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Gender Profiles of Asian Development Bank's Pacific Developing Member Countries

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Introduction

This document is intended to provide information to a number of key users to assist them to better understand gender equality issues in the Pacific Developing Member Countries (PDMC) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).¹ This information supplements a wealth of existing information created by development partners at all levels.

The country profiles will support ADB's gender analysis during development of Country Partnership Strategies and provides information that can be integrated into policy dialogue at a variety of levels. The profiles also provide a benchmark, or snapshot in time, of countries' progress to achieve gender equality, using indicators related to education, health, infrastructure services, political participation and violence against women. The country profile information can also be used as context for planning and design of any country level intervention to assess gender issues and target assistance.

Concurrent development of country profiles is also being done in more specific and detailed ways by other development partners, most notably through analysis of national progress on implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). UNIFEM and UNDP have compiled an analysis of legislative indicators for those Pacific countries (excluding Timor Leste), which is extremely useful as a both a tool for integrated planning and a platform for policy dialogue.² This is supplemented by the concluding comments of the CEDAW committee for those countries that have submitted national reports on implementation progress.

The process of drafting these country profiles has reinforced existing criticisms that data on gender equality and women's status is problematic. Not all data is consistently available and even where it can be found for all countries it has not always been compiled in the same source documents. This data problem is a key gap and an area for further work for the ADB and other donors. There is an urgent need to coordinate data collection and also to ensure that all projects for all sectors, regardless of thematic emphasis, be required to compile age and sex-disaggregated data about all beneficiaries and participants of projects. Data analysis frameworks and protocols for gender related information need to be agreed between development partners to promote development effectiveness. In addition, compilation, collation and analysis of national women's policies would help to identify baseline criteria for gender issues in the region.

The following document contains a brief Pacific overview of gender and development issues across countries, followed by 14 country gender profiles. At the end of the document Appendices 1 and 2 contain tables that summarize information on donor activities at the regional and country level. The information in the Appendices has been provided by each agency. In some cases the tables are incomplete because development partners did not have their gender information compiled by country and/or they did not have the capacity to collate and summarize their activities to submit to this ADB project. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is currently working to establish a development-effectiveness working group on gender in the Pacific. SPC, acting as secretariat, will work with all development partners, including ADB, to collate activities on gender in the Pacific region and track this information to monitor progress and evaluate barriers and supports to achieving gender equality.

¹ Countries include: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

² UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva.

Regional Overview on Indicative Areas for Applied Research

Most international donors and development agencies in the Pacific deliver their gender and development programmes through regional and sub-regional programmes and target specific member countries for different activities. This approach helps to target assistance where it is most needed, generate awareness and political will at high levels, provide an environment for lateral learning between countries, and create economies of scale to overcome constraints such as geographic isolation, lack of facilities and low capacity.

In the Pacific, the guiding regional document, The Pacific Plan, is a key mechanism that can be used to leverage gender considerations into regional planning for development and implementation. The Council of Regional Agency of the Pacific (CROP) gender strategy, which the 10 CROP agencies have endorsed to demonstrate commitment to gender mainstreaming, supplements the Pacific Plan strategic objectives for gender. Both mechanisms are coordinated by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) in collaboration with the Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC). The SPC Human Development Program (HDP) manages a triennial process to consult with all stakeholders and build consensus on regional development priorities and emerging issues that are related to gender equality. This is done with an understanding that gender equality is a prerequisite for development effectiveness as well as a human right. Based on this mandate and commitment, the SPC-HDP works with major donors to provide coordinated technical support services for gender and women's empowerment assisting both governments and national/regional non-government entities.

While gender is included in the high level policy and planning frameworks for the Pacific regional agencies, the 2007 stocktake of CROP's gender mainstreaming process highlighted that there are significant gaps between what is endorsed and what is happening. The stocktake identified that the enabling environment for gender-responsive development programming within regional agencies is still relatively weak and that there is a need to:

- i) increase demonstrated political will for gender mainstreaming;
- ii) improve organisational culture and attitudes about gender equality as a prerequisite for positive development outcomes;
- iii) increase responsibility and accountability for gender at senior levels and throughout organisational performance management systems;
- iv) improve technical capacity to do gender analysis across sectoral and thematic areas within each agency; and,
- v) provide adequate allocation of resources to ensure gender mainstreaming commitments can be implemented

The sub-regions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia have differing levels of development, human resource capacity, socio-economic stability, and different cultural norms related to gender. These factors influence levels of female education and participation as well as the ability of countries to incorporate gender issues into government and civil society systems and mechanisms. Additionally, differing economic bases influence sub-regional variations in women's livelihoods, their ability to access to resources and their dependency on male relatives and husbands.

Fiji is a regional hub and is home to a number of national NGOs that offer regional gender-related services on human rights, leadership and advocacy, and ending violence against women. Fiji also hosts the main campus of the University of the South Pacific (USP). The USP Institute of Pacific

Studies has facilitated a number of research projects on gender in the region, and the USP Gender Advisory Committee has specifically identified the need to create an integrated gender and development program that would both mainstream gender in USP and support a Gender Studies Programme. This would help create a critical mass of Pacific professionals with an understanding of the links between Pacific culture, gender and development success.

Region-wide structural and systemic issues that have been identified in various regional and national gender forums include:

- The lack of enabling environments for gender within the structures and systems of Pacific bureaucratic and political systems;
- Low capacity and a small human resource pool for gender analysis and gender-responsive planning in donor agencies, regional agencies, governments and civil society;
- Marginalization of National Women's Machineries within government and their lack of influence on strategic analysis and priority setting, national planning, and budget allocation;
- Inadequate collection and analysis of sex/age-disaggregated data which constrains development of evidence based rationales for gender mainstreaming;
- Poor knowledge management and lack of information dissemination by governments;
- Poor infrastructure and social service delivery and women's resulting time poverty, overwork and negative health impacts;
- Low environmental standards and associated implications for women's changing resource management responsibilities, workloads, time poverty and ability to provide for their families.

Region wide social issues, that vary in degree from country to country, include:

- Women's low level of participation in the decision-making processes of their countries;
- Unemployment among male and female youth;
- Women's lower level of access to and control of economic resources;
- The extreme marginalization and abuse of women and girls in already vulnerable groups such as the disabled;
- Violence against women and children;
- The stigma attached to people living with HIV/AIDs and their (most often female) caregivers;
- Uneven educational and employment opportunities between rural and urban areas and associated implications for more male than female youth migration to towns and cities.

The attached compendium of country information papers is intended i) to support the ADB Country Partnership Strategies (CPS) for the Pacific, and ii) to provide guidance in identifying areas for ADB and other development partners to make targeted gender interventions in the region. The profiles are built around categories used for the CPS and they also incorporate supplemental indicators identified by i) the UN Millennium Project to demonstrate progress toward gender equality and ii) CEDAW analyses and reporting processes.

The donor tables in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 show the regional and country level initiatives of bilateral donors, UNIFEM, UNDP, UNFPA, SPC and PIFS and programming areas of key regional NGOs.

Cook Islands

I. Gender situation and key issues

The Cook Islands are comprised of 15 islands and atolls spread across 2 million km² of ocean. The population is primarily Maori and shares the language and many cultural similarities with the New Zealand Maori. The population is approximately 19,500, half of which is concentrated on the main island of Rarotonga. There is a negative annual growth rate of -1.5 due to out migration to New Zealand.³ Half the population is under 26 years of age and many youth are leaving to seek opportunities overseas.

Cook Islands women have a high degree of autonomy and traditional status but continue to face discrimination in law and practice and have less access and control of economic, political, time and knowledge resources than men. The 1995 National Policy on Women notes that 'subtle elements of discrimination against women perpetuated by culture, custom, and tradition continue to exist in Cook Island society today.' This view is reinforced in the 2006 State Report on CEDAW.⁴

The nature of Cook Island's free association with New Zealand has created high living standards and ensures that there are solid remittance payments from the estimated 50,000 expatriate Cook Islanders in New Zealand. The distribution of social welfare payments indicates that female-headed households continue to bear the brunt of hardship that does exist in the Cook Islands.

Assessing the progress of the Cook Islands against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.⁵ These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; limited human resource capacity; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. The 2007 ADB Country Performance Assessment indicates that secondary enrollment ratios for girls are only 63%. While this is higher than the male ratio of 58% it is a significant drop from primary levels of 98%. Retention rates are reportedly low with only 22% of students who start the secondary level complete the 7th Form. The changing age structure (50% of the population is under 26%) and secondary results indicate the need for improved vocational and tertiary opportunities in the country.⁶ It must be noted that there are some discrepancies in data on secondary education which may be due to out migration of young people while they are still also registered as being Cook Islands residents.

³ SPC.2007. *Pacific Island Populations*. Noumea.

⁴ UN Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. 2006. *Initial Report of State Parties: Cook Islands*. New York. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reports.htm>

⁵ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

⁶ ADB.2007. Country Performance Assessment: Cook Islands (Education score section). Manila

COUNTRY PROFILE: COOK ISLANDS

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. Reproductive health standards are good with the assistance of skilled birth attendants available for 100% of deliveries. The total fertility rate is 2.9 and contraceptive prevalence is approximately 44%. There is however a fairly high adolescent fertility rate of 68 births/ 1000 women aged 15 – 19 years. Maternal mortality figures are not available, but infant mortality rates are 14.6/1000 live births, under-5 mortality is 19/1000 live births and under 5 malnourishment (underweight) figures are 10/1000. These figures indicate that the Cooks will meet their MDG targets for basic health indicators. Women's life expectancy is 74 years to men's 68 years.

In terms of sexual rights and freedoms, Cook Islands women still face strong discrimination. Rape in marriage is not considered a crime and abortion is illegal except to save the mother's life or when the pregnancy is the result of incest or abuse.⁷ There have only been two reported cases of HIV/AIDS, both in non-Cook Islanders. The government has a prevention and awareness program in place but does not have facilities to provide treatment.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in the Cook Islands perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence and sometimes cash crop farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. The Cooks have developed a comprehensive infrastructure framework for water supply and sanitation. But although 98% of urban and 88% of rural homes have access to improved water supplies, the piped water on the two most populous islands is not potable. Across the country, 100% of all areas are reported to have improved sanitation but in higher density areas the quality of maintenance has been poor and there is suspected contamination of lagoons by septic systems. This creates an additional workload for women in their capacity as family managers. They have to cope with increased risks of skin and water borne disease from non-potable water and food poisoning from contaminated marine food sources. A major infrastructure constraint to women and girls economic opportunities is transportation from the outer islands. Air and sea travel is expensive and time consuming respectively. This inhibits women's ability to access economic opportunities, particularly in relation to marketing their finely woven handicrafts. The Cooks have a fragile environment that is high risk from severe weather and climate change. Infrastructure improvements, to protect the environment and provide protection to structures, need to involve women as stakeholders and monitors in order to ensure effective management and maintenance in all communities.

Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In the Cook Islands women have less access to productive and economic resources than men despite their seeming equality of

⁷ UN Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. 2006. op cited.

COUNTRY PROFILE: COOK ISLANDS

access to land, credit and employment. Most land in the Cook Islands is freehold and women and men can both have land title. There seems to be little difference in women's ability to access credit although there is anecdotal evidence of some lenders requiring the signature of a husband or brother when law does not require such co-signing. If women are unaware of their rights this may block their access to credit and discourage private sector development where they have been very active. From 1998 – 2002 the Small Business Enterprise Center assisted 89 start-ups, 65% of which were women-run.⁸

Women make up 42% of the public service including a number of top posts. In 2002 women held 4 out of the 31 Permanent Secretary level positions and there were 29 women leading government divisions compared to 59 men. It is clear that despite the equal qualifications of women, there is still an organisational culture that favors the appointment of men to senior positions of responsibility.⁹ In private sector employment a large number of women are employed at a low level in tourism related service industries.

There is no legislation supporting equal pay. The 2001 census showed inequality in earning; there were more women in the lowest income bracket and more men in all other incremental brackets. Female-headed households are worst off; most of the recipients of the government's social welfare allowances are women with child dependents. Due to relatively low salaries and the high cost of imported goods, women continue to engage in subsistence livelihood activities even when they have full time employment, family and community responsibilities.

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

As of early 2008 there were 3 women in the 24-seat Parliament one of whom holds a ministerial position.¹⁰ Women hold between 30 and 50% of Directors positions on government boards and committees and have also been well represented in the national House of Chiefs where (from 1986 - 1992) they had an average 50/50 representation. In the outer islands, small numbers of women have been elected to Island Councils, which are capable of owning, selling and managing land. While women are having successes in the political arena there are still constraints. Far fewer women stand for election than men as they face time constraints related to their continued family responsibilities and difficulty in financing campaigns. As in all other countries in the Pacific there is still a strong need to link gender into good governance initiatives and provide gender analysis training for politicians. This is an area where donors need to increase their own political will and more effectively assist the Cook Islands with improved decision-making to support and advance the progress that is being made for gender equality.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. Despite women's relatively high status in the Cook Islands and good showing on the basic MDG indicators, violence against women is a problem. In 2005 there were 180 cases reported by women to the NGO Punanga Tauturu (PTI), which is the women's counseling centre in Rarotonga. This was an increase of 20 over the previous year. Only a fraction these were reported to the police. There is currently no specific legislation related to domestic violence despite considerable advocacy about the need to legally

⁸ ADB. 2008. Draft Country Partnership Strategy: Cook Islands. Manila.

⁹ UN Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. 2006. *ibid*

¹⁰ Cook Islands Government website <http://www.cook-islands.gov.ck/parliament.php>

COUNTRY PROFILE: COOK ISLANDS

address both domestic violence and sexual crimes against women and children. Currently, the courts are quite lenient in these cases, often handing down only short or suspended sentences when prosecutions are successful. The PTI has facilitated training for police, the Ministry of Health and the Probation Service, which has resulted in the adoption of a ‘no drop’ policy by police.¹¹

II. Government’s gender policy and planning framework

Due to the Cook Island’s free association agreement with New Zealand, both countries ratified CEDAW in 1985. Cook Islands submitted its first State Report in 2006 with support from UNIFEM. The report identifies a number of areas for legislative reform to ensure constitutional commitments to gender are realized through the chain of law, policy, planning and implementation. The National Sustainable Development Plan approved in 2007 provides development guidelines until 2020 and all of its eight strategic priorities are relevant to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Social Services gender equality portfolio. In addition, correlated objectives can be found in the National Policy on Women. However there are significant constraints in budget allocations for the Ministry’s gender programs and a shortage of staff with adequate gender analysis capacity to advocate and integrate these into the current planning framework.

III. Government’s institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Social Services is responsible for gender equality through the Gender and Development Division (GADD). The Division’s programs focus on implementation of the National Policy on Women and regional and international commitments on gender. These are integral to the success of the NSDP. Coordination of commitments and action planning is supported by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), which works, on a triennial basis, to bring countries together to i) report and focus on their government’s priorities, ii) coordinate regional resources and iii) identify strategies for development cooperation. Current constraints include the lack of integrated gender analysis in Cook Island national budget and small staff numbers and limited financial resources for the GADD. To offset this weakness there is a need to build capacity, in the GADD and across government, to advocate for legislative and policy change in central and line ministries to ensure that national priorities for gender are budgeted for and integrated across sectors.

The GADD also works closely with a number of NGOs in the country. These organisations run their own programs and support action on government-sponsored initiatives. These include legal/human rights training, prevention of violence against women, HIV/AIDs awareness, and women’s economic empowerment.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

¹¹ UN Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. 2006. *ibid*

V. Indicative areas for intervention

The draft CPS for the Cook Islands indicates a focus on infrastructure and public sector performance. Both areas will benefit from gender analysis and identification of strategic gender responsive inputs. These include identification of indicators related to gender, and incorporation of systems to capture sex/age-disaggregated data in needs assessments and results frameworks. This will support development of knowledge on i) the relationships between environmental protection infrastructure and gendered responsibilities for environmental management and ii) how financing for gender equality can be incorporated into public sector improvement and improved financial planning processes. It is important for team leaders to integrate gender into cross-sectoral high-level policy dialogue and work with the Social Development Specialist to plan for these interventions and incorporate effective gender responsive features into projects. Information from ADB projects should be coordinated with government's gender mainstreaming efforts. Financial inputs for gender related project features and gender specific indicators should be discussed with government to support further gender responsive planning and service delivery.

