, persons with disabilities involved in the A’u ki Ai Cash Assistance Scheme were categorized into 5 different categories:

1. **Physical Disability:** Includes clients with amputations, mobility issues, bedridden clients, wheelchair users and conditions such as Cerebral Palsy.
2. **Psychiatric Disability:** Refers to conditions including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, dementia and psychosocial disabilities.
3. **Intellectual/Learning/Neurological:** Refers to conditions including: Down Syndrome, mental retardation, clients with brain trauma, developmental delay, congenital conditions, meningitis, Parkinson’s Disease and Epilepsy.
4. **Sensory Impairment:** Includes vision and hearing impairments.
5. **Unknown:** cases where diagnosis was not clear or known

Below is the data for the different categories.

Types of Diagnosis	TBU	EUA	HAAPAI	VAVAU	NTT	NF	SUB TOTAL
Intellectual/Learning/Neurological	113	12	31	57	1	1	215
Physical Disability	396	38	44	122	5	4	609
Psychiatric Disability	99	2	7	14	0	0	122
Sensory Impairment	38	3	6	20	0	0	67
Unknown	6	3	0	12	0	0	21
TOTAL:	652	58	88	225	6	5	<u>1034</u>

- iii. Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Scheme): Currently though, based on the universal poverty measure for extreme poverty of USD\$1.90 per person per day which identified 3% of our population in there, MIA is finalizing their Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Scheme. This is a poverty policy benefit scheme aimed to alleviate the extreme monetary poverty suffered by this 3%.

II Introduced or strengthened maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave

- i. Other than maternity (3 months leave) and paternity (5 days leave) afforded to public servants under the Public Service Policy Instructions 2010, there have been no further introduced or strengthened similar leave types available. There is anticipation though with the Employment Relations Bill 2013, that such leaves will be introduced to cater for private sector employees and those not covered under the Public Service Policy Instruction 2010.

8. Has Tonga introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing over the PAST FIVE YEARS?

NO

9. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls

I Broadened access to land, housing, finance, technology and/or agriculture extension services

- i. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Food – Women’s Extension: They administer and provide training for the purpose of empowering women to be able to provide for themselves if they are unable to with a stable source of income. Every year, they carry out distribution upon requests of seedlings, poultry and livestock to women and also run training like sewing and cooking.

- ii. Establishment of the Government Grant for the empowerment of women: This grant is being administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division and operates through applications submitted by registered women groups with the Ministry and is being assessed against a pre-set criteria by the Women’s Affairs Division before endorsement is considered by the CEO of the said Ministry. The purpose is to empower self-employed women mainly in the area of handicraft although other areas can be considered provided that it could generate income and also be sustainable.

II Supported women’s entrepreneurship and business development groups projects

- i. Training institutions: Tonga has various institutions and agencies that provide business skills and other vocational training e.g. Tonga Business Enterprise Center under the Tonga Chamber of Commerce & Industry Inc – for more information at http://new.tongachamber.org/?page_id=168 , Tonga Skills – for more information at <http://tongaskills.com/> , ‘Ahopanilolo Technical Institute, Tonga National Youth Congress – for more information at <http://tonganationalyouth.org/>)

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

- i. Cash assistance for disabilities (A’u kiai): This scheme is intended for persons with disabilities and is being administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs- Social Protection and Disability Division.
- ii. Pension scheme for the elderly: This scheme is government funded and is for elderly persons aged 70 and above. These are paid out each month and is administered by Tonga’s National Retirement Benefits Fund.
- iii. Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Scheme: A poverty policy benefit scheme and program aimed to reduce and eliminate poverty in the Kingdom. The target audience are the households suffering from extreme poverty (3% of the Total population in 2016) in Tonga.

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

- i. Family Protection Legal Aid Center: Its establishment in 2018 as a pilot project in Tonga was successful as the Government has agreed for the Center to continue for another 3 years under the assistance of SPC/RRRT before Government absorbs it under the Ministry of Justice. The Center provides free legal representation and advice for victims/survivors of domestic violence.

10. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to improve access to social protection for women and girls?

I Introduced or strengthened social protection for unemployed women (e.g. unemployment benefits, public works programmes, social assistance)

- i. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Food – Women’s Extension: They administer and provide training for the purpose of empowering women to be able to provide for themselves if they are unable to with a stable source of income. Every year, they carry out distribution upon requests of seedlings, poultry and livestock to women and also run training like sewing and cooking.
- ii. Establishment of the Government Grant for the empowerment of women: This grant is being administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division and operates through applications submitted by registered women groups with the Ministry and is being assessed against a pre-set criteria by the Women’s Affairs Division before endorsement is considered by the CEO of the said Ministry. The purpose is to empower self-employed women mainly in the area of handicraft although other areas can be considered provided that it could generate income and also be sustainable.
- iii. Cash assistance for disabilities (A’u kiai): This scheme is intended for persons with disabilities and is being administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs- Social Protection and Disability Division.
- iv. Pension scheme for the elderly: This scheme is government funded and is for elderly persons aged 70 and above. These are paid out each month and is administered by Tonga’s National Retirement Benefits Fund.

II Introduced or strengthened non-contributory social pensions

- i. Cash assistance for disabilities (A’u kiai): This scheme is intended for persons with disabilities and is being administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs- Social Protection and Disability Division.
- ii. Pension scheme for the elderly: This scheme is government funded and is for elderly persons aged 70 and above. These are paid out each month and is administered by Tonga’s National Retirement Benefits Fund.

11. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to improve health outcomes for women and girls in Tonga.

I Undertaken gender-specific public awareness/health promotion campaigns

- i. Mobile Community clinics: an initiative by NGO Tonga Family Health Association in collaboration with the Ministry of Health for the purpose of ensuring that health services are accessible by members of the community. Through the clinics, they are able to provide awareness and also carry out health tests for HIV, STI’s and pregnancy. They have also been able to establish these community clinics in most of the outer islands.