Federated States of Micronesia

I. Gender situation and key issues

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) consists of four island groups made up of over 600 islands. The country has a population of 110,000, half of which is under 20 years of age and 20% of who live on remote outer islands. There is a large youth population. There are eight local languages, with English as the language of government and commerce. The government of FSM is complex for such a small population; there are three branches of government and four constitutional states with specific authority and differing legislation. This makes it challenging for women to advocate for consistent gender responsive services and legislation. Women's empowerment indicators vary from state to state. With the exception of Yap, all states have a matrilineal inheritance patterns but across the country, men have more access to, and control of, political, economic, time and knowledge resources. The 2005 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) indicated that 36.7% of households had incomes below the basic needs poverty line. This reflects an increase in poverty from 1998 levels of 30%. Subsistence agriculture and fishing are mainstays for food security in rural areas and division of labour between men and women varies depending on the state and the activity. Poverty in FSM is linked to causal factors such as weak economic performance, a breakdown in traditional social safety nets and poor public service delivery. Poverty manifests as deteriorating access to essential social services, low educational achievement levels, a lack of jobs and markets and malnutrition in urban areas where the consumption poor quality processed foods is high.

Assessing the progress of FSM against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.¹² These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; lack of integrated gender analysis in planning and budgeting by both government and donors; low human resource capacity; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. Gross secondary enrollment for girls in 2005 was 88% with a female/ male ratio of 1.07. There are no sex-disaggregated statistics available on tertiary enrollment or secondary completion. The quality of education is low and testing indicates poor performance in language arts and math. Despite this the school system graduates 91% of children from the primary level and 86% from secondary. Only 1% of teachers have education degrees and 39% have no formal tertiary qualifications. Consequently both boys and girls leave the school system unprepared to function well in government or in the private sector employment.¹³ There are no statistics available on male/female literacy levels.

¹² UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. *Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality*. New York

¹³ ADB. 2005. *Country Strategy and Program Update 2006 – 2007*. Manila

COUNTRY PROFILE: FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. Women in FSM face health challenges due to weakening service delivery and poor water supply and sanitation infrastructure. There are decentralized services for births with 88% of deliveries assisted by skilled birth attendants.

Contraceptive prevalence among married women is reported at 45% with no figures available for youth. Fertility rates are 4.2 births/women and an adolescent fertility rate of 33.8/1000 (women aged 15 – 19). There are high maternal mortality rates of 274/100,000 births (2001) as well as high infant mortality (34/1000 live births). Women's life expectancy is 68.7 to the national average of 68.¹⁴

Rape in marriage is illegal in national legislation but this is not consistent across the states. Abortion is not criminalized under the national constitution, in Yap, Pohnpei or Kosrae, but it is criminalized in Chuuk.¹⁵ HIV/AIDS is an issue in FSM. There have been 36 reported cases, almost half of which were women, and all but two of the individuals have died. There are both donor and NGO funded programmes for youth and Chuuk and Pohnpei have clear policies.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in FSM perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence and cash crop farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. The geography of FSM combined with land tenure constraints and high transportation costs inhibit women's ability to access credit, take advantage of centralized services and engage in entrepreneurship and marketing. Women spend disproportionate amounts of time on household management and provision of health care. Only 41% of the population has access to improved water sources – which are not always safe – and there is only 45% availability of improved sanitation. Poor or no waste management systems further compromise the environmental health of communities, and create stress and overwork for women in their roles care givers and food providers.¹⁶

Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In FSM women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. Land ownership in FSM is based on customary title. Except for Yap, inheritance and land titles pass through women who have influence on decision-making at the household and clan level. However men make most land use decisions related to resource extraction and development and benefits are not equally shared. Pohnpei is the only state with legislation ensuring equal access to land and property for women. While these

¹⁴ UNDP. 2007/2008. *Human Development Report*. New York. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/>

¹⁵ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva.

¹⁶ ADB. 2005. *ibid*

COUNTRY PROFILE: FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

issues pose significant constraints for women seeking to enter the private sector, there are instances of successful female business owners and Chamber of Commerce members in Chuuk and Pohnpei.

At the national level women have higher average labour force participation rates than men. In formal sector employment however men hold twice as many jobs as women. Women have no rights to paid maternity leave and there are no unfair dismissal laws so women have no recourse if they are fired when they become pregnant. There are no laws protecting domestic workers who are citizens of FSM.¹⁷ The only state that has minimum wage standards is Pohnpei, and there are no enforcement mechanisms in place. All of these factors make women particularly vulnerable to exploitation.¹⁸

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

While women have privilege and respect in certain forums in FSM due to the matrilineal nature of Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae they have not been able to translate that influence into the public political arena. There are no elected female representatives at the national level in FSM. In the traditional system, women are not prohibited from being traditional leaders but are rarely given such positions. This makes it difficult for them to leverage political power in the western system of government. Women's low representation in politics undoubtedly contributes to the poor record of FSM to legislate equal rights and protections for women in the home, labour force and public life. Women in FSM have very limited opportunity to communicate directly with service providers and government to influence policy and programs. As in other Pacific states there is a need for increased gender analysis of political agendas, training for all politicians and targeted education for voters and female candidates.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. Violence against women is a growing problem in FSM as traditional extended family systems break down and the complex systems of family sanctions for abuse and neglect are no longer functioning in a reliable way. Violence against women is exacerbated by substance abuse, particularly alcohol. Incidence of violence and levels of severity are reported to be increasing. There is no domestic violence legislation and women are fearful on filing charges of assault due to family threats and a record of police inaction. There are no government or private facilities to shelter women seeking to escape abusive situations.¹⁹

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

The government's action on gender has been sporadic and limited. FSM ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2004 and UNIFEM and UNDP regional offices have supported legislative analysis. The Women's Development Unit within the Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for women's issues and gender equality and there are equivalent offices at the state level. While a large number of the

¹⁷ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. Op cited.

¹⁸ ADB. 2005. *ibid*

¹⁹ US Department of State. 2000 *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Federated States of Micronesia*. Washington. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/1999/297.htm>

COUNTRY PROFILE: FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

government's Strategic Development Plan (SDP) objectives are relevant to women's interest there is no specific documentation available demonstrating significant integration of gender analysis into government strategies. This demonstrates a weak organisational culture for gender and indicates the need for awareness raising, education and advocacy on gender to be directed to government leaders in both political and civil service arenas.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The focus of the Women's Unit is implementation of the government's commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action, the Pacific Platform for Action, CEDAW and related advocacy for women's interests and mainstreaming gender into government across sectors.

There is little support for the work of the Women's Unit in the SDP and the machinery of government is not designed to facilitate gender responsive public service delivery. The SDP is not aligned with hardship reduction strategies and does not specifically identify the poor or have strategies to address poverty in marginalized groups such as women. Compact funding is directed toward issues that include education and health, but there is no indication that gender analysis has been incorporated into budget allocation. Statistical information disaggregated by age and sex is not readily available and seems to signal a lack of accountability to develop evidence based rationales for planning that is relevant to all population groups.

A National Women's Advisory Council has been in existence since 1992 and there are a number of small NGOs active on state, national and regional issues related to women's empowerment. Overall however there is a shortage of technical capacity for gender analysis, advocacy and action in both government and civil society.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

SPC's Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available on request to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality. SPC also has a relatively new field office in FSM that will hopefully result in implementation of more gender responsive programs and an increased amount of high-level policy dialogue incorporating gender considerations.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

ADB's primary focus areas of private sector led growth, inclusive social development and pro-poor economic strategies should all be adjusted to incorporate gender features that will lead to more responsive, effective and successful results. Team leaders need to integrate gender into cross-sectoral high-level policy dialogue, ensure collection of sex and age-disaggregated statistics in their results frameworks, integrate gender features into TAs and involve the HQ Social Development Specialist in tracking and documenting gender specific outcomes. Across Micronesia there is a pressing need to develop evidence-based rationales for gender mainstreaming in government and to build capacity for integrated policy formulation and planning.

Fiji

I. Gender situation and key issues

Fiji is a geographically dispersed country of 320 islands, about half of which are populated. The bulk of the population (828,000) is concentrated on the two large islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. Ethnic Fijians and Rotumans comprise 52% of the population; Indo-Fijians make up 44% and the remaining 6% is comprised of other groups. Population growth is estimated to be 2.0% annually between 2007 – 2015.²⁰

There are distinctions in gender relations between the different racial groups in Fiji although all are patriarchal where men control more political, economic, time and knowledge resources than women. Fiji ranks 81 out of 136 on the UN Gender Development Index and 92 out of 178 on the Human Development Index. Poverty is severe problem in Fiji. Based on provisional data from the 2003/04 urban Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), nearly 40% of urban households, and 48% of settlement households are below the poverty line of expenditures for basic needs.²¹ Women have a higher risk of poverty linked to labor force discrimination, increasing divorce rates, lack of property rights, and low or non-existent child maintenance payments. Female headed-households are becoming more prevalent and are particularly vulnerable to poverty and there has been an increase in prostitution as women struggle to cope.

Assessing the progress of Fiji against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.²² These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; lack of integrated gender analysis in planning and budgeting by both government and donors; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and to a low level of indigenous Fijian private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. Fiji ranks very well for girl's attendance at secondary level, the gross secondary enrollment for girls is 91% and the female to male ratios are 1.07 but fewer girls than boys finish high school.²³ The prevalence of higher female than male participation extends to the tertiary level with a female to male ratio of 1.2 but girls have lower enrollment in high demand faculties such as commerce, economics and science/technology. More Fijian boys drop out of secondary school than any other group, and there have been informal reports from the University of the South Pacific (USP) administration that more girls have been dropping out of university to reduce family economic burdens and support families impacted by political instability following both the 2000 and the 2006 coup.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for

²⁰ SPC. 2007. *Pacific Island Populations*. Noumea

²¹ ADB.2006. *Country Gender Assessment: Republic of the Fiji Islands*. Manila

²² UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

²³ UN. 2005. *The World's Women: Progress in Statistics*. New York. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/asp/user/list.asp-ParentID=60.htm>

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development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. Women's maternal and sexual health indicators for Fiji are the best in Melanesia and reflect the positive correlation between education and health as well as the government's success at delivering health services. Assistance of skilled birth attendants is almost universal in Fiji, and there is a fertility rate of 2.9 live births/woman. Maternal mortality is 210/100,000 live births, infant mortality 18/1,000 live births, there is 8% malnutrition (underweight) for children under 5 and women have a life expectancy of 68 years compared to men's 64 years. The contraceptive prevalence rate is 44% among married women and is unknown but expected to be lower for adolescent girls. The adolescent fertility rate is 43/1000 live births for women aged 15 – 19 years.²⁴

There is a low level of sex education in schools and abortion is illegal which results in complications and death for a number of women seeking terminations. Rape in marriage is not illegal, and it is not mandatory for employers to provide pregnancy leave. These factors demonstrate a contravention of women's human rights and sexual freedoms.²⁵

Fiji has the second highest reported incidence of HIV/AIDs in ADB's Pacific countries and most of the transmission is heterosexual. In 2007 there were 200 reported cases, 83 of which were women.²⁶ The UNFPA is working on adolescent reproductive health strategies for awareness and a number of Fiji based NGOs have regional programs to act against the disease.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in Fiji perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence and cash crop farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. In rural and settlement areas Fiji's women invest large amounts of time collecting water, wood for cooking fires and walking to natural water sources to do laundry and dishes. Only 47% of the population has access to an improved water source, which may not provide potable water, and only 72% have improved sanitation.²⁷ Urban squatter settlements have particular restrictions on water and sanitation and women must generally wait for trucked water deliveries or use contaminated local sources. Transport infrastructure consists of primary and secondary road networks, maritime shipping, ferries and scheduled flights. For women in rural areas and on outlying islands, the cost of using transport infrastructure constrains their ability to market agriculture and craft products, requires large investments of travel time, and is not cost effective on an individual basis. There is little cooperative production and telecommunication and electrification limitations inhibit creative use of ITCs.

²⁴ UNDP. 2007/2008. *Human Development Report*. New York. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/> and SPC. 2007 Op cited.

²⁵ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva.

²⁶ SPC and WHO. 2007. *A Review of Pacific Regional HIV Strategy and Progress Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support*. Noumea.

²⁷ UNDP. 2007/2008. *ibid*

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Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In Fiji women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. According to the central bank, the economy is estimated to have shrunk by 3.9% in 2007. Tourism has fallen off and women, as a large sector of that workforce, have lost jobs. The garment industry, previously a major employer of women, continues to suffer from loss of preferential trade agreements. The mining and sugar sectors have declined and while the workforce there was predominately male, women will be forced to manage households and food security with less family resources. There is no national minimum wage and no law ensuring pay equity. In the labour force, the ratio of estimated female to male earned income is 0.48 and the HIES found that urban women make up 35.5% of the economically active population but only 31% of these are engaged in the cash economy. In the HIES listing of 9 occupational categories women outnumber men only as clerks. Women hold 42% of professional jobs but only 17% of positions classified as senior officials and managers.²⁸

Between ethnic groups in Fiji there are distinct differences in women's control and access of productive resources, but all women are restricted from accessing credit and engaging in business development above a micro level due discriminatory property rights and lack of formalized assets. Fijian women are excluded from inheritance of customary land and have no land rights other than those given at the discretion of husbands or brothers. Indo-Fijians have very low access to land resources and those who do have freehold or lease rights generally practice father-to-son inheritance.

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

While women in Fiji have been more successful at winning seats in parliament than women in other Melanesian countries, they continue to have very low participation rates. This hinders progress on implementing government commitment to international and constitutional commitments on equality. Before the suspension of parliament by the 2006 coup there were 7 female MPs out of a total of 109, and 2 female senators. A UNIFEM review of women in politics identified that for women's political representation to have a meaningful impact on the women's status, it is necessary not only to elect a critical mass of women. It is also necessary to ensure training for both voters and politicians that raises awareness of gender considerations and integrates that awareness into decision-making on all aspects of governance.²⁹

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women (VAW) is high in Fijian and Indo-Fijian society and it presents a serious constraint to national development – impacting mental and physical health, reducing productivity and contravening human rights.. There is active NGO advocacy on this issue, which has helped raise awareness of the extent of the problem. However, there are strong socio-cultural attitudes normalizing VAW and women feel they have little recourse to escape because of their economic dependence on men as supporters of their families. Levels of reporting are low due to fear of further reprisal and family attitudes. In 1995 the police adopted a 'no drop' policy. Police are

²⁸ ADB.2006. ibid

²⁹ Siwatibau et al 2005 *Developing a More Facilitating Environment for Women's Political Participation in Fiji*. cited in ADB. 2005. ibid

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committed to ensure that once a formal complaint is made it continues through the legal process – the aim is to protect those filing a complaint from coercion by family members pressuring them to drop charges.

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

Fiji ratified CEDAW in 1995 and has made two state reports on implementation. The elected government ousted in the 2006 coup had put in place a medium term development strategy with priorities relevant to, but not specifically addressing, gender inequality. There is potential to align these more closely with both the Women's Plan of Action (1999 – 2008) and ADB's areas of comparative advantage. Priorities included enhancement of law and order, alleviation of poverty, good governance, and affirmative action.

The Women's Plan of Action identifies 5 key action areas in line with its national and international commitments: i) mainstreaming gender into policy and planning; ii) review of discriminatory laws; iii) facilitating women's access to credit; iv) promoting gender balance in decision-making and training opportunities; and v) ending violence against women. Despite the logic of policy and planning to promote gender equality, progress has been slow. As in other countries this is related to the gap between pledges of intent for gender mainstreaming and true political will as reflected by analysis, action and change. This lack of action is exacerbated by the marginalization of gender equality as a concern in times of political and economic instability.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The public service experienced severe upheaval following the 2006 coup and there was considerable disruption to both institutional arrangements, continuity of knowledge and capacity in all areas, including the Ministry of Women and Culture.

The Ministry's programming is focused on implementing the Plan of Action. The Ministry works closely with National Council of Women, which is made up of affiliates from both Fijian and Indo-Fijian communities. The Ministry has a mandate to provide services that include: policy advice on issues related to women's development, ministerial advice and services, gender training to requesting government offices. The Ministry has also specifically promoted awareness of gender responsive budgeting and advocating for improvement in the collection of age/sex-disaggregated data. In 2000 ADB worked with the Ministry for Women and Culture and undertook gender audits of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, Sugar and Land Resettlement. In 2006 ADB published a country gender assessment in Fiji which provides detailed analysis of the Ministry of Women and Culture's wider policy environment.

As in other countries, the Fiji Ministry responsible for women has been constrained internally by low technical capacity and inadequate resources to support gender equality. The concluding comments of the CEDAW committee (2002) noted that work on elimination of discrimination against women is further inhibited by stereotypical attitudes toward women's work and family responsibilities.³⁰

³⁰ UN. 2002. *Concluding Comments of the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women: Fiji*. New York.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

As a result of political instability since the military coup 2006 Fiji has been under donor sanctions. This includes suspension of scholarship and training support from bilateral donors, as well as review of current activities and freezing of new initiatives by both bilaterals and multilaterals.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

Once the political situation is resolved and ADB resumes new assistance to Fiji, there will be scope to re-engage and move forward with the detailed gender strategy recommendations as outlined in the Country Gender Assessment. There needs to be inclusion of gender analysis into high level policy dialogues and improved effort by ADB to collect and analyze sex/age-disaggregated statistics. This will include i) potential interventions supporting women's participation in the private sector ii) involving women as stakeholders in the provision of infrastructure services and iii) strengthening institutions and processes particularly through capacity building, integrating gender analysis into public sector planning and increasing community participation. As in other countries there is also considerable scope to incorporate HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention into policy and technical programs through both policy dialogue and special gender responsive project features.

Kiribati

I. Gender situation and key issues

Kiribati consists of 33 low-lying atoll islands located in three widely dispersed island groups with only 811 square kilometers of land. The 2005 Census Report showed that Kiribati had a population of 92,533 an increase of 9.5% since 2000. It is problematic that urban drift has resulted in 44% of the population is being concentrated in South Tarawa creating a population density of 2558 people/km². The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) figures indicate that approximately 50% of the population is under 20 years of age.

The government of Kiribati entered into a ‘poverty partnership’ with ADB in 2003 and the findings were incorporated into the National Development Strategy. Key NDS areas related to poverty reduction are i) economic growth ii) equitable distribution iii) public sector performance iv) equipping people to manage change v) sustainable use of physical resources and vi) protection and use of financial resources. Due to government reserves and large volumes of remittance payments from i-Kiribati seafarers and migrants, extreme poverty is low. However overcrowding, poor sanitation and low quality housing in S Tarawa combined with unemployment and alcoholism create a series of hardships, particularly for women.

Women’s basic rights are protected under the constitution, but the constitution does not explicitly guarantee substantive equality on the basis of sex/gender³¹. Violence against women is increasing, as are risk factors related to HIV/AIDS. Women’s social status is low and men have more access to, and control of political, economic, knowledge and time resources than women do. Women’s primary livelihoods on outer islands are subsistence and artisanal fisheries and craft production. In urban areas an increasing number of women are both informally self-employed and in the formal labour force.

Assessing the progress of Kiribati against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.³² These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; lack of integrated gender analysis in planning and budgeting by both government and donors; low human resource capacity; women’s poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. Girls in Kiribati have good opportunities at the secondary school level with gross secondary enrollments of 93%, and there are more girls than boys enrolling. There is a slight drop from full enrollment for girls and boys in primary school. There are significant problems however with the quality of education including teachers without qualifications, poorly maintained education infrastructure, lack of materials and inadequate curriculum. Only 50% of students exit the secondary system with qualifications enabling them to enter tertiary education overseas³³.

³¹ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva.

³² UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

³³ ADB 2007. *Country Performance Assessment: Kiribati*. Manila

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Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. The quality of reproductive health services and consistency of service delivery are problematic in Kiribati with particular gaps in the area of child health/mortality rates. For women, skilled birth attendants are available for 85% of deliveries, and the total fertility rate is 3.5. The adolescent fertility rate is 39 births/1000 women 15 – 19 years of age. There is a low reported contraceptive prevalence 21% for married women of childbearing age and the rate is unknown for unmarried adolescents. The maternal mortality ratio is 56/100,000 with infant mortality high at 52/1000 live births.³⁴ Under-5 malnutrition (underweight) is reported at 13% but this figure may be misleading as there is also a problem with obesity linked to over consumption of low nutrient, high calorie processed food under-5 mortality is 69/1000 live births. Women's life expectancy is 63.1 years to men's 58.9 years.³⁵

The fact that rape in marriage is not illegal in Kiribati and that abortion is criminalized indicates that the law significantly inhibits women's reproductive rights and freedoms.³⁶ There are a growing number of HIV/AIDS cases in Kiribati with 46 reported as of 2007.³⁷ The high number of i-Kiribati seafarers, (a key demographic vector for the disease), poverty and prostitution in Tarawa are contributing to the increase.³⁸ There are a number of targeted awareness programs, but with contraception prevalence at a low rate it is expected that the problem will worsen. Women are caregivers for sick relatives and, as elsewhere in the Pacific, they face stigma and exclusion by virtue of being in contact with HIV positive people and AIDS sufferers.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in Kiribati perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. Poor infrastructure contributes significantly to women's time poverty in Kiribati. Women are primarily responsible for household management and caring for sick family members. Poor water supply and sanitation systems mean women have to cope with environment-related contamination and illnesses and take extra steps to ensure infants and children are safe from water-borne disease and food poisoning. In 2004, 65.0% of the population had access to an improved water source however, the protection of water sources from pollution, mainly from nearby sanitation systems, is a constant public health concern. Only 40% of the population had access to improved sanitation. The 2005 Census indicates that 2000 buildings are ostensibly connected to a sewage system in South Tarawa, but most of the population reported using the beach, sea or bush for toileting facilities. Groundwater is being depleted in Tarawa due to population pressure and there is a high level of terrestrial and marine contamination from human and solid waste. Other infrastructure

³⁴ UN 2007/2008 *Human Development Report statistics page*. New York.

http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_MHL.html

³⁵ SPC.2007. *Pacific Island Populations*. Noumea and UNFPA. 2004. *Kiribati at a Glance Factsheet*. Suva

³⁶ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. Suva. Op cited.

³⁷ SPC and WHO. 2007. *A Review of Pacific Regional HIV Strategy and Progress Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support*. Noumea.

³⁸ ADB.2007. *Country Performance Assessment: Kiribati*. Manila

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constraints, such as limited maritime shipping, civil aviation and telecommunication networks also create cost-effectiveness barriers to private sector development in outer islands. Such barriers can be particularly difficult for women who are often engaged in sectors such as tourism, marketing of handicrafts and marine aquarium products or immediate provision of services.

Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In Kiribati women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. In traditional Kiribati society, women were able to inherit and 'own' land within the collective family-based tenure system but their rights were secondary to men's rights. This is reinforced in the contemporary legal system, which stipulates that in distributing land and fishpond assets in the absence of a will that 'the shares of sons shall exceed the shares of daughters.'³⁹

Women now comprise 51.5% of the workforce and 37% of those in paid employment. There is no legislation guaranteeing equal pay. Women in the public service receive 12 weeks maternity leave at full pay however women in the private sector are guaranteed only 25% of salaries the same leave period and neither group has protection should they choose to extend their leave. The 2005 Census found that 64% of people above the age of 15 were "economically active", but only 23% had regular paid employment; 53% of those employed were in public administration, the remainder were employed mainly as subsistence farmers or fishermen. Subsidies to public entities are thought to reduce the opportunities for private job creation. At the time of the 2000 census only 23% of women held permanent secretary positions, and only 5% of school principals were female.⁴⁰

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

Women have consistently been poorly represented in political decision-making in Kiribati. There are currently only 2 women in the 46-seat legislature.⁴¹ As in other Pacific countries, women face entrenched discrimination of chiefs, a lack of trust from the general population, and lack of support from mainstream parties. In addition it is difficult for women without mentors and role models to navigate the political system, raise funds and analyze issues for campaigning. There continues to be a need for voter education and for training candidates in gender analysis of development issues and government policies and plans.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. Violence against women and girls is increasing in Kiribati. This includes crimes of child sexual abuse and rape. There is no legislation criminalizing domestic violence and the organisation of the court systems provides little protection for complainants. Government has not collected statistics and information on

³⁹ Cited in ADB. 1995 *Women in Development Country Briefing Paper: Kiribati*. Manila

⁴⁰ ADB. 2006. *Country Strategy and Program Update: Kiribati 2006 – 2007*. Manila

⁴¹ Inter-Parliamentary Union. 2007. *Women in Parliament in 2007: The Year in Perspective*. Geneva. www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmn07-e.pdf

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violence against women, but currently a number of donors (UNFPA, SPC and AusAID) are collaborating on research into domestic violence in Kiribati. This work should provide guidance on intervention approaches and longer-term strategies.

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

The government has participated in international and regional women's conferences and ratified CEDAW in 2004. However no national plan of action for gender equality/women's empowerment was drawn up following the Beijing 4th World Conference on Women, there is no national women's policy, and the NDS reflects no incorporation of gender analysis or gender responsive strategies. No CEDAW report has been submitted despite the fact that UNIFEM and UNDP have provided an in-depth analysis of areas where legislative change is required. Low political will and an organisational culture that reinforces women's low status are binding constraints to progress in this area.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

Gender equality and women's issues are managed by the Community Development Services Division of the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs. In the absence of a national action plan, the Kiribati government's work is reactive to issues identified and funded by donors. Low absorption potential, lack of human resources and low capacity means that it is necessary to outsource for most skill sets. There is a National Council of Women, which is the NGO counterpart for support to gender equality. Gender mainstreaming across government has not been done although there were some attempts by UNIFEM to train national statisticians and planners in gender analysis in the late 1990's. The lack of gender disaggregated statistics makes it difficult to develop evidence-based rationales that can be used to advocate for more gender sensitive policies and planning.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

As ADB's focus in Kiribati is on sustainable i) economic growth, ii) water supply, sanitation and waste management iii) land and private sector development and iv) population and HIV/AIDS policies, there is considerable scope for integrating gender analysis, gender features and specific sex/age-disaggregated data into projects. Team leaders should include discussion of gender in cross-sectoral high-level policy dialogue and at the project level ensure the involvement of female stakeholders who can speak to women's interests.

Nauru

I. Gender situation and key issues

Nauru is an isolated island nation with just 21 km² of land. The population is just 9,429 (2006) with an annual growth rate of 2.3%. About half the population is under the age of 20.⁴² There is no arable land for agriculture and the Nauruans depend on small quantities of vegetables grown in pots, fishing and imported foods. Mining processes have depleted soil resources and resulted in contamination of marine food resources. There is a high incidence of lifestyle diseases such as obesity and diabetes resulting from over consumption of low nutrient, highly processed food. There is also a high degree of alcoholism and other substance abuse. While the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) states that there is no gender discrimination in access to opportunities and services, women continue to be unrepresented at the political level, to be disproportionate victims of violent assault and rape, and their reproductive health needs and rights are not being adequately met. Significant hardship has been created in Nauru due to the collapse of its resource-based economy. The government has not invested funds into programs targeting gender equality and women's empowerment. Any initiatives in these areas come in the form of short-term donor projects.

Assessing the progress of Nauru against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.⁴³ These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; lack of integrated gender analysis in planning and budgeting by both government and donors; low human resource capacity; women's relative poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity. As the following sections show, the indicators must be considered in the context of other exacerbating constraints related to the collapse of the Nauru environment and economy.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. In Nauru, gross secondary enrollment for boys and girls has reportedly risen from approximately 56% in 2002 to 70% in 2006. Census results showed the female/male ratio at secondary level was 1.07. At the same time there are high truancy rates of 36% and there is a problem with teacher non-attendance. Education standards are low and the literacy rate is reportedly declining. Girls have received the majority of merit-based scholarships offered by donors since the programs were initiated however a 2007 Dept of Education survey indicates that boys are now winning an increasing percentage of these opportunities. The reported results of tertiary studies are not encouraging as the University of the South Pacific indicates only a 10% success rate for Nauruan students.⁴⁴

⁴² SPC. 2007. *Pacific Island Populations*. Noumea

⁴³ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. *Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality*. New York

⁴⁴ ADB. 2007. *Country Performance Assessment*. Manila and ADB. 2007 *Country Economic Report: Nauru*. Manila

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Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. There are limited statistics on reproductive health for Nauru and those that exist indicate that women are poorly served by the health system. While contraceptives are widely available, prevalence rates are not known. They are assumed to be low given the total fertility rate of 4.0 and an adolescent fertility rate of 93births/1000 women aged 15 – 19 years. There is no information on maternal mortality, but infant mortality is 42.3/1000 live births and under 5 mortality rate is 30/1000 live births. Life expectancy rates are low at 58 for women and 53 for men, reflecting the impacts of poor nutrition and high obesity and alcoholism rates⁴⁵.

Information on laws on rape in marriage is not available. Abortion is allowed on grounds of protecting the mother's life and mental health. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community is the implementing agency for an ADB RETA to support HIV/AIDS prevention based on the identification of risk factors evident in Nauru including high incidence of sexually transmitted infections, low use of condoms and multiple sexual partners. As of 2005 there were 2 reported cases of HIV/AIDS, both of which were men.⁴⁶

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in Nauru perform multiple roles as household managers, minor subsistence farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. Nauru's environment has been devastated by phosphate mining and the limited land availability combined with land distribution patterns and housing congestion has resulted in problems with basic water supply, sanitation and waste systems, creating environmental health risks. Congested building patterns and living conditions mean that there are often cesspits, water wells, animal pens, and planting containers on single small plots of land. This combination of pollutant sources and the limited fresh water resource increases skin and water-borne diseases that must be managed by women as the primary care givers of families.

Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In Nauru women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. Nauruan women were traditionally afforded respect and priority land rights, but under current law, men and women have equal rights to inheritance and control of land. Given the land/population ratio and the history of resource extraction, this does not have an impact on women's ability access to credit. Labour force participation rates for women (2002) were 68% compared to 85% for men and more women (29.6%) than men (17%) were unemployed and actively looking for work. Women make up a

⁴⁵ SPC. 2007. *ibid* and UNFPA.2005. *Nauru at a Glance*. Suva

⁴⁶ SPC and WHO. 2007. *A Review of Pacific Regional HIV Strategy and Progress Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support*. Noumea.

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slightly higher percentage of the economically active population, however they are under-represented among all occupational categories except clerks where they comprise 75% of workers.⁴⁷

Women's Representation in Political Bodies:

There are no women represented in Nauru's parliament, and women are under-represented on the boards of State Owned Enterprises and in senior official positions. Nauruan women interested in participating in politics face similar entry hurdles to women in other countries. It is difficult for women without mentors and role models to navigate the political system, raise funds and analyze issues for campaigning. As elsewhere, there continues to be a need for voter education and for training candidates in gender analysis of development issues and government policies and plans.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. Violence against women and domestic violence have been identified as issues in the National Sustainable Development Strategy and are closely linked to binge drinking. Regional NGOs and intergovernmental agencies have identified the issue and conducted advocacy with government and through community groups. NZAID has worked with the government to address domestic violence and improve police awareness and approaches that has resulted in the establishment of a Domestic Violence Unit in the Police Department.

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

Nauru is not a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) although there is ongoing advocacy from UNIFEM and SPC to encourage the government to sign and ratify. The Nauru constitution protects women's basic equality with men. The National Sustainable Development Strategy identifies the principle of non-discrimination, on grounds of gender, for access to human capital development opportunities and productive resources. As well, equality of access to social services and opportunity for all Nauruans is a social sector goal. There is however, no labour legislation to protect employment rights and Nauru is not a member of the ILO.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

Gender equality and empowerment of women in Nauru are the responsibility of the Women's Affairs Section of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Section is constrained in the implementation of its mandate by an inadequate budget, low human resources and lack of technical capacity for integrated gender analysis and planning. The Section relies on donor inputs for design and implement of projects that support Nauruan women. There is very poor statistical documentation of gender differences in Nauru and this needs to be addressed in order to build evidence and rationales for more effective policies and planning. Specific training on gender analysis and planning across ministries, incorporated into all governance initiatives, would strengthen the ability of government to understand the importance of gender issues in

⁴⁷ ADB. 2007. Op cited.

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development effectiveness and distribute responsibility for provision of equitable service across all Ministries.

The National Council of Women (NCW) is the Women's Section's non-government counterpart. It is mandated to provide outreach and support services to women. The NCW participates with government in triennial regional meetings on gender equality and women's empowerment.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

As the government recovers its equilibrium and ADB's assistance increases in line with the government's key goals for i) establishment of stable, trustworthy, fiscally responsible government; ii) provision of enhanced social, infrastructure and utilities services; iii) development of an economy based on multiple sources of revenue; iv) rehabilitation of mined out lands for livelihood sustainability; and v) development of domestic food production, there will be scope to ensure ADB initiatives incorporate gender analysis and specific features to support equity in service provision. ADB should build gender considerations into all levels of policy dialogue, and support collection of sex/age-disaggregated data in all assessments, results frameworks and indicators.