- ii. Ongoing Outreach and awareness programmes: These continue throughout each year by the Ministry of Health and other associated partners like the Tonga Family Health Association.

II Strengthened comprehensive sexuality education in schools or through community programs

- i. Tonga Family Life Education: Tonga Family Life Education: This initiative supported by UNFPA involves modules that are created to be proposed to be included in the education curriculums on the topic of gender and human rights – consultations have been conducted throughout Tonga including the outer islands with government and mission’s schools, government ministries and private sectors. This will address sexuality education however because of cultural reasons, it has yet to be approved.

12. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls

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

- ii. Tonga Family Life Education: This initiative supported by UNFPA involves modules that are created to be proposed to be included in the education curriculum on the topic of gender and human rights – consultations have been conducted throughout Tonga including the outer islands with government and mission’s schools, government ministries and private sectors. It is yet to be approved by the Ministry of Education.

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

- i. Education Act 2013: provides for inclusive education and all teachers are aware of this and reminded in staff meetings.
- ii. Teachers Training College: persons that are trained to become teachers at the Tonga Teachers Training College are trained to promote safe, harassment-free and inclusive educational environments for women and girls.

13. In the LAST FIVE YEARS, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific contexts or settings has Tonga prioritized for action?

I Intimate partner violence/domestic violence, including sexual violence and marital rape

- i. Family Protection Act 2013: This law recognizes physical, sexual, mental and economic abuse in a domestic relationship which is defined under the law. It covers men, women and children. It was established to provide greater protection from domestic violence, to introduce orders, clarify the duties of the police and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of victims/survivors of domestic violence and related matters. For further information on the Act at https://ago.gov.to/cms/legislation/current-revised-edition/by-title.html?view=acts_alpha

- ii. Criminal Offences Act 1926: The Act has now criminalized marital rape since 1999 in Tonga whereas before it was not. The issue identified was that women who were separated from their husbands but yet to be divorced would not be able to claim rape if their husbands had forced sexual intercourse with them purely because they were still married on paper. A legislative comparison exercise of the Legislation of Tonga and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) identified that there was still much in this Act that required reviewing as it did not fully protect women and girls, for example, the definition of rape which did not extend to situation where women are sexually violated with other penetrable objects such as sticks and bottles. In such a case, a woman could only claim for a lesser offence of indecent assault which was considered unfair. Works are continuing to push for this review. The Act also covers all other forms of violence that are not covered under the FPA 2013. For further information on the Act at https://ago.gov.to/cms/legislation/current-revised-edition/by-title.html?view=acts_alpha
- ii. Family Protection Legal Aid Center: Its establishment in 2018 as a pilot project in Tonga was successful as the Government has agreed for the Center to continue for another 3 years under the assistance of SPC/RRRT before Government absorbs it under the Ministry of Justice. The Center provides free legal representation and advice for victims/survivors of domestic violence pursuant to the Family Protection Act 2013. The Centre is hoped to address the issue of access to justice by women who are victims/survivors of domestic violence.

II Sexual harassment and violence in public places, educational settings and in employment

- i. Gender Audit of the Public Service Commission: identified definitions within the Public Service (Grievance and Dispute Procedures) Regulations 2006, for example, the definition of “employment grievance” that was limited and did not provide sufficient guidance for employees of the public service on how to bring about. Gender based issues that could potentially take place in the workplace like gender based bullying or sexual harassment did not have specific set of guidelines in which employees of the public service could follow. As such a recommendation to ensure that these are included in the Regulations would strengthen the gender responsiveness of the needs of men and women in the public service.
- ii. Employment Relations Bill 2013; This Bill covers sexual harassment under the part of equal employment opportunity. The Bill has been approved by Cabinet this year and will now be tabled at Parliament for discussion.
- iii. 2019 Consultations on a National Service Delivery Protocol for GBV: As part of the review of the RNPAGAD 2014-2018 priority outcome 1 that covers violence against women and girls, it was identified that there was a lot of duplication of programs and services by service providers for victims/survivors of violence. At times, clients and people were confused as to which services would meet their need or requirement. In light of this, discussions were initiated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division with external parties for funding to develop a National Service Delivery Protocol to help coordinate the services of service providers for victims/survivors of violence. Consultations have commenced this year in Tongatapu and the main outer islands. It is hoped to continue with a completion date by the end of 2019.

III Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (e.g., cyber violence, online stalking)

- i. Tonga Computer Response Team: This team is established and in the process of finalizing legislation to replace Tonga's Computer Crimes Act 2003 and which will recognize violence against women and girls facilitated by technology together with the relevant penalties.

IV Child, early and forced marriages

- i. "Let Girls be Girls" campaign: This campaign initiated by NGO Talitha Project and supported by the Ministry of Justice promotes the increase of the age of child marriage in Tonga's law from 15 years to 18 years old. Currently the Births, Deaths and Marriages Act 1926 allows the marriage of males or females at the age of 15 provided parental consent is given. Various civil societies, NGOs and even government ministries believe that children should still be at school at that age. Further, that children at that age are not fully matured to take on the responsibilities that come with marriage.

V Trafficking in women and girls

- i. Counter Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime Act 2013: This law criminalizes trafficking of persons and children in Tonga.