Palau

I. Gender situation and key issues

Palau is comprised of over 250 islands, 8 of which are main centres for the population of approximately 19,900. Government management is divided among 16 states. Palauan citizens make up 74% of the population and are primarily Micronesian with some Melanesian and Malay influence. The remaining 26% of non-Palauans are mostly Asian laborers and domestic workers who represent more than 50% of the economically active labour force. The annual population growth rate is quite slow at 0.6% but the urban populations are increasing steadily as rural inhabitants migrate into the capital. Palau has a Compact Agreement with the US, which enables Palauans to emigrate easily, and there has been concern about out-migration. Palauan society is matrilineal and affords women considerable autonomy and decision-making power at the household level. Palauan women's rights are protected under the constitution but no legislative analysis has been done to see how this translates into legal protection. Foreign 'guest workers' do not have the same rights and protections as Palauans. Trafficking of Asian women for prostitution is an issue noted by the US State Department and there are no in-country resources to support these women to escape and return home.⁴⁸

There are limited international statistics on Palau, its Human Development and Gender Development Index rates are not calculated. Similarly, there are no poverty line calculations available for Palauans or non-Palauans but the Palauans are prosperous by Pacific standards with per capita income (for Palauans) of \$6,925. Vulnerability to poverty is linked to high levels of household indebtedness from high interest informal lending and a low level of saving. Health indicators such as a falling life expectancy for women (from 75 years in 1995 to 72 in 2005) and increasing suicide rates among women indicate that there are emerging social challenges that are not being managed proactively. The youth population faces significant challenges including geographic isolation, depression, substance abuse, suicide and interpersonal violence. There is an aging demographic profile caused by youth out migration and Palau has the highest median population age in the Pacific at 33.2 years.⁴⁹ Gender issues among youth are not clearly documented but expatriate Palauan youth in the US have a high incidence of gang membership which entrenches gender discriminatory and exploitive attitudes and values. There is a national youth policy but little evidence of its implementation.

There has been a gradual erosion of the traditional social safety net system in Palau, which creates vulnerability for the elderly, disabled, children, youth and women. This, combined with the reduction of support from the US government at independence, has also shifted the burden of care to women. There are reports that Palauans, particularly women, forgo formal employment and experience higher levels of hardship due to responsibilities to care for their elders.

Assessing the progress of Palau against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.⁵⁰ While Palau rates better than most Pacific states in key high-level indicators, its weak performance in the areas of gender balanced political representation, budget allocations that account for women's contributions to the non-cash economy; ending violence against women (both Palauan and non-Palauan), and ending

⁴⁸ US Department of State. 2005 *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Palau*. Washington. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61622.htm>

⁴⁹ ADB. 2007. draft *Republic of Palau Social Sector Review*. unpublished

⁵⁰ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

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sexual exploitation of foreign women workers indicates weak governance systems and a continued need for advocacy and action from donors.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. There is little gender differentiation in Palau's gross secondary school enrollment rates of 89% (2001). According to the draft ADB Social Sector Report more girls than boys graduate from high school, but more men than women have tertiary qualifications. While there is universal enrollment at primary level there is an obvious attrition through the secondary years. As with other Pacific countries, the curricula do not necessarily meet the needs of the country, conveying little in the way of skills for entrepreneurship and commerce. The Palau Community College has a relatively high intake of secondary school graduates but about 50% transfer to studies overseas mid-way through their programs and 80% of graduates migrate to work overseas.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. In Palau 100% of women have access to skilled birth attendants. The total fertility rates are 1.9 and the adolescent fertility rate is 35/100 births to women aged 15 – 19 years of age. Maternal mortality rates are unavailable, infant mortality is 31/1000 live births.⁵¹ According to UNFPA the contraceptive prevalence rates are low at 17.2% (modern methods).⁵² Palau is one of the only countries in the Pacific where marital rape can be prosecuted, and while the legal situation vis a vis abortion is unclear, the Centre for Reproductive Rights lists Palau as one of the most restrictive countries for abortion rights.⁵³ The combination of in and out-migration and reports of increasingly high risk sexual behaviour among youth indicate that Palau needs to maintain a preventative focus on sexual health, sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS. Currently UNFPA and UNAIDS are providing support in these areas. Palau has had 8 reported cases of HIV/AIDS, 3 of which were women. This is a ratio of 40/100,00 and due to limited surveillance, these figures are considered to be an under-count, particularly since non-Palauans do not have access to the health system.⁵⁴

Health care costs are becoming a burden for individuals and families. There are informal reports that financial obligations and family debt result in people placing a low priority on health care spending, which undermines prevention strategies and results in more serious health issues.

⁵¹ SPC.2007. Pacific Island Populations. Noumea. http://www.spc.int/sdp/index.php?option=com_docman&Itemid=42

⁵² UNFPA. No date. Palau at a Glance. Suva (references year 2000 data) <http://pacific.unfpa.org/Countries/pw.htm>

⁵³ Centre for Reproductive Rights. 2007. *The World's Abortion Laws*. New York, http://www.reproductiverights.org/pdf/pub_fac_abortionlaws.pdf

⁵⁴ SPC and WHO. 2007. *A Review of Pacific Regional HIV Strategy and Progress Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support*. Noumea.

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Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in Palau perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence and cash crop farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. Palauan women and girls are not particularly constrained by infrastructure shortfalls. Palau's population is concentrated on four main islands connected by a series of bridge and causeways. Road access is good and the bulk of the population is well served with access to improved water, sanitation and electrification. Anecdotal reports indicate that there are some areas where water supply and sanitation infrastructure is not properly installed or maintained resulting in a high proportion of households not having direct access to potable water. This lack of adequate infrastructure creates more time burdens for women who have to find other sources of water and deal with health issues that arise such as skin disease and water-borne disease.

Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In Palau women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. Women's customary inheritance rights to land pass through the female line but are largely controlled by men. There is private land ownership; however there is little private sector development by Palauans linked to land as an asset. There are no microfinance facilities to support small entrepreneurs and there is limited access to formal credit. High interest rates and debt from informal loans have created high personal debt loads and family stress.

Women's participation in the labour force is concentrated in the technical and administrative sectors and in the public service. Although women have the right to work, and pay equity legislation is in place, less than 50% of women are engaged in the formal labour force. This is not surprising as non-Palauans are over 50% of the labour force. There are fewer women than men at senior management and administrative levels. Palauan women have noted that there is workplace discrimination linked to advancement, promotion and organisational culture; as elsewhere women have to overachieve and outperform men to be perceived as equal. In most areas families participate in limited subsistence agriculture and both men and women share labour. To participate more equitably and account for their dual role as both household managers and formal/informal workers, women still need legislative and policy support in areas such as expanded access to capital for private sector development, licensed child care, and maternity benefits⁵⁵

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

While women in Palau have a base of decision-making power rooted in their matrilineal heritage and play a key role in household and clan decision-making, they are severely under-represented in the political arena. Only 3 of 16 state governors are women and there are no female Congressional members. As is the case in many matrilineal societies, women are largely excluded from public political power – undermining an initial impression of gender equality. There is a need to strengthen capacity for gender analysis among male and female Palauan decision-makers

⁵⁵ ADB 2007. *ibid*

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at all levels and to integrate this analysis into policy and planning and to ensure effective and efficient development results.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. The US State Department report on Human Rights notes that reported cases violence against women are increasing and also that violence is under-reported to police. Domestic violence constitutes criminal assault and police will investigate, but due to dependency issues and family pressure women are often reluctant to prosecute. A bill on domestic violence has been prepared and put before Congress several years in a row, but it has yet to be passed. Violence is a significant mental health issue; the suicide hotline reports that 50% of attempted suicides are related to domestic violence.

Female 'guest workers' in the sex trade and other industries, particularly those who have been trafficked against their will face high risks of sexual harassment, exploitation, violence, and risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. As elsewhere in the world, their vulnerable immigration status and lack of citizen's rights make them easy victims of intimidation and coercion. This in turn prevents them from coming forward to seek support services. They are a largely invisible exploited population that needs to be considered in statistical analysis and service delivery. Donors need to advocate with government for attention to this, as it is a significant human rights issue.

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

Currently there are inadequate policies and legislation to address social and gender concerns in Palau. The country is not a signatory to the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. The government architecture for women's empowerment is very weak with the Ministry of Community and Cultural Affairs managing gender issues through the Belau Women's Resource Centre. There is no national gender equality strategy and there appears to be little if any mention of gender analysis in any government documents. There are several specific areas not supported by policies including care for the elderly, child care, and domestic violence.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

As noted above, government support and budgeting for gender equality is not a priority. The Women's Centre has a weak program and as gender and women's issues are not highlighted in any of governments higher level planning or policy frameworks, it is challenging to build momentum for advocacy and action. Technical capacity to do gender analysis is low and gender equality is not perceived to be a 'problem' despite the growing rates of violence against women, trafficking of foreign workers for the sex trade, and increasing suicides among women. There is a strong need for improved sex/age-disaggregated statistics across all sectors and for both Palauans and non-Palauans. This would support the development of evidence-based rationales for relevant policy dialogue, analysis and programming.

There are a number of NGOs that address gender issues as well as women's groups at the community level focused on traditional activities. The widespread base of women's groups would benefit from awareness training on gender and legal rights, such as that offered by the

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Pacific Regional Human Rights Resource Team (RRRT). This would support informed stakeholder interaction with government and could provide valuable relevant inputs to government planning and service delivery frameworks. There is little political will in government to address gender equality and the organisational culture for mainstreaming is unformed.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

The ADB Country Partnership Strategy Pre-Assessment mission identified a number of factors that need to be integrated into ADB's analysis on Palau. These are closely related to the MDG strategic indicators discussed above and include i) weak coordination among ministries, ii) lack of sustainable social assistance programming, iii) uneven access to economic opportunities, basic services, and iv) the absence of formalized social safety nets.

Given ADB's commitment to work on pro-poor economic policy, there is a clear need for all ADB staff to integrate gender/social analysis into policy dialogue across sectors and at all levels. There is scope to build in age/sex/citizenship-disaggregated data into all studies and to involve ADB Social Development Specialists in the creation of gender features and action plans for Technical Assistance in private sector development and infrastructure.

Papua New Guinea

I. Gender situation and key issues

Papua New Guinea is made up of over 600 islands and is a diverse agglomeration of tribal groups speaking 800 distinct languages. These groups were brought together through colonialism under a Westminster system of government. Levels of development for women vary drastically depending on geographic isolation, history of contact with colonizers, matrilineal or patrilineal culture of the group, quality of governance at the Provincial level, and varying levels of service delivery and infrastructure. PNG ranks 145 out of 178 on the UN Human Development Index and also ranks very low (103 out of 136) on the UNDP Gender-related Development Index (GDI), which measures women's life expectancy, educational attainment and literacy.

The population is 6.1 million, half of this group is under 20 years of age, and population size is predicted to double in 25 years. Cash poverty is significant with 40% of the population living on less than one dollar per day. This figure is somewhat misleading as 85% of the population live in rural areas and are dependent on subsistence agriculture.⁵⁶ Therefore the degree of crowding by region, geographic isolation, and soil fertility must also be factored into poverty assessments. There is a strong traditional obligation system that undermines individual control of resources and exacerbates women's lack of economic power. Opportunity to access credit is constrained by lack of land registration and by women's generally low political decision-making influence in community settings. Women experience time poverty and overwork due to responsibilities for fuel wood and water collection, subsistence agriculture, and provision of services to large families, community and the church.

The combination of poverty, overwork, and the high-risk security situation in PNG is a severe constraint to women's development. There is a high level of normalized violence in the country, an ongoing problem with small arms and military weapons among the general population following from the Bougainville war. There is widespread disregard for women's rights and dignity particularly in the police and military systems. All these factors severely limit women's safety, mobility and opportunity to participate in economic and political systems and undermine the reproduction and maintenance of social capital.

Assessing the progress of PNG against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.⁵⁷ These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; lack of integrated gender analysis in planning and budgeting by both government and donors; low human resource capacity; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. While primary enrollment is relatively high, retention of girls is a major problem. Girls' share of secondary school enrollment ratio in PNG was just 23% in 2005 and only 1% of those who enter Grade 1

⁵⁶ NZAID. Oct 2007. <http://www.nzaid.govt.nz/library/publications/factsheets.html>

⁵⁷ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

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will also enter a tertiary institution. In rural situations high schools are often residential and the number of dormitory spaces limits girls' educational opportunity. Security for girls is also a constraint as violence against women and rape exists even in school settings. The female adult literacy rate is only 51% and women's ability to function effectively, access services and provide support to their families is further constrained by the multilingual nature of the country.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. Women's low level of education and poor access to adequate health care are closely linked to high fertility rates of 4.3 live births/woman, maternal mortality of 470/100,000 live births, infant mortality rates of 55/1,000 live births, 35% malnutrition of children under-5 (underweight), and a relatively low life expectancy of 55.7 years for women⁵⁸. Only 41% of women have access to a skilled birth attendant for deliveries and there are only 5 physicians for every 100,000 people. Contraceptive prevalence rate is 26% among married women and must be assumed to be lower due to sexual violence, high levels of prostitution and high adolescent sexual activity. The adolescent fertility rate is 70/1000 births for women aged 15 – 19 and UNFPA has identified adolescent reproductive rights, teen pregnancy and HIV/AIDS among young women as key problems requiring urgent strategic action.

Sexual violence is rampant in PNG and includes high incidences of gang rape, rape in marriage and child sexual abuse.⁵⁹ Military barracks and police stations are known locations for gang rape, and hence the ability of women to report or seek protection from the legal system is almost non-existent. Abortion is illegal, while rape in marriage is not illegal.⁶⁰

PNG has 90% of the HIV/AIDS cases in the Pacific and it is considered to have a full blown epidemic with case numbers increasing by 30%/year⁶¹. As of 2005 there were 14,276 cases of HIV/AIDS more than half of which were women.⁶² There is a high level of stigma attached to HIV/AIDS and to those who act as caregivers – primarily women – which inhibits testing and reporting.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girls Time Poverty

Women's economic activity and market access is constrained by the poor quality of existing roads and a shortage of feeder roads into dispersed rural communities. Women often have to walk long distances to access public motor vehicles, which run on unreliable schedules, partially due to the quality of the roads. It is estimated that 35% of the population live at least 10 km from a national road. This heavily impacts the ability of the government and donors to deliver health and education services and improvements.⁶³ The percentage of the population using improved

⁵⁸ UNDP. 2007/2008. *Human Development Report*. New York. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/>

⁵⁹ UN. 2007. *United Nations Country Program Papua New Guinea*. Pt Moresby

⁶⁰ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva.

⁶¹ UNAIDS. Pacific regional statistics page. <http://www.unaids.org/fj/index.cfm?si=main.resources&cmd=forumview&uid=aboutus&cid=6>

⁶² SPC and WHO. 2007. *A Review of Pacific Regional HIV Strategy and Progress Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support*. Noumea.

⁶³ ADB. 2006. *Country Gender Assessment Papua New Guinea*. Manila

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sanitation (39%) and improved water sources (44%) in PNG did not change between 1999 and 2005.⁶⁴ Women must gather fuel wood and water, walk to rivers to wash laundry and dishes, and care for family members who fall ill from preventable disease caused by poor sanitation conditions and a lack of potable water.

Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Women undertake a major percentage of non-monetized productive and reproductive work but only 68% of women are active in the monetized sector compared to the male rate of 86%. Women work in cash crop production but there are no reliable statistics on women's control of such income within the household. Women are constrained from engaging in private sector activity and small business by their lack of access to credit and banking facilities. This is in turn linked to their lack of control over property and productive resources. Even in matrilineal areas where land registration has been introduced (East New Britain) women report brothers taking the role of signatories and then over-riding the guidance of female relatives who have cultural inheritance rights to land. On a positive note government, NGOs and donors are collaborating to enhance and increase micro-finance for women in PNG, and are providing training on the use of credit and savings.

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

One woman won a parliamentary seat in the 2007 election from a pool of 94 candidates despite intense support from regional and UN agencies. Women candidates are constrained by gender discrimination in the main parties and are often forced to run as independents, funding their own campaigns from family contributions. There is a Constitutional option for nominated women candidates to be appointed to seats, but this has never been used except in Bougainville where there is a system of reserve seats for women. At the provincial level there are some quota systems but when the assemblies appoint women, it is generally without input from provincial women's councils or other representative stakeholder groups.

Violence Against Women and Girls

As noted above violence against women and girls is epidemic in PNG. It contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts women and children's mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. Violence against women has been a recognized development issue for decades, and donors have funded significant high quality work since the 1980s. However, without the political will and commitment to action in the police, military and judicial systems law reform proposals, policy initiatives and public awareness campaigns can only have a minor ameliorative effect and women will still be afraid to report.

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

Papua New Guinea is a signatory to CEDAW and has a national women's policy to guide government action on gender equality. The Medium Term Development Strategy identifies gender inequality as a major constraint and states that it 'continues to be a key focus' along with infrastructure, health and education. In reality there is a low level of awareness and political will for gender equality in government and strategic objectives are largely unimplemented. The

⁶⁴ UNDP. 2007/2008 *ibid*.

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organisational culture of government is not conducive to gender responsive interventions and while donors have gender policies and some supportive programs, gender is not well integrated into the development architecture. There is a consequent lack of gender analysis in high-level policy dialogues and an absence of gender responsive targets and indicators in the planning frameworks of major development projects.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

Government coordination on gender equality is through the Gender Unit within the Department of Community Development. The Unit works with civil society through the National Council of Women (NCW) and a broader base of provincial councils. The Gender Unit is constrained by lack of technical capacity and inadequate resources for staff and programs. Statistics are unavailable, but across government employment of women is increasing although very few women hold senior government managerial or administrative posts.

There is a lack of accountability and responsibility for gender in central government, with promises for more resources made in public arenas but not forthcoming through budget allocations. This is symptomatic of weak public sector financial management, which results in inadequate budgeting in other areas, such as health education and infrastructure, that exacerbate gender inequality. Introduction of a Medium Term Expenditure Framework model may support a more integrated planning and budgeting cycle but this will require the awareness, support and advocacy of donors⁶⁵. Sector priorities need to integrate gender analysis and identify gender specific indicators, such features are not apparent in the current framework. Lack of technical and advisory capacity poses a major constraint and is an area for donor intervention.

The dearth of consistent sex and age disaggregated data on social and gender factors in PNG points to lack of awareness among donors and government about the need for such information to create evidence based rationales for more sensitive and responsive planning and budgeting processes.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention by ADB

There is scope for ADB to incorporate gender analysis into all existing work through gender analysis in agendas high level policy dialogues, production of sex/age-disaggregated data for project inputs and results, project gender action plans and specific assurances that leverage existing government policy.

The ADB Country Gender Assessment (2006) lists detailed strategies to integrate gender in the ADB's program in PNG. Recommended interventions include i) Public finance management should build capacity for oversight and advocacy in the Gender Unit and in civil society as well

⁶⁵ This was identified in the 2003 Public Expenditure Review and Rationalization study by the World Bank.

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as increasing the gender analysis skills of sectoral ministries ii) Road transport infrastructure projects should involve women more actively as stakeholders in design, implementation and monitoring of projects and providing equitable employment opportunities based on equal pay and safety provisions. Additionally, road related projects need to focus on HIV/AIDS awareness in government and communities and prevention programs to be managed through the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation and the Dept of Public Works iii) Private sector technical support must include policy makers in mainstreaming gender analysis into decision-making and planning. There is also scope for collaboration with the World Bank/IFC/FIAS initiatives researching and supporting the informal sector, and iv) Health sector initiatives should integrate the UNDP Gender Audit into the National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS and across ADB's project activities.

Republic of Marshall Islands

I. Gender situation and key issues

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) is composed of more than 1000 low lying islands and coral atolls but is a highly urbanized country with 68% of total population of 52,700 living on Majuro or Ebeye. SPC figures show that half the population is under 19 years of age. The somewhat misleading annual population growth rate of 1.0 is largely due to extensive out migration to the US.⁶⁶ On outer islands peoples' main subsistence comes from the sea with small amounts of own-use agriculture such as breadfruit, fruit, pigs and chickens. The Marshallese are Micronesian and the traditional matrilineal culture passes names and inheritance through the female line. In the past women have had considerable respect and status in their communities and have exercised directing influence behind the scene at the household level. Despite this men have more control over political, economic and social resources than women. The breakdown of traditional structures, out-migration to the United States, urbanization, the influence of US colonialism and the development process, including land registration processes, risks further undermining women's status and weakening their position in Marshallese society.

The ADB Country Performance Assessment (2007) shows that RMI has a weakly performing economy. Government spending is not aligned with poverty strategies and this increases the risk for vulnerable groups such as youth, school dropouts and the elderly. Government spending on social services shows weak spending on primary health care and primary education, both of which would have a more immediate and sustainable impact on poverty reduction. Traditional social safety nets are weakening and there are no coordinated government strategies to compensate. There is increasing evidence of vulnerability among children, the elderly, the disabled, and female-headed households. Prostitution is reported to be rising and exploitation of women and girls is increasingly evident indicating that women are losing their traditionally strong social status.

Assessing the progress of the Marshall Islands against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; lack of integrated gender analysis in planning and budgeting by both government and donors; low human resource capacity; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. The gross secondary enrollment ratio for girls is 78% with female to male ratios at 1.05.⁶⁷ Secondary completion data indicates that 46% of boys graduate compared to 36% of girls. Given that the teen pregnancy rates are very high (see below), it must be assumed that this is one of the constraints to girl's attendance along with the poor employment outlook for both sexes. In addition the education system is overburdened, teachers are not specifically qualified and children are under motivated

⁶⁶ SPC. 2007. *Pacific Islands Populations*. Noumea.

http://www.spc.int/sdp/index.php?option=com_docman&Itemid=42

⁶⁷ UN 2007/2008 *Human Development Report statistics page*. New York.

http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_MHL.html

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to remain in school despite increased education budgets. A 2004 World Bank study indicated that for every 100 children enrolled in Grade 1 only 30 will finish Grade 12.⁶⁸

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. Fertility and sexual health issues are a key area of concern in the Marshall Islands and are indicative of weak policy, planning and education systems for both gender equality and population issues. Availability of skilled birth attendants is high at 95% but this does not seem to correlate with the increasing percentages of low birth-weight babies which indicates that pregnant women are not receiving adequate prenatal counseling, education and support. The total fertility rate is 4.4 births/woman while the adolescent fertility rate is 71 births/1000 women in the 15 – 19 age group. Maternal mortality ratios are 73.8/100,000 births and the infant mortality rate is 51/1000 live births. Contraceptive prevalence among married women of childbearing age is 34% and there are a number of programs to distribute condoms to teens and promote peer education. Women's life expectancy is 67.4 to men's 63.7 years.⁶⁹

Rape in marriage is not illegal and while abortion is not criminalized the pregnancy must be proven to be a threat to the woman's life or mental health. There have been 13 confirmed cases of HIV/AIDS in the country, at least three of which are women. There is an increasing problem with sexually transmitted infections exacerbated by a lack of political will and clear policy direction, which undermines the effectiveness of prevention programs. There are commonly reported and ongoing incidences of fathers and brothers sexually exploiting their female relatives by prostituting them to the transshipment fleets that enter Majuro harbor. As the HIV/AIDS rates among seafarers are among the highest in the world this situation is another vulnerability point increasing RMIs risk of an HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in RMI perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. Due to the dispersed atoll geography of the country, combined with the limited maritime transport, civil aviation and communication infrastructure, there is poor service delivery to outer islands and residents are restricted from accessing markets and economic opportunities in the centre. As elsewhere in Micronesia, women (particularly on outer islands) spend disproportionate amounts on time on household management and provision of health care. While 87% of the population has access to improved water sources, recent EPA testing has revealed high levels of contamination and access to clean water on Ebeye has regressed in 2006/07. Improved sanitation access is reported to be 82%, but poor waste management, salination of water lenses, overcrowding and family size create additional infrastructure related burdens for women.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ cited in ADB 2007. *Country Performance Assessment: Marshall Islands*. Manila

⁶⁹ SPC.2007. *ibid*

⁷⁰ ADB 2007. *Country Performance Assessment: Marshall Islands*. Manila

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Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In the Marshall Islands women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. The traditional matrilineal system provides women with rights to customary land title and inheritance passes through the female lines. This does not guarantee women any access to credit or to registration rights. Consequently women's ability to economically leverage their matrilineal rights is not predictable. In the formal sector, labour force participation (1999) was 35.4% for women and 66.3% for men. The 2006 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) results show that women's earnings are approximately 70% of men's. In outer islands where the copra industry is falling off, women's share of economic activity, based on production of handicrafts, is increasing. However, there are limited marketing opportunities due to transportation and communication infrastructure constraints. There is no equal pay legislation, no legislation protecting women's employment when they become pregnant, and no legislated maternity leave benefits.⁷¹

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

Women have had little success in political participation in RMI. In 2007 there was only one woman elected to the Nitijela. The Nitijela runs on influence from the traditional system where male chiefs have dominated leadership. Women, despite the matrilineal culture, are not accorded the same public leadership responsibilities and this discrimination has continued in the modern political system. At the local council level men hold the vast majority of seats. In general there is little political will for gender equality as a development concept, reflecting the need for increased awareness programs for politicians on the links between gender equality and effective development. In addition there is a need to strengthen men's and women's gender analysis skills and provide training to women on engaging in the political process.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. There is no government data collection on violence against women and there is no legislation. Sexual assault legislation was strengthened but enforcement and awareness of issues related to violence against women (VAW) and sexual assault is low. Substance abuse, particularly alcoholism, exacerbates problems of violence. The largest Marshallese women's NGO, Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI), reports high prevalence rates for VAW as well as high levels of stigma that prevent reporting and public discussion.

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

RMI ratified CEDAW in 2006 and participates periodically in inter-governmental regional forums on gender equality and women's empowerment, when funded by donors. However in separate studies both UNIFEM Pacific and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) have concluded that the government of RMI does not view gender equality as a priority⁷². There is no

⁷¹ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva.

⁷² ADB. 2007. *Country Performance Assessment: RMI*. Manila

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integration of gender considerations into government objectives, despite the relevance of gender issues to education, health, environmental management and development of the private sector. The general organisational culture of government is not conducive to individual efforts to strengthen gender equality and there is a need for coordinated efforts by donors to develop specific cross-sectoral gender analyses and integrate the issues into all levels of policy dialogue.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has a Women in Development Division which is responsible for gender in the Marshall Islands. The focus of its program is to increase government responsibility to ensure non-discrimination, and to implement the government's commitments to gender (CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, Pacific Platform for Action). In fact the Women in Development Division has been downgraded over recent years, receives inadequate budget allocations and has low technical capacity for gender advocacy and analysis. Currently the Division relies on NGOs to implement a large portion of its mandate. This demonstrates a lack of government accountability to international commitments, an unsupportive organisational culture, and a disregard for women's human rights. Sex and age-disaggregated statistical information is lacking and inhibits the development of evidence-based rationales for more gender responsive programming in government.⁷³

NGO activity on gender through the Women United Together in the Marshall Islands has more profile than government's work. The organisation promotes advocacy campaigns and awareness around the country working on a number of projects including women in leadership, domestic violence, and skills development. Despite the fact that WUTMI is delivering programs that should be carried by government, the government has restricted its freedoms – refusing to allow WUTMI access to airtime on the government controlled radio station for its awareness and advocacy programs⁷⁴.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

Given ADBs commitment to work on pro-poor economic policy, there is a clear need for all ADB staff to integrate gender analysis into policy dialogue across sectors and at all levels. There is scope to build in age/sex-disaggregated data into all studies and to involve ADB social development specialists in the creation of gender features and action plans for Technical Assistance in private sector development and public sector strengthening.

With respect to integrating gender into ADB's program in the Marshalls, it would be useful to create an analysis framework similar to the environment mainstreaming framework included in

⁷³ Huffer, Elise. 2004. *SPC Review of Institutional Mechanisms, Policies, Legislation and Programmes in Support and Promotion of Gender Equality in the Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa and Fiji*. Noumea

⁷⁴ ADB. 2007. *ibid*

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the CSPU Appendix 5. This type of analysis and a targeted recommendations framework would facilitate monitoring of inputs and results in key areas and support improved planning by government.

Samoa

I. Gender situation and key issues

Most of Samoa's population of 179,500 resides on the two main islands of Savaii and Upolu and half the population is under 19 years of age. The country has a total land area of almost 3,000 km² and there is relatively low population density. Annual population growth rate is 0.1 largely due to a balance between high birth rates and the high net migration rate of minus 20%; and there are now more Samoans living outside than inside the country.⁷⁵ Samoans are Polynesian and the Fa'a Samoan culture is chiefly and patrilineal. Women have lower status than men and this is legislated in the area of land rights and evident in many other areas of life. While Samoan women are not equally represented in the formal workforce, they have little protection from labour related discrimination and overall they have less access to political, economic, time and knowledge resources than men. Samoa's Gender and Development Index rating is 71 out of 136 countries and it is placed 77 out of 178 in the Human Development Index.

The population is 80% rural and most people engage in some subsistence agriculture combined with small income generation and cash crops. The Samoan government estimated in 2006 that, based on 2000 data, only 7% of households lived below the USD\$ 1.00/day poverty line⁷⁶. This low level of poverty is directly linked to Samoans living outside the country and the strong remittance economy.

Assessing the progress of Samoa against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.⁷⁷ These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weaknesses in governance; under-utilized human resource capacity; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of private sector activity.

Gender gaps and opportunities for girls at secondary school level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. In Samoa the gross secondary enrollment rate for girls 85% is high by regional standards and there are more girls than boys attending as shown by the female/male ratio of 1.12. The secondary rates do however show a drop from primary where gross primary enrollment for girls is 91%. Gross tertiary enrollment for young women is 7% and at this level men outnumber women.⁷⁸ One constraint to girl's attendance at secondary and tertiary levels is the high rate of adolescent pregnancy, as many girls leave school when pregnant and don't return. Educational outcomes in Samoa are overall quite good, and many Samoan students qualify for overseas study.

⁷⁵ SPC. 2007. *Pacific Island Populations*. Noumea

⁷⁶ UN. 2006. Report of International Expert Group Meeting on MDG, Indigenous Participation and Good Governance. New York http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/workshop_MDG_elisara.doc

⁷⁷ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

⁷⁸ UNDP. 2007/2008. Human Development Report Statistics. http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_SLB.html

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Sexual and reproductive rights and health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are not supported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. In Samoa women can access the assistance of skilled birth attendants in 100% of cases. The fertility rate is high at an average of 4.6 births/woman and the adolescent fertility rate is 45 births/1000 women aged 15 – 19 years. UNFPA reports that contraceptive prevalence is approximately 45% (2000). The reported maternal mortality ratio for 2000-2006 was 29/100,000 (UNICEF) and there are no adjusted figures available. Infant mortality is 19.3/1000 births and under-5 mortality is 29/1000 live births. Women have a longer life expectancy living on average 75.5 years compared to men's 70.1.⁷⁹

In Samoa, rape in marriage is not illegal so married women are unprotected by law from this crime. Abortion is criminalized with penalties of 7 years imprisonment for women who terminate their pregnancies; the only exceptions are to save the mothers life. These two contraventions of women's human rights and equality indicate that Samoan women still face serious discrimination in the family and society⁸⁰.

According to SPC statistics there were 12 reported cases of HIV/AIDS as of March 2007, four of these cases were women. Due to limited surveillance, it is assumed that this is an under-count.⁸¹ The government works in concert with a number of regional initiatives on HIV/AIDS linked to the Pacific Plan. The government has also established a National AIDS Coordinating Council to manage their national prevention and control program. There are no clear reports on the outcomes of these strategies, for example to what extent the promotion of safer sexual practices is happening.

Infrastructure that supports reduction in women and girl's time poverty

Women in Samoa perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence and cash crop farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. Samoa has a good basic road network and public transport system, which facilitates marketing of produce, and access to employment on Upolu. The road networks on Savaii are more basic and there are limited sea transport services, consequently women are more isolated and disadvantaged there. Approximately 88 % of the population has access to improved water supply but not all is potable, consequently in many areas women must take on time-consuming water collection and/or water purification responsibilities.⁸² The draft ADB Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for Samoa indicates that safe water is a problem and notes that there are regular water-borne disease issues. The CPS also notes the financial and time costs related to taking sick children to clinics and the

⁷⁹ *ibid*

⁸⁰ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva.

⁸¹ SPC and WHO. 2007. *A Review of Pacific Regional HIV Strategy and Progress Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support*. Noumea.