14. Actions Tonga have prioritized in the LAST FIVE YEARS to address violence against women and girls

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

- iii. Family Protection Act 2013: This law recognizes physical, sexual, mental and economic abuse in a domestic relationship which is defined under the law. It covers men, women and children. It was established to provide greater protection from domestic violence, to introduce orders, clarify the duties of the police and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of victims/survivors of domestic violence and related matters. For further information on the Act at https://ago.gov.to/cms/legislation/current-revised-edition/by-title.html?view=acts_alpha
- iv. Criminal Offences Act 1926: The Act has now criminalized marital rape since 1999 in Tonga whereas before it was not. The issue identified was that women who were separated from their husbands but yet to be divorced would not be able to claim rape if their husbands had forced sexual intercourse with them purely because they were still married on paper. A legislative comparison exercise of the Legislation of Tonga and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) identified that there was still much in this Act that required reviewing as it did not fully protect women and girls, for example, the definition of rape which did not extend to situation where women are sexually violated with other penetrable objects such as sticks and bottles. In such a case, a woman could only claim for a lesser offence of indecent assault which was considered unfair. Works are continuing to push for this review. The Act also covers all other forms of violence that

are not covered under the FPA 2013. For further information on the Act at https://ago.gov.to/cms/legislation/current-revised-edition/by-title.html?view=acts_alpha

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

- i. National Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga (WEGET) Policy 2019-2025: This is the most recent National Policy on Gender and Development which continues to focus on ending violence against women and girls as part of its priority outcomes. The WEGET also has a Strategic Plan of Action that sets out the key outputs and actions in addressing this issue. Priority outcome 2 “Families and communities prosper from gender equality” focusses on ensuring that the values of gender equality are better understood and promoted in the family, workplace and society, that measures are in place to eliminate domestic violence and provide services to victims; and to improve sexual and reproductive health rights including access to family planning. For further information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/kzkua>

- iv. 2019 Consultations on a National Service Delivery Protocol for GBV: As part of the review of the RNP/GBV 2014-2018 priority outcome 1 that covers violence against women and girls, it was identified that there was a lot of duplication of programs and services by service providers for victims/survivors of violence. At times, clients and people were confused as to which services would meet their need or requirement. In light of this, discussions were initiated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division with external parties for funding to develop a National Service Delivery Protocol to help coordinate the services of service providers for victims/survivors of violence. Consultations have commenced this year in Tongatapu and the main outer islands. It is hoped to continue with a completion date by the end of 2019.

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

- i. Training of Judiciary and Police: Various trainings on Gender and the Family Protection Act 2013 have been carried out to members of the judiciary including both Magistrate and High Court judges and also Police officers. These involve officers both at the front line and those that deal directly with domestic violence. These trainings are facilitated by the Women and Children’s Crisis Center in Tonga with the support of from development partners.

- iii. Family Protection Legal Aid Center: Its establishment in 2018 as a pilot project in Tonga was successful as the Government has agreed for the Center to continue for another 3 years under the assistance of SPC/RRRT before Government absorbs it under the Ministry of Justice. The Center provides free legal representation and advice for victims/survivors of domestic violence pursuant to the Family Protection Act 2013. The Centre is hoped to address the issue of access to justice by women who are victims/survivors of domestic violence.

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

- i. Safe House for victims/survivors of domestic violence: There were 2 safe houses in Tonga, one housed by the Tonga National Center for Women and Children (TNCWC) and one by the Women and Children’s Crisis Center (WCCC). The shelter for TNCWC however was closed last year and as such there is only 1 shelter remaining in Tonga and continues to be housed by WCCC for victims/survivors of domestic violence. The operation of the WCCC safe house is being financially assisted by Government.
- ii. Counselling helpline for victims/survivors of domestic violence: This helpline is owned by the WCCC and operates 24 hours 7 days. This is to ensure that victims/survivors has 24 hours 7 days access to help if needed and in addition to the other services already available.

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

- i. Partnerships: There have been partnerships with NRL Australia (2018) on their “Voices against Violence” to promote eliminating violence against women and girls using their rugby players. These are conducted through educational materials, awareness and outreach programs at schools and sports groups. There is also partnership with famous local sports icons like Mr. Pita Taufatofua in promoting eliminating violence against women through media campaigns.
- ii. Continued outreach and awareness on the Family Protection Act 2013: This has continued in the past 5 years to date in the communities in Tongatapu and also the outer islands reaching the most remote of all at the Niuas.
- iii. Families Free of Violence (FFOV) project: A Australian Government funded project through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade works in close collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division and the Ministry of Police in running programs and activities as response strategies to eliminating violence against women and girls. The FFOV are also main supporters to the Ministry of Internal Affairs preparatory works for marking of White Ribbon Day and 16 days of activism in Tonga and the implementation of the Family Protection Act 2013.

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

- i. Consistent meetings of national overseeing bodies: There are quarterly meetings of the Family Protection Advisory Council that is established under the Family Protection Act 2013. Their main purpose is to act in an advisory capacity to the Minister to assure the safety of victims of domestic violence and to carry out functions set out in the Act. The Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division provides secretariat services to this Council. Disaggregated data collected by the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division from various stakeholders that deal directly with victims/survivors of domestic violence are presented to the Council every quarter. The members of the Council is chaired by the CEO of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and includes CEO’s of other relevant Ministries and the main service providers for domestic violence cases.
- ii. Gender Equality: Where do we Stand? Tonga statistical report: This was launched in April 2019 and provides the most updated statistics disaggregated by men, women, boys and girls on their social, economic and political opportunities and participation and mainly based on

the 2016 Tonga Census although other national and official reports are also made reference to.

- iii. Monitoring and Evaluation: The Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division now has a dedicated senior technical officer (recruited in early 2018) responsible for Monitoring and Evaluation of progress on the implementation of Tonga’s Policy on Gender and Development. Her main role focusses on collaborating closely with the relevant stakeholders of the Gender and Development Policy to collect the relevant disaggregated data for analysis on the status on a quarterly basis.

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

- i. Building capacities: Recruitment of the Family Protection Coordinator in 2016 and also 2 other senior technical officers (Policy and Legislation officer and the Monitoring and Evaluation officer, the first time for the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division to be technically skilled in these areas. Their capacities together with that of other responsible officers are continued to be built through training and distance learning programs of best practices in the region and internationally and other trainings on topics like GBV, family violence, data collection, SRHR, economic empowerment of women, leadership and political participation, gender in humanitarian and so forth.
- ii. Collaboration with faith based organizations: It has been identified that church leaders in Tonga are very influential leaders within the communities and the society. As such, it has further been recognized that there is a need to include them in discussions on the issue of violence against women and girls and how they could participate and contribute in eliminating and preventing this issue. There have been various study tours and learning visits in the pacific region (Fiji, Vanuatu, and Australia) to learn best practices from other faith based organizations. Tonga’s is now in the process of carrying out consultations with local church leaders of different churches to share the lessons learnt and to work together in drawing the roadmap going forward and how Government, Civil Societies, NGOs and Faith based organizations can work together in eliminating violence against women and girls.