⁸² UNDP. 2007/2008. *ibid*

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central hospital. Access to varying levels of improved sanitation is reported to be universal but there are drainage system issues that require improvement, particularly in the Apia area.⁸³

Access to productive and economic resources including women's property and inheritance rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In Samoa women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. Customary land accounts for 80% of the land base in Samoa and patrilineal inheritance rights are given legislative status. This gives men control of most aspects of land and property which is discriminatory against women. Only the 10% of women who hold chiefly Matai titles can lease custom land. Women can technically own freehold land if they can access credit or resources to purchase it. However there is a vicious circle of disadvantage as women have little collateral due to the laws related to custom land rights. Nonetheless, a small percentage of women are active in the private sector and there is a Women in Business and Development Association that provides support services and information to women entrepreneurs. Women currently make up about 33% of the paid workforce and their participation in the formal economy is increasing. Samoa has equal pay legislation but no pay equity so it is not illegal for employers to pay women less than men. Women do earn less than men for equivalent work and this creates particular hardship at the lower end of the wage scale where women are heavily represented. The minimum wage, set in 2005, is ST\$ 2.00.⁸⁴

In 2005, the UN CEDAW Committee, when responding to Samoa's State Report noted concern about the low numbers of economically active women in Samoa and that there are particular areas of discrimination related to lack of protection from discrimination during pregnancy, the limited provision of maternity benefits in the private sector, the absence of pay equity legislation, and a lack of protection against sexual harassment in the workplace.⁸⁵ As of 2007, no related legislation revisions have taken place.⁸⁶

Women's representation in political bodies

Only individuals with the chiefly Matai titles can be elected to parliament. Technically both men and women can receive the title but in fact only about 10% of Matai are female. This creates discrimination and disadvantage for women seeking to enter politics. Despite this, as of March 2007, 4 of the 49 members of parliament were women and three of those held Ministerial posts. Women also face constraints of financing campaigns, developing a base of support in a traditionally male dominated society and balancing family, community and campaigning responsibilities. The low level of women's representation in parliament inhibits analysis and coordination of gender considerations into decision-making. As elsewhere in the region there is an ongoing need to train both male and female parliamentarians on gender analysis and the links between gender equality and development effectiveness.

⁸³ ADB 2008. *Draft Country Partnership Strategy: Samoa*. Manila

⁸⁴ ADB.2008. *Draft Country Partnership Strategy: Samoa 2008 - 2012*. Manila.

⁸⁵ UN. 2005. CEDAW Committee. *Concluding Comments: Samoa*. New York. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/32sess.htm#samoa32>

⁸⁶ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *ibid*

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Violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. Violence against women in Samoa is known to be very high based on in-depth research carried out on the issue by SPC, UNFPA and WHO (2000). The Samoa Family Health and Safety Study shows that 41% of 'ever-partnered' women had experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner and 20% had experienced non-consensual sexual violence or rape.⁸⁷ Despite this Samoa has not yet incorporated domestic violence into its criminal legislation.⁸⁸ The New Zealand government is supporting training with the police to respond more appropriately to protect victims of domestic violence, a number of NGOs in the country provide support and shelter, and there are community based legal rights programmes sponsored by the Pacific Regional Human Rights Team (RRRT). The above-mentioned research also showed that women with higher education experienced violence less frequently and that violence was less common for women in urban areas. This points to the need for a concentration on education as well as urban and rural outreach programmes that target men as well as women. The study reinforces international findings that the costs of violence are particularly high and insidious for children. They tend to be traumatized by it and at the same time normalize the phenomena so boys are more likely to replicate violence, and girls are more likely to accept it, when they enter intimate relationships.

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

Samoa's policy framework for gender is laid out in its National Policy for Women of Samoa, and is linked to international and regional commitments including CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Pacific Platform for Action. As with other Ministries in the Samoan government, the Women's Ministry's corporate and management plans are integrated with the framework of the Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS) but the strategy itself sets no national priorities for eliminating discrimination against women and/or promoting gender equality. The SDS strategic objectives are all relevant to promoting gender equality and empowering women; they include: i) strengthening the private sector and creating employment, ii) promoting agricultural development, iii) increasing the tourism sector in a balanced manner, iv) community development linked to creation of economic and social opportunities, v) improved education outcomes and vi) improved health outcomes. However, without specific requirements to link these objectives to gender equality, progress will only be ad hoc. The Government's CEDAW report demonstrates that there is considerable legislative reform that needs to be integrated into the Ministry's planning and programming to address inequalities in law and in the daily lives of Samoan women.⁸⁹ Further, the concluding comments of the CEDAW committee note concern over the lack of benchmarks and timelines for this process.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The Ministry for Women works in partnership with the National Council of Women to implement both practical and strategic objectives from the original National Policy for the Women of Samoa

⁸⁷ WHO. 2004. *WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women: Samoa Country Findings*. Manila. http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study/fact_sheets/Samoa2.pdf

⁸⁸ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *ibid*

⁸⁹ UN. 2003. *Report on the Status of Women in Samoa 2001. State Report to CEDAW Committee*. New York <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/32sess.htm#samoa32>

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that will "Develop and enhance the capacity of women of Samoa in all spheres in partnership with stakeholders, ensuring in particular that women are well informed of their human rights as well as ways and means of accessing needed services and resources". The most recently revised policy notes the need to improve the capacity of women and particularly to place more emphasis on support and training for women in the informal sector and vocational training aimed at rural women. The Samoan government has very strong systems and management checks and balances, however, as elsewhere in the Pacific there are implementation challenges related to technical capacity for gender analysis and planning as well as adequacy of resources for gender.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

The draft ADB CPS for Samoa shows that interventions are being planned in a number of sectors to support government. All projects will benefit from gender analysis, integration of gender specific policy dialogue at senior levels, and production of sex/age-disaggregated statistics. For work in the area of private sector and enabling business environments, projects should assess differential factors that restrict women from entering business or growing their businesses. Assessment of barriers to women moving from the informal to formal sectors would also support increased private sector activities. Education projects should have specific targeted gender features and a Gender Action Plan to support equality of outcomes for young men and young women. Sex/age-disaggregated information can be used to monitor results between groups and to improve targeting. Social infrastructure initiatives, while planned at the macro scale, should ensure that women's stakeholder groups and the Ministry of Women have the opportunity to provide comments and inputs to initial stages of any and all projects.

Solomon Islands

I. Gender situation and key issues

The Solomon Islands is a diverse country with over 900 islands and 70 language groups. The population of 530,000 is primarily Melanesian with a 4% minority group of Polynesians. Half the population is under 20 years of age, 80% live in rural areas and the annual growth rate is approximately 2.8%. The country ranks 129th out of 178 countries on the Human Development Index but has not been given a GDI rating for 2007/08 due to lack of sex-disaggregated data. Gender relations are influenced by matrilineal and patrilineal cultural patterns, but decision-making and control of resources is biased in favor of men across all groups. There is a strong traditional obligation system that undermines individual control of resources and exacerbates women's lack of economic power. Opportunity to access credit is constrained by lack of land registration and by women's generally low political decision-making influence in community settings. Women experience time poverty due to overwork in rural subsistence agriculture and responsibilities to family, community and the church.

Political upheaval since 2000 has had a heavy impact on women, and during the period of tension, resulted in forced marriage, increased levels of rape and other violent assaults, population displacement, and loss of livelihoods and opportunities. Children in some areas have paid a very heavy price as schools were burned or closed; they witnessed atrocities and experienced food shortages and hunger. During the conflict women were active in peace building but were excluded from high-level peace talks facilitated by the UN, New Zealand and Australia. Local and regional NGOs have worked with women's organizations and communities to raise government and donor awareness of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on ensuring involvement of women as decision-makers and stakeholders in conflict reduction and peace building.

Poverty in the Solomon Islands is widespread with women and children suffering disproportionately to men. Additional factors such as endemic malaria and natural disasters exacerbate poverty and create increased burdens for women as care givers, food producers, and community members.

Assessing the progress of the Solomon Islands against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.⁹⁰ These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; lack of integrated gender analysis in planning and budgeting by both government and donors; low human resource capacity; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. The UN Human Development Report states that the gross secondary enrollment rate for girls was 27% in 2005. With a female to male ratio of 0.86. A number of donors have invested in improvements to education infrastructure with a focus on ensure accessibility to primary level schooling. Initial

⁹⁰ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

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primary enrollment for girls and boys starts at approximately 94% but rates fall disproportionately at secondary level due to a shortage of places, a high drop out rate, adolescent pregnancy, and families pulling girls from school for household and on-farm labour.⁹¹

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. Fertility rates are high at 4.4 live births per woman overall with teen pregnancy rates of 72 live births per 1000 women aged 15 – 19.⁹² Contraceptive prevalence (modern methods) is 15%, contraceptives are not readily available, and when they are they are not free which further inhibits uptake. AusAID is funding health services and 80% of the population has access to devolved basic health services, but personnel often have only basic first aid training. UNFPA reports that a trained birth attendant supports 86% of births. The UN Human Development Report lists the maternal mortality ratio 200/100,000 live births, with infant mortality at 24/1000 live births and child malnutrition (underweight) is 21%.

Sexual and reproductive rights are not defined in legislation. Marital rape is not a crime, abortion is illegal, and women report difficulty in making decisions on contraceptive use within marriage. In situations of poverty women's regional agencies have documented that brothers and fathers in certain areas coordinate the prostitution of their female relatives. Policies for HIV/AIDs are in place, but implementation remains challenging due to gender inequality and taboos on discussing sensitive sexual issues. As of 2005 there were 6 reported cases, half of which were women.⁹³ There is stigma and discrimination against HIV positive individuals and also often against their caregivers who are primarily women. This has a negative impact on the number of individuals who present for testing, needs assessment, and treatment.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in the Solomon Islands perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence and cash crop farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. The Solomon Islands is a rugged country with dispersed island groups, poor maritime shipping and air services and limited, poor quality road networks. There is low population density and rural communities are often isolated from markets. Water supply and sanitation systems in rural areas are basic and women spend a disproportionate amount of their time collecting fuel wood, water, and providing health care for preventable diseases caused by lack of sanitation and reliable water. Only 31% of the population has the use of improved sanitation facilities while 70% have some improvements in water supply⁹⁴. Women need to be involved in design and delivery of targeted infrastructure to reduce overwork and increase available time of activities such as community management, local marketing of surplus produce, and developing alternative livelihoods.

⁹¹ UN 2007/2008. Human Development Report Statistics. http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_SLB.html

⁹² UNFPA. Solomon Islands at a Glance. No date but statistics cited from 2000. <http://pacific.unfpa.org/Countries/sb.htm>

⁹³ SPC and WHO. 2007. *A Review of Pacific Regional HIV Strategy and Progress Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support*. Noumea.

⁹⁴ UN 2007/2008. *ibid*

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Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In Solomon Islands women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. There are no legal barriers to women accessing credit, but as land ownership is customary and decisions about land are almost always made by men – even in matrilineal societies – women have little opportunity to leverage assets for formal or informal credit. In general women's environmental access rights are limited by custom to specific areas on clan land and to specific types of resource collection activities. Patterns of household income control are not well documented, but women's NGOs report men tend to use discretionary income on alcohol and tobacco. This is in line with international findings that women spend more than men on social capital and family well-being.

There is little labour market participation data but the 2002 UNDP Solomon Islands Development Report notes that women account for 48% of the population but only 17% of administrative and managerial positions and 30% of professional and technical positions. The current minimum wage is SI\$1.50/hour except for agriculture and fisheries where it is SI\$1.25 and there is legislation for equal pay. There is legislation for 12 weeks maternity leave although pay rates are guaranteed for only 25% of salary and women are prohibited from working for 6 weeks after childbirth.⁹⁵

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

Currently there are no women holding parliamentary seats in the Solomon Islands despite the fact that 15 female candidates ran in 2006 national election. UNIFEM, AusAID and regional NGOs have provided support to women candidates, but major parties discourage female candidates and most women run as independents with no funding support and high levels of cultural distrust. The party system is weak overall but has links to the traditional power of chiefs and leaders, and as elsewhere in Melanesia, these male leaders often undermine women's attempts to participate. There continues to be a strong need for ongoing education of the electorate and training to female candidates.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. As noted above, extreme domestic and random violence against women and girls is high and presents a serious constraint to national development. This violence has been exacerbated by political upheaval and is further normalized by public figures who are known to abuse their wives and children. Domestic violence is not criminalized, and while sexual assault legislation exists it is weak and incomprehensive. Women do have the right to access restraining orders to protect them from violence in their homes but in general the police and the judiciary act inconsistently and undermine women's trust in the system. Women are often discouraged from reporting domestic violence by family and community and may be fearful of further retribution. The geographic isolation of many areas also makes it difficult for rural women to understand their rights and find appropriate support services.

⁹⁵ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

The government has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women although it has yet to submit a status report. A National Women's Policy was introduced in 1999 and is intended to guide a planning framework across ministries but it has no legislative authority. The government is non-compliant with CEDAW in a number of areas including 'the establishment of legislation to monitor the implementation of law and policy to foster the advancement of women.'⁹⁶ There is a low level of awareness and political will for gender equality in government and the policy is largely unimplemented. The organisational culture of government is not conducive to gender responsive interventions and the recent influx of public service support from the Australian led Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) has not incorporated any significant gender analysis into its programming.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The national women's machinery is the Ministry of Women, Youth, and Sports, which has a mandate to promote the empowerment of women. While the Permanent Secretaries for the Ministry have been strong and motivated, there is a general lack of technical capacity in the Women's Development Department. The staff strives to deliver services mainly to rural women through home economic and basic leadership courses but lack capacity to design innovative gender responsive programs, the Department has very poor physical facilities and capital assets, and is severely under-budgeted. There is no specific budgeting for gender mainstreaming across ministries.

The Permanent Secretary responsible for gender equality is expected to provide comment on proposed donor interventions and Ministerial support, however this person has a lack of authority across government and cannot effectively influence policy and programming changes to mainstream gender in other sectors.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

There is scope for ADB to incorporate gender analysis into all existing work through the use of project gender action plans and specific assurances and leveraging existing government policy. There is a specific need for the collection of age/sex-disaggregated data on all projects involving national stakeholders and for project outcomes to beneficiaries.

Infrastructure projects have potential to involve women more actively as stakeholders in design, implementation and monitoring of projects. Supplemental project activities to create economic opportunities for women and to introduce HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention programs in rural areas would add value to current projects.

⁹⁶ *ibid.*

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In addition ADB should involve the Solomon Islands in the proposed RETA to Strengthen Pacific Economic Analysis and Policy Development that will examine areas for improved integration of gender into government and development cooperation policy.

Timor Leste

I. Gender situation and key issues

As a new nation, Timor Leste faces significant challenges in the areas of social development, equality, and human rights. Timor-Leste's history has been shaped by a complex combination of socio-economic, geo-environmental, and political factors, which create hardship for the less powerful social groups. Divisions of power are linked to sex, place of origin, age, physical ability, and degree of geographic isolation from urban areas. There are multiple inter-related development constraints including political instability, poverty, low literacy levels, limited capacity and poor coordination within government, limited service delivery, and poor infrastructure. The president of the World Bank announced April 14th, 2008 that the rapidly increasing price of staple foods threatens to plunge more than 100 million people into poverty worldwide.⁹⁷ Timor-Leste also faces imminent shortages of rice and there are no confirmed systems for ordering alternative staple food imports.⁹⁸

The 2008 meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) notes that poor state and donor financing mechanisms for gender equality are pervasive and that this is a major persistent constraint to development. Lack of funding and commitment for gender equality undermines the ongoing efforts of Timorese women to gain fair representation in the development process – in government and across civil society. Moreover, the lack of support for gender equality inhibits the success of all development initiatives. A decade of international literature, including studies by the World Bank and the UN Millennium Project indicate that gender inequality exacerbates poverty and is causal in low productivity, stagnant economic performance, labour market inefficiency, poor governance standards and community instability.

The recent history of Timor-Leste has generated both constraints and supports for social development. Although many disadvantaged groups, and the women within them, have been organised activists in the independence movement, they remain marginalized and are seriously disadvantaged according to international measures of social and gender equality. In the supplemental MDG gender indicators, related to capability, opportunity and security, the rankings are also low. Selected UN strategic MDG priorities for gender can be supported in ADB's work in Timor-Leste. These include: i) reducing girls and women's time poverty through gender-responsive infrastructure (transport, WSS and energy); ii) guaranteeing property rights and reducing labour market discrimination; and iii) working to end a culture of violence against women.⁹⁹

Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus has noted that 'Poverty is not created by poor people. It is produced by our failure to create institution to support human capabilities.'¹⁰⁰ In Timor-Leste as elsewhere, the fact that gender inequality is pervasive in the development industry exacerbates traditional biases, excludes women from economic opportunity and entrenches differential levels of poverty between men and women. This problem is becoming worse with the explosion of the youth population and stagnant job creation.

⁹⁷ BBC News. April 14, 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7344892.stm>

⁹⁸ Personal communication with Timor-Leste Food Security Advisor April 11, 2008.

⁹⁹ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

¹⁰⁰ Quoted in UNDP 2007. UNDP 2nd Participatory Poverty Assessment in Timor-Leste: 48. Dili.

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The population of Timor-Leste was approximately one million in 2004, and is projected to grow at an annual rate of 3.4 from 2005 – 2015¹⁰¹. The population is 80% rural and one third of households rely exclusively on subsistence agriculture¹⁰². Statistics on poverty vary but it is estimated that 40% of the population lives on less than \$0.55/day.¹⁰³ Rural areas have a much higher incidence of poverty (46%) than urban centres (26%).¹⁰⁴ The gender division of labour in subsistence and industrial agriculture is not well documented, but information from government and NGO staff, as well as preliminary research, indicates that women face a higher level of cash, time and opportunity poverty than men due to a combination of household and subsistence agricultural labour requirements.

Timor-Leste is not achieving its Millennium Development Goals. There is poor delivery and low utilization of health services and poor education performance. Population growth is extremely high, per capita income is decreasing and poverty seems to be rising.¹⁰⁵

As one of the poorest countries in the world, based on non-petroleum GDP, Timor-Leste has to address a wide range of socio-economic and political constraints to development. The government does not have an effective social safety net system for vulnerable groups, and delivery of social services is constrained by low human resource availability and technical capacity. Specific vulnerable groups include the elderly, children in institutional care, the disabled and mentally ill, widows and veterans of the resistance, internally displaced people, and members of female-headed households. In December 2006 the government recognized the hardship of widows from the military and police forces killed in the April 2006 massacre and established pensions for them. Compensation payments were also made to civilian widows.¹⁰⁶ The fight for independence, displacement of population and the high fertility rates have contributed to children being abandoned by their families or turned over to institutional care as a means to ensure their survival. There is no legislation to address adoption and reports of increased trafficking of children has resulted in the government banning any kind of foreign adoptions. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) notes that 'Timor-Leste has been identified as a destination country for the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation from other Asian countries and as a potential country of origin for trafficking victims. The country is also affected by internal trafficking in women and children for the purposes of sexual exploitation and domestic servitude.'¹⁰⁷

Youth are an additional at-risk group as they are largely disenfranchised by both the education system and due to high youth unemployment, and are at risk of exploitation by members of rival political factions. There is no juvenile offender legislation and minors are generally sentenced as adults. They are highly at risk of physical and sexual violence in the national adult prison system. Youth under 18 years comprise 50% of the population and the high youth unemployment rate of 43% for 15 – 24-year olds is a serious constraint.¹⁰⁸ The World Bank estimates that there are 15,000 young people entering the labour market each year while only 400 new jobs are

¹⁰¹ UNDP.2007/2008. Human Development Report Statistical Tables. New York. http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_TMP.html

¹⁰² IFC and ADB. 2007. *Economic and Social Development Brief*. Manila and Washington.

¹⁰³ UNDP and ILO. 2007. *Timor-Leste Key Market Indicators*. Dili. & IFC and ADB 2007. Op. cit.

¹⁰⁴ ADB and UNIFEM.2005. *Country Gender Assessment: Timor-Leste*. Manila.

¹⁰⁵ Green, Amanda.2005. *Public Interventions for Poverty Reduction in Timor-Leste*.

¹⁰⁶ Alola Foundation. 2008. http://www.alolafoundation.org/widows_program.php

¹⁰⁷ IOM press release. Feb.2008. <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/pbnAS/cache/offonce?entryId=16754>

¹⁰⁸ Das, M.B. 2004. *Labour Market Impact of Minimum Wage Policy: The Case of Timor-Leste in Comparative Perspective*. Washington, World Bank.

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created.¹⁰⁹ The high teen pregnancy rates combined with i) discrimination against pregnant girls attending school and ii) the traditional division of labour for reproductive work mean that young women are doubly hindered from potential engagement in the workforce if they become pregnant.¹¹⁰

Gender Inequality as a Major Social Constraint to Development

Assessing the progress of Timor-Leste against the following MDG supplemental indicators for gender equality demonstrates areas that require strategic action.¹¹¹ Poor performance against these indicators can also be correlated to development constraints including i) weak governance; ii) lack of integrated gender analysis in planning and budgeting by both government and donors; iii) low human resource capacity; iv) women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and v) low levels of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. In Timor-Leste, gross secondary enrollment for girls was just 52% in 2005 which is about the same as for boys, and is, overall, very low. Only 4% of women and 8% of men have tertiary education.¹¹² Indications are that there is a higher primary and secondary drop out rate for girls than boys. This is symptomatic of high household workloads that are resolved by pulling girls from school to supplement labour needs.¹¹³ Low literacy and high drop out rates are pervasive at the primary and secondary levels despite gradual improvements in education systems and coverage. The low literacy rate of for women is on average 52% and much lower (40%) for poor women. This is considerably lower than men's literacy rate of 65%. All of these factors contribute to the current low levels of human resource capacity and block the future success of Timor-Leste. There is a need to remind development agencies and government that international studies have consistently found that educating girls and women is one of the fastest and most effective ways to improve both social and economic development indicators.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. Due to a combination of weak rural health systems, poor road infrastructure and lack of training only 18% of pregnant women have assistance from a skilled birth attendant. Women face maternal mortality ratios estimated by the Timor-Leste 2006 Health Statistics report to be as high as 660/100,000 births. There is a total fertility rate of 7.4 children/woman. High numbers of pregnancies and the associated health risks have negative impacts on women's time poverty,

¹⁰⁹ World Bank. 2008. *Country Brief: Timor-Leste*. Washington

¹¹⁰ UNICEF. 2007. UNICEF Humanitarian Action: Timor-Leste in 2007. <http://www.unicef.org/har07/files/TimorLeste.pdf>

¹¹¹ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. *Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality*. New York.

¹¹² IFC and ADB 2007. Op. cit.

¹¹³ Gov't of Timor-Leste. 2002. *Common Core Document for UN Treaty Reporting*. Dili

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nutritional status, and productivity. The adolescent fertility rate is one of the highest in the world and increasing. In 2000 the rate was 130 births/1000 women aged 15 – 19 years and in 2004 this had risen to 177.¹¹⁴ Child health is poor with under-5 malnutrition (underweight) at 46%. Women's life expectancy is 60.5 years compared to men's at 58.9.¹¹⁵

Rape is narrowly defined in the law and rape within marriage is not considered to be a crime. Abortion is a sensitive issue in Timor-Leste and after considerable discussion facilitated by the Secretariat of State for the Promotion of Equality (SEPI) and the Alola Foundation, a local NGO, voluntary abortion has been taken out of the draft penal code and recommendations have been made to deal with it under separate legislation.

HIV/AIDS prevalence is currently believed to be low in Timor-Leste however the large scale of social dislocation and a number of behavioral risk factors (including the high youth population, large wage disparities between men and women, increasing poverty-related prostitution, low use of condoms, and high incidence of violence against women) could have a devastating effect if the issue is not addressed proactively. Timor-Leste has adopted and implemented a number of programs on HIV prevention but effective implementation has been inhibited by poor coordination and weak capacity. In 2005 government, civil society and the UN engaged in development of a new national strategy on HIV/AIDs.¹¹⁶

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Despite an existing, extensive road network rural communities are isolated by the poor and deteriorating condition of road infrastructure. This inhibits consistent timely delivery of key services such as health and education, restricts economic activity and creates additional burdens for women in their roles as household managers and family health providers. Water supply and sanitation systems in rural and urban areas are basic and women spend a disproportionate amount of their time collecting fuel, water, and providing health care for preventable diseases caused by lack of sanitation and reliable water supplies. In the capital Dili it is estimated that 75% of housing is unplanned and without adequate water supply and sanitation systems.¹¹⁷ The low rate (11%) of rural electrification creates further time constraints and higher workloads for women.¹¹⁸ Only 36% of the population has the use of improved sanitation facilities while in rural areas only 43% have some improvements in water supply compared to the national average of 58%¹¹⁹. In most cases piped water is not considered potable. Women need to be involved in design and delivery of targeted infrastructure to reduce overwork and increase available time for activities such as community management, local marketing of surplus produce, and developing alternative livelihoods. This is inhibited by the lack of development planning and project experience of most government staff. The lack of gender awareness among development professionals working on infrastructure creates an additional and exacerbating constraint.

Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

¹¹⁴ USAID.2007. *Health Policy Initiative: Youth Policy.com*. Washington. <http://www.youth-policy.com/index.cfm?page=interviewApril2007>

¹¹⁵ UNDP.2007/2008. Op. cit.

¹¹⁶ http://hivaidsclearinghouse.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=7983_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC

¹¹⁷ Personal communication. April 2008. Director, Secretariat of State for Building and Urban Planning.

¹¹⁸ IMF 2005. *Demorcratic Republic of Timor-Leste: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper – Joint Staff Advisory Note*. Washington.

¹¹⁹ UNDP. 2007/2008. Op. cit.

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Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. Working with the local and international NGOs, who have existing commitments to gender equality is a key method to build capacity and achieve development results and ADB has trialed this approach with success in the road sector.

Timor-Leste's labour force participation rates are 40% for women and 80% for men and UNDP estimates put women's earned income at one eighth of men's¹²⁰. Women make up 24.3% of civil servants, but they are significantly underrepresented at senior management levels¹²¹. Both women and men in political and public service positions require training in gender analysis in order to create innovative responsive policies and plans for Timor-Leste. Women's participation in the informal sector is heaviest in traditionally female areas of activities such as craft production, textiles, marketing produce, and catering services.

When so much of the population is engaged in subsistence livelihoods, which may include informal self-employment and intermittent income generation activities, it is difficult to precisely define the concept of private sector. It is however generally acknowledged that participation in the private sector above a micro level requires assets and access to credit. Lack of land legislation and clear inheritance rights are a constraint to women and men's ability to participate in the private sector. Land rights are undefined and have traditionally been dependent on patrilineal and matrilineal custom and on the decisions of previous colonial administrations are no longer recognized. Consequently there is no legislated protection for land titles. Ensuring certainty around land, increasing the capacity of informal sector entrepreneurs and at the same time creating a friendlier business environment are long-term requirements to engage both men and women in a functional private sector.

ADB's current experience in the road sector, creating community based opportunities for labour intensive road maintenance, can support skill building for potential entrepreneurs and deliver social and economic benefits. As women comprise 52% of the self-employed they are a highly relevant target group for this work.¹²²

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

As the nation establishes itself women are beginning to take a significant role in political decision-making. This builds on a long history of women's activism in the independence movements and has been supported by a combination of UN organisations, led by UNIFEM, bilateral donors and the EU. In the 2005 local government elections 90 women were elected to village councils (SUCOs) across the country and at the national level women hold 26% of assembly seats, including 20% of ministerial and administrative posts. UNIFEM is currently planning support initiatives for women candidates and the electorate for the 2009 elections.

To ensure that this solid level of political representation is used to the benefit of Timorese men and women, it is critical that both male and female politicians and their advisers receive training and support on gender analysis and gender-responsive planning. This will facilitate integration of human rights, gender equity and development effectiveness considerations into political debate, policymaking, financing for gender equality, and planning. In addition ongoing support to

¹²⁰ ADB. 2007. *Country Performance Assessment: Appendix 1*. Manila

¹²¹ ADB and UNIFEM 2005 Op. cit.

¹²² IFC and ADB 2007. Op. cit.

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implement legislative change in line with the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is essential. UNDP and UNIFEM are currently working with SEPI to support gender awareness training for politicians and senior government staff and to facilitate a caucus of women parliamentarians.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women is a contravention of women's human rights and is also a serious constraint to all forms of development as it negatively impacts community integrity, labour force stability and productivity, prevention of HIV/AIDS, mental health, and child welfare. The government has specifically recognized violence against women as an impediment to development and acknowledged the need for legislation.¹²³ Cultural factors such as bride price, high levels of persistent poverty and the legacy of conflict in the country are factors in the growing epidemic of violence against women. Legislation has been drafted to address violence against women but as of April 2008 it was still before the Council of Ministers. Once the bill is passed it will still be necessary to ensure its integration into the penal code (currently in draft) to ensure that domestic violence is criminalized. Donors and NGOs identify ongoing challenges in the fight to end violence against women. These include the lack of reporting due to coercion of victims by families and community, the need for further training for the judiciary and police, and pervasive social attitudes that normalize the crime. UNFPA has been providing technical and financial support to the government through SEPI and NGOs. Progress made on gender based violence (GBV) includes establishment of i) a Vulnerable Person's Unit in the police force at national and district levels to support victims of GBV, ii) a 'safe house' at Dili National Hospital, which provides medical and forensic capacity, trauma counseling and emergency shelter, a victim support service with a local NGO (JSMP) providing legal advice to victims. There are a number of safe houses and shelters supported by donors, NGOs and religious organizations, however there is no overall inventory of how many there are around the country. Fokupers keeps a database on cases of violence against women and publishes annual reports on the issue. Social/Gender Policy and Planning Framework

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

Government has low capacity, an organisational culture imbued with political distrust and a related lack of information sharing and integrated problem solving. Due to the poor education system, government is also inhibited by an acute shortage of human resources to manage and implement its policies and plans. In its 2008 National Priorities document, the government has identified 6 priority areas as key challenges and areas for strategic action. These priorities include i) Public Safety and Security, ii) Social Protection and Solidarity, iii) Addressing the Needs of Youth, iv) Employment and Income Generation, v) Improving Social Service Delivery, and vi) Clean and Effective Government.¹²⁴ Given the constraints government is faced with, it is not as clear how the ambitious programs for change will actually be facilitated without significant inputs of donor funds and external expertise at all levels.

Gender is absent as a specific area of action in the 2008 National Priorities but gender equality has been incorporated into Timor-Leste's constitutional framework with specific commitments to equality between men and women and there is a sophisticated policy framework under the Secretary of State for Promotion of Equality. Timor Leste has ratified CEDAW, and the National

¹²³ United Nations. 2005. *Timor-Leste ministerial statement to 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women*. New York.

¹²⁴ Government of Timor-Leste. 2008. *Working Together: 2008 Priorities*. Dili

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Development Plan (NDP) includes targets and indicators for the achievement of gender equality in government. In addition the NDP mainstreams all MDG commitments. The NDP currently stands in lieu of a national gender policy while some sectors, such as agriculture, have drafted internal policy direction to be supported by gender focal points. In 2004 the government passed legislation to facilitate women's political representation through quotas of reserved seats on local councils at the Suco (district) level.

Also in 2004 government made commitments to mainstream gender in the Sector Investment Programs although gender indicators are not comprehensive across all sectors. If Sector Wide Approaches are introduced, this commitment to integration of gender analysis can potentially be translated into more inclusive and effective planning frameworks.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The Secretariat of State for Promotion of Equality (SEPI) is the national women's machinery and is located in the Prime Ministers Office. It runs 4 core programs: gender mainstreaming, promotion of a culture of equality, addressing gender based violence, and empowerment of women. Implementation of the policy and planning framework is coordinated through the SEPI and gender mainstreaming pilot programmes have been established in the education, health, justice and policing sectors. Mainstreaming is defined by SEPI as 'the reorganization, improvement, development and evaluation of the processes of implementation of policies, at all levels and in all stages by all actors generally involved in policy decision making'. SEPI emphasizes that gender analysis and mainstreaming is the responsibility of individual ministries and there is an Inter-Ministerial Working Group on gender to help develop mainstreaming strategies across government. SEPI has the services of two gender advisors supported by UNIFEM. And UNDP has provided advisory support for gender analysis across the machinery of government, including analysis of state budget proposals. SEPI has requested Irish Aid to fund additional advisors to support the Ministries of Health, Education, Justice, and Economy and Development.