15. Strategies Tonga has used in the LAST FIVE YEARS to prevent violence against women and girls

I Public awareness raising and changing of attitudes and behaviors

- i. Outreach and awareness programs: In the last 5 years, ongoing outreach and awareness programs on Tonga’s Gender and Development policy and the Family Protection Act 2013 continues to be conducted in Tonga including the outer islands. This is carried out by various stakeholders involved and include government ministries, CSOs and NGOs. They are carried out in person most of the time, through community meetings, workshops, focus group meetings, marking of international days nationally and also trainings, but other outreach and awareness programs are also run through media (radio, TV).
- ii. Partnerships: There have been partnerships with NRL Australia (2018) on their “Voices against Violence” to promote eliminating violence against women and girls using their rugby

players. These are conducted through educational materials, awareness and outreach programs at schools and sports groups. There is also partnership with famous local sports icons like Mr. Pita Taufatofua in promoting eliminating violence against women through media campaigns.

- iii. Collaboration with faith based organizations: It has been identified that church leaders in Tonga are very influential leaders within the communities and the society. As such, it has further been recognized that there is a need to include them in discussions on the issue of violence against women and girls and how they could participate and contribute in eliminating and preventing this issue. There have been various study tours and learning visits in the pacific region (Fiji, Vanuatu, and Australia) to learn best practices from other faith based organizations. Tonga's is now in the process of carrying out consultations with local church leaders of different churches to share the lessons learnt and to work together in drawing the roadmap going forward and how Government, Civil Societies, NGOs and Faith based organizations can work together in eliminating violence against women and girls.

II Grassroots and community-level mobilization

- i. Outreach and awareness programs: In the last 5 years, ongoing outreach and awareness programs on Tonga's Gender and Development policy and the Family Protection Act 2013 continues to be conducted in Tonga including the outer islands. This is carried out by various stakeholders involved and include government ministries, CSOs and NGOs. They are carried out in person most of the time, through community meetings, workshops, focus group meetings, marking of international days nationally and also trainings, but other outreach and awareness programs are also run through media (radio, TV).

III Working with men and boys

- i. Partnerships: There have been partnerships with NRL Australia (2018) on their "Voices against Violence" to promote eliminating violence against women and girls using their rugby players. These are conducted through educational materials, awareness and outreach programs at schools and sports groups. There is also partnership with famous local sports icons like Mr. Pita Taufatofua in promoting eliminating violence against women through media campaigns.

IV Perpetrator programmes

- i. Activities: While there are no official programs in place for perpetrators, referrals have been made by the Ministry of Justice of perpetrators to the service provide, Women and Children Crisis Center for counselling. The Church also have programs to support perpetrators to reconnect with societies. They also have a support group.

16. Actions Tonga has 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)

I Introduced or strengthened legislation and regulatory provisions

- i. Tonga National Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT): This was established in 2016 to provide proactive services to minimize the likelihood of cyber-attacks through providing vulnerability information to organisations in Tonga. They also respond to cyber incidents mitigating the impact of cyber-attacks. They provide assistance to Tonga Police with computer forensics and advice and carry out consultations on legislation to replace the Computer Crimes Act 2003 recognising violence facilitated by technology. By doing this, it hopes to provide Tonga with ‘a safe and secure digital environment’. There is also a CERT Board that comprises of various Government Ministries, public enterprises, private sectors and civil societies. The Board provides oversight and strategic direction to the CERT.
- ii. Budapest Convention on Cybercrime Treaty 2017: Tonga has become the 55th Party to this Convention allowing for effective international cooperation on cybercrime and electronic evidence. By acceding to the Convention, Tonga is able to obtain assistance to build its capacities in dealing with cyber issues and further develop the new computer crimes bill to make it more effective with the current challenges that the country faces in the cyber world. For more information at <http://www.mic.gov.to/news-today/press-releases/6788-tonga-the-first-pacific-island-to-be-a-party-in-the-budapest-convention>

II Implemented awareness raising initiatives targeting the general public and young women and men in educational settings

- i. Tonga National Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT): This was established in 2016 to provide proactive services to minimize the likelihood of cyber-attacks through providing vulnerability information to organisations in Tonga. They also respond to cyber incidents mitigating the impact of cyber-attacks. They provide assistance to Tonga Police with computer forensics and advice and carry out consultations on legislation to replace the Computer Crimes Act 2003 recognising violence facilitated by technology. By doing this, it hopes to provide Tonga with ‘a safe and secure digital environment’. There is also a CERT Board that comprises of various Government Ministries, public enterprises, private sectors and civil societies. The Board provides oversight and strategic direction to the CERT.
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III Worked with technology providers to set and adhere to good business practices

- i. Budapest Convention on Cybercrime Treaty 2017: Tonga has become the 55th Party to this Convention allowing for effective international cooperation on cybercrime and electronic evidence. By acceding to the Convention, Tonga is able to obtain assistance to build its capacities in dealing with cyber issues and further develop the new computer crimes bill to make it more effective with the current challenges that the country faces in the cyber world.

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17. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media

No Official Reports available

18. Has Tonga taken any action in the LAST FIVE YEARS specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?

YES

- National Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga Policy and Strategic Plan of Act 2019-2025 (formerly known as Revised National Policy on Gender and Development and Strategic Plan of Action 2014-2018: This Gender and Development Policy for Tonga continues to be consistent with the principle of “leaving no one behind”. It is consistent in recognising people with disabilities and vulnerable groups such as female headed households, women in rural areas and the outer islands, the elderly and children as being integral to its priority outcomes. The Strategic Plan of Action contains key outputs and activities that address violence against these specific groups of women that continue to face multiple forms of discrimination whether it be in the family, society, workplace, school and religious organisation. For more information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/kzkua>
- National Policy on Disability Inclusive Development 2014-2018: This policy sets the direction and provides a comprehensive framework for the improvement of quality for life of persons with disabilities and increase their meaningful participation in the society. The review of this policy is now in progress and anticipated to be launched in 2019 with a new term of 2019-2022. The revised Policy contains all of the priority areas of focus from the 2014-2018 Policy with minor amendments. The Policy contains various activities that will address each priority outcome.
- Gender Equality: Where do we stand? Tonga statistical report: This was launched this year (2019) and provides the most updated statistics disaggregated by men, women, boys and girls on their social, economic and political opportunities and participation mainly based on the 2016 Tonga Census. This document is made publicly available on both hard copy and e-copy and hopes to inform people on the current status of gender equality in Tonga. There is a section of the report that identifies the status of violence against women in Tonga based on various data collected during 2014-2018. For more information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/oemo2>

19. Actions and measures Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making

I Reformed constitution, laws and regulations that promote women's participation in politics, especially at decision-making level, including electoral system reform, adoption of temporary special measures, such as quotas, reserved seats, benchmarks and targets)

- i. Temporary Special Measures: Women's Coalition led by the Civil Society Forum of Tonga prepared and submitted a temporary special measures for reserved seats for women in parliament. No decision or further discussions have been made on this although there are still plans to pursue this going forward but with the support from the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women's Affairs Division.

II Implemented capacity building, skills development and other measures

- i. 2014 Practice Parliament for Women: This exercise was carried out as an initiative to encourage women's participation in parliament and inspire wider participation in the law making process and geared to help participants understand parliamentary processes. After this exercise, there was an increase in number of women that registered as candidates for the 2014 national elections.
- ii. 2016 Candidacy training: This initiative was made as part of the national marking program for International Women's Day in Tonga. This resulted in the highest ever number of women registered as candidates for the local government elections and the first ever female District and Town Officer were elected; 2018: Practice Parliament for Youth - carried out as an initiative to encourage women and girls participation in parliament and inspire wider participation in the law making process and geared to help participants understand parliamentary processes.

III Provided opportunities for mentorship, training in leadership, decision-making, public speaking, self-assertion, political campaigning

- i. 2014 Practice Parliament for Women: This exercise was carried out as an initiative to encourage women's participation in parliament and inspire wider participation in the law making process and geared to help participants understand parliamentary processes. After this exercise, there was an increase in number of women that registered as candidates for the 2014 national elections.
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- iii. 2018 Practice Parliament for Youth: This was carried out as an initiative to encourage youth participation in parliament and inspire wider participation by youth in the law making process and geared to help youth understand parliamentary processes.

IV Collected and analysed data on women’s political participation, including in appointed and elected positions

- i. Gender Equality: Where do we stand? Tonga statistical report: This was launched this year (2019) and provides the most updated statistics disaggregated by men, women, boys and girls on their social, economic and political opportunities and participation mainly based on the 2016 Tonga Census. This document is made publicly available on both hard copy and e-copy and hopes to inform people on the current status of gender equality in Tonga. There is a section of the report that identifies the status of violence against women in Tonga based on various data collected during 2014-2018. For more information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/oemo2>

20. Actions Tonga has 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)?

I Provided support to women’s media networks and organisations

- i. Women in ICT: a non-profit organisation with the vision “to allow all women and girls to enter the ICT industry without fear of discrimination nor persecution, thus giving them equal opportunity to impact the industry for the better”. They have started with conducting outreach in the high schools in Tongatapu only and with financial assistance will be able to spread this further on to the outer islands.

21. Does Tonga track the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender responsive budgeting)?

NO

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

N/A

23. Does Tonga have a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality?

YES

- i. The name of the plan is the National Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga Policy Strategic Plan of Action 2019-2025 (formerly known as the Revised National Policy on Gender and Development Strategic Plan of Action 2014-2018. The priority outcomes are as follows:

- a) Enabling environment for mainstreaming gender across government policies, programmes and services, corporate budgeting and monitoring and evaluation
- b) Families and communities prosper from gender equality
- c) Equitable access to economic assets and employment
- d) Increased women's leadership and equitable political representation
- e) Create equal conditions to respond to natural disasters, environmental challenges and climate change

People with disabilities and vulnerable groups are integral to these 5 priority outcomes of Tonga's national strategy.

Funding is covered partially by the Ministry of Internal Affairs recurrent budget in its Corporate Plan and also by donor funding mainly from the Government of Australia through its Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the UN Women. There are plans to create further partnerships with other developing partners. Tonga remains committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and with this plan and intends to implement a more inclusive, sustainable and empowered women and girl's development agenda by strengthening its commitment to SDG 5.

- ii. The Plan is yet to be fully costed, however sufficient resources are currently in place to work together with all necessary stakeholders in implementing and achieving the key actions and outputs covered in the plan for the period covered. Current budgets are made on a financial year period (June-July).

24. Does Tonga have an action plan and timeline for implementation for 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 National human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women?

NO

If YES, please provide some highlights of the action plans and timeline for implementation.

25. Is there a national human rights institution in Tonga?

NO

26. Actions Tonga has 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.

I Other

- i. Meetings: A Women, Peace and Security symposium was held in Tonga in early 2018 and coordinated by His Majesty's Armed Forces in collaboration with the Nevada National Guard. This platform opened dialogue on the UN Resolution 1325, whether it was relevant

and how it could benefit Tonga. In this platform, it was agreed that a national action plan on women, peace and security to ensure protection, equal participation in relief and recovery and prevention of all forms of violence against women during and after the crisis and disasters. This was further agreed would be spearheaded by His Majesty's Armed Forces with the support of the various government Ministries including the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women's Affairs Division, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Police, the Attorney General's Office and relevant civil society organizations. This initiative is financially supported under the Defence & Security Cooperation Program between His Majesty's Armed Forces and the US Armed Forces (PACOM).

- ii. Training: A Tongan delegation was selected in 2019 and led by military personnel from His Majesty's Armed Forces together with 2 public servants (from the national machinery for gender equality and the Attorney General's office) to attend DKI-APCSS (Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies Hawaii) and to undertake a course on comprehensive crisis management 19-1. Part of the training involved working with professional staff of the Center in drafting a National Action Plan on WPS for Tonga. A draft zero has been drafted under the guardianship of His Majesty's Armed Forces further collaborations with relevant stakeholders. Further information on DKI-APCSS at <https://apcss.org/>
- iii. National WEGET Strategic Action Plan 2019-2025: The Strategic Plan of Action 2019-2025, priority outcome 2 (Families and communities prosper from gender equality) recognizes the need to support the development of a WPS NAP pursuant to the 1325 UN Resolution to ensure that the values of gender equality are better understood and promoted in the family, workplace and society. This has been achieved through the support of the National Machinery for Gender equality in the drafting of draft zero of the National Action Plan on women, peace and security. For further information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/kzkua>

27. Actions Tonga has 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?

I Promoted equal participation of women in humanitarian and crisis response activities at all levels, particularly at the decision-making level

- i. Safety and Protection Cluster: This cluster established by the National Emergency Committee under the National Emergency Management Office of the Ministry of MEIDECC includes a gender balanced participation.

II Integrated a gender perspective in humanitarian action and crisis response

- i. Safety and Protection Cluster: This cluster established by the National Emergency Committee under the National Emergency Management Office of the Ministry of MEIDECC consists of key players that consider the safety and protection of men, women and children before, during and after crisis and natural disasters. Vulnerable groups are prioritized during response initiatives. The Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women's Affairs Division is a member of the cluster and its CEO the Chairperson.

28. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response.

I Implemented legal and policy reform to redress and prevent violations of the rights of women and girls

- i. National WEGET Policy and Strategic Plan of Action 2019-2015: This is the most recent National Policy on Gender and Development which addresses specific violations of the rights of women and girls in Tonga. This includes issues such as violence against women and girls, SRHR, equal access to economic assets and employment, women's participation in leaders and political roles and equal conditions when responding to natural disasters, environmental challenges and climate change. The policy further recognises the need for an enabling environment for mainstreaming gender across government policies, programs and services, corporate budgeting and monitoring and evaluation. Key outputs and actions have been identified in its Strategic Plan of Action that together with the assistance of various stakeholders like civil society organisations, NGOs, government ministries and faith based organisations, could be achieved. Funding is provided both from Government budget and also developing partners through partnerships and agreements with the Government. For further information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/kzkua>

II Taken measures to combat illicit arms trafficking

- i. Capacity building: There are various trainings and capacity building programs designed for officers within the Ministry of Police for the purpose of being better placed to enforce crimes recognized under the Criminal Offences Act 1926 including arms trafficking.
- ii. Transnational Crimes Unit: This special unit within the Ministry of Police looks after transnational crimes and includes trafficking between borders of illicit arms.

III Taken measures to combat the production, use of the trafficking in illicit drugs

- i. Capacity building: There are various trainings and capacity building programs designed for officers within the Ministry of Police for the purpose of being better placed to enforce crimes recognized under the Criminal Offences Act 1926 including arms trafficking.
- ii. Transnational Crimes Unit: This special unit within the Ministry of Police looks after transnational crimes and includes trafficking between borders of illicit drugs

IV Taken measures to combat trafficking in women and children

- i. Counter Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime Act 2013: This law acts to 'give effect to the Kingdom's International obligations concerning certain United Nations counter terrorism Conventions and Instruments and the Transnational Organised crime Convention and protocols and for related purposes.

- ii. Transnational Crimes Unit: This special unit within the Ministry of Police looks after transnational crimes and includes trafficking between borders of women and girls.

29. Actions that Tonga has taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child

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

- i. “Let Girls be Girls” campaign: A campaign initiated by NGO Talitha Project with the support of the Ministry of Justice to promote increasing of marriage age for girls from 15 to 18 years old. The aim is to encourage legislative change that allows marriage of children below the age of 18 years old provided parental consent is provided.

II Strengthened girls’ access to quality education, skills development and training

- i. Education Act 2013: promotes the right of children to quality education and has incorporated inclusive education to reach out to all learners and students and as an overall principle, guiding all education and policies and practices starting from the fact that education is a basic human right and the foundation for a more just and equal society.

III Tackled disadvantages in health outcomes due to malnutrition, early childbearing (e.g. anemia) and exposure to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases

- i. Community outreach: The Ministry of Health have various community health clinics to cater for people in the rural areas in Tonga including the outer islands. This enables and encourages easy access by men, women, girls and boys to most of the essential health services which are offered in the in town. Through these community health clinics, they are also able to conduct awareness on health issues like non communicable and communicable diseases. This is further strengthened through the mobile clinics established by NGO, Tonga Family Health Association in the rural villages including the outer islands.

IV Implemented policies and programmes to reduce and eradicate child, early and forced marriage

- i. “Let Girls be Girls” campaign: A campaign initiated by NGO Talitha Project with the support of the Ministry of Justice to promote increasing of marriage age for girls from 15 to 18 years old. The aim is to encourage legislative change that allows marriage of children below the age of 18 years old provided parental consent is provided.

V Implemented policies and programmes to eliminate violence against girls, including physical and sexual violence and harmful practices

- i. National WEGET Policy 2019-2025; This is the most recent National Policy on Gender and Development which continues to focus on ending violence against women and girls as part of its priority outcomes. The WEGET also has a Strategic Plan of Action that sets out the key outputs and actions in addressing this issue. Priority outcome 2 “Families and communities prosper from gender equality” focusses on ensuring that the values of gender equality are better understood and promoted in the family, workplace and society, that measures are in

place to eliminate domestic violence and provide services to victims; and to improve sexual and reproductive health rights including access to family planning. For further information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/kzkua>

- ii. Family Protection Act 2013: This law recognizes physical, sexual, mental and economic abuse in a domestic relationship which is defined under the law. It covers men, women and children. It was established to provide greater protection from domestic violence, to introduce orders, clarify the duties of the police and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of victims/survivors of domestic violence and related matters. For further information on the Act at https://ago.gov.to/cms/legislation/current-revised-edition/by-title.html?view=acts_alpha
- iii. National Service Delivery Protocol: As part of the review of the RNPAGD 2014-2018 priority outcome 1 that covers violence against women and girls, it was identified that there was a lot of duplication of programs and services by service providers for victims/survivors of violence. At times, clients and people were confused as to which services would meet their need or requirement. In light of this, discussions were initiated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women’s Affairs Division with external parties for funding to develop a National Service Delivery Protocol to help coordinate the services of service providers for victims/survivors of violence. Consultations have commenced this year in Tongatapu and the main outer islands. It is hoped to continue with a completion date by the end of 2019.

VI Implemented policies and programmes to eradicate child labour and excessive levels of unpaid care and domestic work undertaken by girl children

- i. Employment Relations Bill 2013: Further consultations on the Bill to all employees and employers in both the public and private sector concluded in 2018. Consultations had also extended to the outer islands. The ERB will be Tonga’s first ever employment legislation and will provide fair minimum employment standards for both employers and employees. While the Bill will apply to all employers and employees in Tonga with some exceptions, the private sector employees stand to benefit the most as the public service employees are protected under the Public Service Act 2002. To date, the ERB has been approved by Cabinet and now is with the Legislative Assembly for discussions

VII Promoted girls’ awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life

- i. Practice Parliament for Youth in 2018: This was carried out as an initiative to encourage youth participation in parliament and inspire wider participation by youth in the law making process and geared to help youth understand parliamentary processes.
- iii. Educational programs: There are various programs that assists girl’s awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life. These are provided by mainly NGOs, like the Tonga Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship (TYEE) that provides programs to assist early school leavers of 18-24 who are unable to secure a job. For more information at <https://www.tyeetonga.org/>
Tonga Skills, a program invested by the Australian Government in Tonga focused in developing skills in Tonga that is linked directly to inclusive economic growth. Tonga Skills operates nationally and works closely with the Ministry of Education and the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board (TNQAB). Their goal is “equitable access to quality

based and demand drive skills development contributing to sustainable economic growth in Tonga. They provide training on demand driven skills development in the areas of tourism, agriculture, fisheries, construction and handicrafts. For more information at <http://tongaskills.com/>

Tonga National Youth Congress also runs programs to support youths and the social challenges that they face. For more information at <http://www.tonganationalyouth.org/>

- ii. “Let Girls be Girls” campaign: A campaign initiated by NGO Talitha Project with the support of the Ministry of Justice to promote increasing of marriage age for girls from 15 to 18 years old. The aim is to encourage legislative change that allows marriage of children below the age of 18 years old provided parental consent is provided.

30. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies?

I Supported women’s participation and leadership in environmental and natural resource management and governance

- i. Gender indicators incorporated in the Outer Islands Renewable Energy Project (OIREP) for 50% participation of women in village committee decision makers.
- ii. Scholarships on environment courses from MEIDECC 50% for females and 50% for males directed.

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

- i. Scholarships on environment courses from MEIDECC 50% for females and 50% for males directed.

III Enhanced women’s access to sustainable time-and labor-saving infrastructure (e.g. access to clean water and energy) and climate smart agricultural technology.

- i. Outer Islands Renewable Energy Project (OIREP)
- ii. WASH Cluster under the National Emergency Committee

31. Actions Tonga has taken in the LAST FIVE YEARS to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation

I Supported women’s participation and leadership, including those affected by disasters, in disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation policies, programmes and projects

- i. *Aims and scope of measures taken; [Environmental Management Act 2010](#); (Joint National Action Plan on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management II, Nuku’alofa Urban Development Sector Plan, Outer Island Renewable Energy Project); [Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2003](#) plays a vital role in assessing the impacts of development activities The target population is at National level coverage. Budget is funded under Government and development partners (DFAT, CIF, GCCA, IUCN, PACC, SPC, UNDP, UNEP, GIZ, GEF, and EU).*

Impact evaluations is covered under the monitoring and evaluation systems that are in place. For more information at <http://ecc.gov.to/> . There is a Strategic implementation plan of action for the JNAP II and includes the gender policy activities for climate change and disaster risk reduction. The Climate Change Trust Fund under the Green Climate Fund to support women's activities in the rural communities is also under way. For more information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/oemo2>

II Promoted access of women in situations of disaster to services such as relief payments, disaster insurance and compensation

- i.* Aims and scope of measures taken; There are grants from the Government under the National Emergency Committee (NEC), that CSO's and NGOs can tap into to assist community groups including women's groups to recover from natural disasters. These funds can be accessed as groups from organizational members of a specific cluster, including the Safety & Protection Cluster, and the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster. The target population include women, people living with disability, female headed households who act as beneficiaries for the grant. Budget is covered by Government and Development partners. Impact evaluations are covered by the monitoring and evaluation which is part of the criteria for grants. For more information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/oemo2>

III Introduction of strengthened and implemented gender-responsive laws and policies related to disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation (e.g. disaster laws addressing vulnerability of women in disaster)

- i.* Aims and scope of measures taken: Climate Change Policy 2016 which has found gender to be central and puts focus on it by incorporating gender components into its JNAP II on climate change. Target population at National level include women and other disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The Budget involves recurrent and development partners. Impact evaluations are covered in the Monitoring and Evaluation which is part of the criteria for the grants. More information at <http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/oemo2>

Section Three: National Institutions and Processes

32. Tonga's national machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The national machinery for gender is the Women's Affairs and Gender Equality Division; it is one of the eight divisions under the portfolio of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which was established in 2012.

33. Tonga's national machinery as member of the institutional process for SDG implementation.

There is no national process for SDG implementation. The National SDGs Committee operates under the National MDGs Taskforce.

34. The formal mechanism in place for different stakeholder to participate in the implantation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

a) Stakeholders participate in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- i. Stakeholders which 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.
- ii. The Civil Society organizations and the United Nations systems participate in the national coordination process through the reporting processes.

b) Mechanisms in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalized groups can participate and that their concerns are reflected in these processes.

The Women's Affairs Division (WAD) is Secretariat to both the National Advisory Committee for Gender and Development (NACGAD) and the Family Protection Act Advisory Council (FPAC). Varying non-government organizations are members of these committees hence their input on their implementation of the varying outcomes of both the gender policy and the Family Protection Act are captured; any issues arising from the implementations are also noted for follow-up actions.

Complementing the NACGAD and FPAC are steering committees for International Women's Day and the 16 Days of Activism, these forums provide an opportunity to highlight key issues faced by marginalized groups.

The WAD is trustee to the Family Protection Act Trust Fund and the Women's Development Grant. These grants are open to both grass-root women's groups and non-government organizations to apply to.

c) How stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.

Stakeholders have contributed in consultations meetings on the implementation of the Revised National Policy on Gender and Development and its review, these contribution have been captured in the recently launched Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga (national gender policy).

35. Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation.

It is one of the priorities under the Tonga Strategic Development Framework II as National Outcome C, "More inclusive, Sustainable and Empowering Human Development with Gender Equality". Further, the Women's Affairs and Gender Equality Division is a National Women's Machinery is a member of the MDGs Taskforce.

Section Four: Data and statistics

36. The TOP THREE AREAS in which Tonga has made most progress over the PAST FIVE YEARS when it comes to gender statistics at the national level.

I Established an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender statistics (e.g., technical group, inter-agency committee) (e.g. Data Working Group)

- i. The Advisory Council on the Family Protection Act has a Data Working Group as a sub-committee on collecting domestic violence data. That committee meets on a quarterly basis prior to the Advisory Council meeting. Members of these committees are service providers on domestic violence which they are Women and Children Crisis Centre, Tonga National Centre for Women and Children, Tonga Legal Aid Centre and the Domestic Violence Unit of the Ministry of Police.

II Re-processed existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics (E.g. Production of GEWDWD report)

- i. **Explanation:** Women's Affairs Division in partnership with Statistics department and SPC in Fiji have been re-processing existing data from national census and surveys to produce gender statistics. For example, is the production of the Gender Equality: Where Do We Stand report.

III Improved administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps (E.g. development of the GMM)

- i. **Explanation:** At present, the Ministry of Internal Affairs – Women's Affairs Division is collecting administrative data to update gender statistics developed from national surveys and census. Partner stakeholders of WAD are based on the 5 national gender policy outcomes of WEGET (National Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga).
- ii. **Explanation:** Provided in the links below are the three publications launched in April 2019.

Gender equality: where do we stand? The Kingdom of Tonga

<http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/oemo>

Gender mainstreaming handbook: Government of the Kingdom of Tonga

<http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/oawzk>

National Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga policy and strategic plan of action: 2019-2025

<http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/kzkua>

37. The TOP 3 PRIORITIES for strengthening national gender statistics over the NEXT FIVE YEARS

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

- i. **Explanation:** Collaboration between the Women's Affairs Division and led by Statistics Department and other stakeholders to conduct a multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS Survey) 2019, which is a survey for children ages 5-17, demographic health survey modules for domestic violence, fertility and contraception)

II Development of a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics

- i. **Explanation:** Recommendations from stakeholders, users and producers gender statistics for a centralised web-based database on gender statistics hosted by the Women’s Affairs Division, thus enabling more effective, efficient usage and accessibility to data. This would also cover the need for 1 national framework / monitoring and evaluation data toolkit.

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

- i. **Explanation:** Request from gender statistics focal points for ongoing conversations and networking to facilitate capacity building of these organisations, utilise opportunities from partners for up-skilling including skills to maximise usage of gender statistics. Further was a request for a Gender Statistics Day, and this would be facilitated by trainings, seminars and retreats

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

Yes

If YES, how many indicators does it include and how many of those are gender-specific¹?

Explanation: Please refer to the links stated below for further information on the indicators:

Gender equality: where do we stand? The Kingdom of Tonga

<http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/oemo>

Gender mainstreaming handbook: Government of the Kingdom of Tonga

<http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/oawzk>

National Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga policy and strategic plan of action: 2019-2025

<http://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/kzkua>

If YES, how many of the gender-specific indicators are additional country indicators (i.e., not part of the global SDG monitoring and indicator framework)?

Please provide the indicators in an annex

If NO, how many global gender-specific SDG indicators (list provided in Annex 1) are available in your country?

Please provide the indicators in an annex

Attach TSDf II Annex 15

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

¹ The term ‘gender-specific indicators’ is used to refer to indicators that explicitly call for disaggregation by sex and/or refer to gender equality as the underlying objective. For example, SDG indicator 5.c.1 captures the percentage of countries with systems to track public allocations that are directed towards policies and programmes that promote gender equality—the underlying objective is the promotion of gender equality. The term is also used for indicators where women and girls are specified within the indicator as the targeted population (see UN Women. 2018. *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York).

X Yes

Women's Affairs Division and SPC produced and launched a gender statistical report based on the 2014-18 gender policy outcome areas, and gender specific indicators were on:

1. Enabling Familial and Social Environment for Gender Equality
2. Equitable Access to Economic Assets and Employment
3. Increased Leadership and Equitable and Political Representation
4. Create Equal Conditions to Response to Natural Disasters and Environmental and Climate Change
5. Increased Focus on Addressing the Additional Vulnerability by Female Headed Households, Women with Disabilities and Women in Rural Areas Especially in the Outer Islands

40. Which of the following disaggregations² is routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

- Geographic location
- Income
- sex
- Age
- Education
- Marital status
- Race/ethnicity
- Migratory status
- Disability

X Other characteristics relevant in national contexts

- Labour Force
- Religion

* * *

² As specified in A/RES/70/1, with the addition of education and marital status.