The Ministries of Education, Health, Infrastructure, Agriculture, and the Ministry of Labour and Community Reintegration have national gender focal points. The police have recruited a gender advisor and the Ministry of Agriculture has a Gender Unit supported by an advisor funded by UNIFEM. The Ministry of Agriculture has developed an internal mainstreaming program and has begun delivering gender training. The Ministry of Finance and Planning received training on gender analysis in 2003/04, but performance on mainstreaming in government continues to be hampered by a lack of gender analysis. There is sex/age-disaggregated data from the 2004 census but to date it has not been analyzed and used to build evidence-based rationales that can guide policy and planning. There is a significant lack of the technical capacity required to build these rationales and integrate gender as a variable in government budget debate and allocations¹²⁵. The World Bank is working with government to improve the budget process and current gender related focus points are limited to education on health. SEPI is exploring the potential to develop gender budgeting but without clear and integrated systems for needs assessment, planning and budgeting, this will be difficult to implement.

A number of factors inhibit the creation of an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming, and by extension undermine development effectiveness and contravene the rights of Timorese women and men. These exist in both development agencies and in government and include: i) a lack of demonstrated political will for gender mainstreaming; ii) organisational cultures that are

¹²⁵ Gov't of Timor-Leste. Op. cit.

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male dominated and normalize the marginalization of gender equality as a development consideration; iii) lack of accountability and responsibility systems for managing gender considerations; iv) low technical capacity for gender analysis and resistance to investing in this skill area; and v) inadequate financing for gender at all levels.

IV. Role of development partners in the sector

ADB Experience with Gender in Timor-Leste

The CSPU 2006 – 2008 identified gender as a thematic priority for the Urban Water Supply and Sanitation and Water Supply Service Organisation Development projects. It specifically noted that ADB should work to address the lack of female involvement in management or senior technical positions in WSS/SAS as having women in those roles has been proven to effectiveness and efficiency in responding to actual needs of users. Due to the 2006 crisis the project was scaled back and the social/gender elements were not implemented.

The ongoing Road Sector Improvement Project has a Gender and Development (GAD) thematic classification. The GAD features are included in the Community Empowerment sub-component, which is involving project communities in the rehabilitation of feeder roads. The project design team set targets for 60% involvement of women in the labour pool, and includes a mandatory savings scheme that encourages micro-enterprise development. This initiative has been documented in case study format and provides lessons learned and extensive guidance on gender design features to enhance similar projects.¹²⁶ Management and implementation of the community empowerment sub-project has been outsourced to CARE, which has a strong commitment to gender and community development. CARE has been engaged in the communities over an extended period and has an existing level of knowledge and trust that is facilitating improved results and significant benefits to women and families.

Role of Other Development Partners in the Sector

There are a large number of UN and bilateral donors in Timor-Leste as well as the World Bank and ADB. The World Bank includes gender as an analytical factor across sector programs with emphasis on governance, private sector and small enterprise development, service delivery, agriculture. UNDP integrates gender into 5 areas of practice: i) governance, ii) poverty reduction, iii) crisis recovery, iv) HIV/AIDs, and v) energy and the environment, and also has a number of specific gender initiatives. UNIFEM has focused on i) women's leadership, ii) implementation of CEDAW iii) supporting the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women in peace building which incorporates programming on ending violence against women. UNICEF and UNFPA operate within their focused mandate areas, mainstreaming gender as a key analytical focus in both humanitarian and development contexts and providing specific types of gender responsive support to children and youth. UNDP, UNFPA, IOM and UNICEF have obtained a 5.6 million dollar allocation from the Spanish government for a 3-year program 'Supporting Women's Rights in Nation Building.' The focus of the program will be on two key areas i) development of legal and policy frameworks, including national action plans on sexual and gender based violence and trafficking, and ii) Strengthening Delivery of Services including research on conditional cash transfers to specific vulnerable groups.

Bilateral donors include Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Canada, USAID. Each of these donors has explicit gender policies for mainstreaming across sectors and in some cases they provide

¹²⁶ ADB.2007.Socially Inclusive and Gender-Responsive Transport Projects. Manila.

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funding support to UN agencies. AusAID supports gender-mainstreaming initiatives within its program to strengthen parliamentary democracy and addresses gender specifically within rural and community development projects. Irish Aid provides technical and financial assistance for training and advocacy targeted to increase government's ability to analyze and incorporate gender issues in its planning and delivery of services, and is planning to fund positions for additional gender advisors in government ministries. Ireland also supports UNIFEM and NGOs to promote the political and economic advancement of women and it works with the NGO forum FONGTIL to build civil society capacity and support conflict resolution programs. Some bilateral donors report challenges with tracking 'mainstreamed' gender inputs as systems of indicators and reporting on results depend on the gender awareness of individual project managers.

Humanitarian contributions tracked through UNOCHA show some targeted interventions for gender from international NGOs including gender awareness trainings for camp staff, programmes to address violence against women, and to support women's economic empowerment.

There are several women's organisations in civil society advocating for women's empowerment and rights including Fokupers and Rede Feto. The NGOs also monitor government and donor actions on gender and deliver services for children, youth and communities. Many NGOs have long-standing relationships and experience with specific communities and as such they should be considered key stakeholders for involvement with ADB in planning, implementation and evaluation of projects.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

Intended Gender Outcomes and Key Outputs Supported by ADB

The Timor-Leste Country Gender Strategy 2005-2008 specifies that, in line with ADB's Gender Policy (2003) and Poverty Reduction Strategy (2004), ADB's portfolio projects must 'selectively explore linked, gender specific activities to address the persisting structural constraints that women face. Specific components will be designed and incorporated into projects to correct gender disparities and increase women's participation in and benefit from project activities. Studies of gender-related issues can also be carried out through TA projects that advance understanding of the nature of gender disparities and how they might be addressed; policy dialogue can reinforce ADB's commitment to promoting gender equality.'¹²⁷

While ADB has a relatively limited program in Timor-Leste, by focusing on current commitments and areas of competitive advantage the bank can continue to set international standards for integrating gender analysis and gender responsive features into large scale 'hard' sectors such as infrastructure and WSS. These features can leverage positive changes such as women's increased earning capacity, economic empowerment and contribution to social stability at relatively low cost. Added benefits include high levels of community ownership and improved sustainability of physical project inputs. The Timor-Leste Country Gender Strategy, included in the Country Gender Assessment, should be referenced in detail for clear sector specific guidance and operational approaches.

Links to CPS Outcomes and other Sector/Thematic Areas

¹²⁷ ADB and UNIFEM. 2005. Op. cit.: 59.

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Linking social and gender considerations into CPS outcomes will increase overall project quality. Gender action plans can be integrated into existing and pipeline projects to increase sustainability and improve results. Integration of common sense analysis and related adjustments to projects, such as the capturing of sex/age-disaggregated data, and development of simple, cost-effective indicators, will support this objective. When working with NGOs as implementing agencies, indicators and objectives for gender equality and community empowerment need to be carefully discussed and articulated.

ADB has developed a significant positive profile with the government by building gender considerations into the Road Sector Improvement Project. This experience can be replicated and enhanced in other infrastructure areas such as Water Supply and Sanitation and more broadly in related initiatives to build capacity in the private sector and the public service. Incorporating gender features into projects will ensure that ADB results support NDP equity objectives, the 2008 National Priorities, and that they are aligned with international standards of good practice for social and gender inclusion to the benefit of communities.

Areas for Intervention

The Gender Strategy detailed in the Timor-Leste Country Gender Assessment provides recommended areas of action to ensure effective gender features are incorporated into project design in ADB's areas of comparative advantage. Project teams must refer to that document for detailed direction.¹²⁸

Moving forward and building on the Gender Strategy, key considerations and rationales for further action include a) Continuing to focus on infrastructure and WSS with stronger integration of gender and youth components in order to create corollary benefits for all communities reached by the project; b) Increasing emphasis on supporting equal involvement of women and men at the project management level so as to contribute to public sector strengthening; c) Building in survey tools to assess informal private sector spin-off activities managed by women and men in conjunction with construction phases of projects; d) Incorporating HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention into early phases of road projects which has proven successful in other ADB initiatives and can be enhanced and further replicated in Timor-Leste; e) Consideration of coordinated project delivery to incorporate technical support for other small scale projects prioritized by communities into community empowerment projects – for example local water catchments, improved drainage, or latrine construction.

As noted above, these types of features can be brought together in project specific gender action plans to facilitate tracking of results through project frameworks. Doing so will also foster capacity building in integrated planning for ministries.

Monitoring Mechanism

Comprehensive performance monitoring for social and gender project features must be integrated into the main results framework, preferably linked to project gender action plans. Development of specific gender responsive and sex/age disaggregated indicators such as for stakeholder participation, frequency of dissemination of information, employment quotas, pay rates for men and women, should be cross-referenced with project assurances.

¹²⁸ Ibid. page 62

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Tonga

I. Gender situation and key issues

The Kingdom of Tonga is comprised of three major island groups with approximately 36 inhabited islands. Tonga has a population of 101,990 (2006) and an estimated annual growth rate of 0.4% for the period 2007 – 2015.¹²⁹ This low growth rate is linked to high levels of out migration. Almost the same number of Tongans live inside the country as overseas.¹³⁰ SPC estimates the crude migration rate for 2007 at minus 18.0% and the high numbers of Tongans living abroad contribute to a large remittance economy that significantly reduces poverty. The majority of in-country Tongans (66%) live in rural areas where agriculture and fishing supplement incomes and provide food security. Remittances are one of the largest income sources in the economy, reinforcing social safety nets and providing a source of funds for micro and small business start up. Individuals without supportive extended families and remittances are vulnerable to poverty and hardship. The government social safety net system is weak and outside the public service, only churches and non-government organisations provide support to those in need. Approximately half the population is under 21 years of age and approximately 46% of youth are unemployed.

Tonga has the highest Human Development Index score of all Pacific countries and major MDG indicators show women and men are basically equal in education attainment and health indicators. However cultural attitudes are a major constraint to women's equality as reflected in discriminatory laws related to women rights to land resources and their sexual and reproductive rights and freedoms. There are strong norms for women to be the primary care giver in the home and, within that role, to provide unpaid reproductive services. This expectation, perpetuated through family work patterns and social messaging, inhibits women from exploring options for work outside the home and creates double labour and time burdens for those who do work.

Assessing the progress of Tonga against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.¹³¹ These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; low human resource capacity; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. Tongan women and girls have excellent performance on this indicator. Gross secondary enrollment for girls is 102% and marginally more girls than boys are enrolled at secondary level with the female/male ratio at secondary being 1.08.¹³² Literacy rates are approximately 99% for both women and men. The progress of Tonga in providing equity in education and supporting women to undertake tertiary training has benefited women in areas such as maternal health and access to formal employment. However it has not translated into significant gains for women's participation in decision-making

¹²⁹ SPC. 2007. *Pacific Island Populations*. Noumea.

¹³⁰ ADB 2007. *Country Partnership Strategy: Tonga*. Manila

¹³¹ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

¹³² UN 2007/2008. Human Development Report Statistics. http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_SLB.html

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outside the home or in equitable control of economic assets. Progress in these areas has been constrained by a combination of traditional attitudes and discriminatory policy and legislation.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process.

As in education, a number of health indicators reflect positive recognition and support for women's reproductive roles. Tongan women have assistance of skilled birth attendants for 95% of births, maternal mortality 78/100,000 live births and the infant mortality rate is 19/1000 births. The total fertility rate is high at 4.2 births/woman, reflecting traditional attitudes about women's responsibility to bear children and the adolescent fertility rate of 24 births/ 1000 women aged 15 – 19 years indicates that there is still a need for better sex education and improved access to contraceptives for youth. UNFPA estimates that contraceptive prevalence for all groups is 34% (UNFPA 2000). Women's life expectancy is 73 years compared to 67.3 years for men.¹³³

As in most other Pacific countries, in Tonga women's reproductive rights are discriminated against in law. Abortion is illegal and rape in marriage it is not illegal. The Pacific Regional Strategy on HIV/AIDS identifies that Tonga is involved in HIV/AIDS prevention through no less than 10 regional initiatives. As of 2005 there were 14 reported cases of HIV/AIDS half of which were women.¹³⁴ Women who are unprotected from domestic violence and rape are particularly vulnerable to contracting sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in Tonga perform multiple roles as household and subsistence managers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. Women on outer islands are limited in accessing markets due to limited and costly maritime shipping services and air service. Services for water and sanitation are good in Tonga as there is 100% access to improved water and 96% of households are reported to have access to improved sanitation.¹³⁵

Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In Tonga women have less access to productive and economic resources than men and the law discriminates against women with regard to their right to inherit and own land. Currently women cannot inherit land and can only access it as leaseholders. The law is under revision to allow women to inherit land, but only where there is no male heir. Widows are allowed to inherit their husbands land but legislation

¹³³ SPC 2007. Op cited.

¹³⁴ SPC 2006. *HIV & STI reports*. Noumean

¹³⁵ UNDP 2007/2008. Op cited.

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stipulates that a widow's ownership is forfeit if she remarries or 'fornicates' with any other person subsequent to her inheritance of the land. If that occurs, the land reverts to ownership by the eldest son or family of the deceased husband. Lack of rights to land as collateral inhibits women's ability to start businesses above a micro-level although this is alleviated to some extent by the available for remittance support from overseas relatives.

Women are active in the labour force but in much smaller numbers than men. The Government of Tonga Department of Statistics reported labour force participation at 52% for women and 74% for men. Youth unemployment, as a proportion of total unemployment, is high at 43% (15 – 24 years). Young women have an unemployment rate of 15% compared to 10% for young men. Women earn less than men are there is no pay equity legislation in Tonga.¹³⁶

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

In 2007/2008 there were 2 women in the one-party Parliament, with one holding a ministerial portfolio. As of the April 2008 elections there were no elected women representatives, and only one King-appointed female minister (the former Attorney General) holding the Justice portfolio. Tongan tradition does not acknowledge or promote women as leaders, and they are not perceived as leaders in contemporary society. This is a serious constraint for women who want to seek elected office, particularly those who are not from the nobility. Without a supportive constituency, women have great difficulty raising funds and building momentum for their campaigns. Women do not regularly support other women when they seek political office and there is a need for education on gender issues in general to promote awareness of why women representatives are needed to advance the agenda of gender equality in the country.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. Violence against women is underreported in Tonga and although Tongan women have spoken out on the issue and advocated for government support for many years, little progress has been made. The Centre for Women and Children is the only agency working specifically on the issue of domestic violence and providing shelter for victims. The Centre is funded by the New Zealand rather than the Tongan government – reflecting a general lack of priority for the issue by Tongan politicians and government officials. There has been donor supported advocacy work done within government and policing systems with the result that the police now have a domestic violence unit and a no-drop policy. It is not clear how well the policy is working as there has been limited training for police on the application of the policy.

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

Tonga is one of 3, out of the 14 independent Pacific countries, that have not yet ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Regional and international development actors have made several presentations to government on the benefits and need for ratification of CEDAW, but there has been no indication to-date that ratification is being seriously considered. A Cabinet decision established the Gender and Development Division, which is now housed within the Ministry of Education, Women's Affairs

¹³⁶ Tonga Department of Statistics. 2003.
<http://www.spc.int/prism/Country/TO/stats/Social/LabourForce/solabour.htm>

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and Culture. There is a National Policy on Gender and Development, established in 2001 and revised in 2005 and this policy is recognized in the National Development Plan. There is however a low level of political will and accountability for gender equality and equity. This is perpetuated by persistent discriminatory cultural traditions and by the contemporary gender biased organisational culture of political and administrative systems.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The focus of the programs managed by the Department of Women's Affairs and Culture is implementation of the National Policy on Gender and Development and its 10 action areas related to women's equality and their right to benefit from the development process. The Department is also responsible to mainstream gender across government and ensure that government services benefit women and men in a balanced and equitable manner, and that women have equal rights with men to enjoy the benefits of development. There is no current system of gender focal points across government ministries. Such a system was promoted by UNIFEM in the late 1990s, training was delivered, and focal points were established for both central and line ministries. However, since that time the individuals in those positions have left government or changed jobs. Since the responsibilities for gender were not entrenched in the terms of reference of each position, but were only linked to individuals, there has been no sustainability in the model.

The government does not incorporate gender as a budget analysis variable and the budget process is gender blind. There is shortage of information on gender issues and not all statistics are gender disaggregated. Both these facts reflect a lack of accountability and responsibility for women's rights as well as a lack of analytical and technical capacity. The fact that most major donors have gender policies and yet don't integrate gender issues into high-level policy discussions, across all sectors, demonstrates that donors are also culpable of ignoring women's human rights to development.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

With respect to integrating gender into ADB's work in Tonga it would be useful to create an analysis framework, across sectors. This would facilitate monitoring of inputs and results in key areas and support improved gender responsive planning by government. Such an approach would also clarify strategic interventions on gender in relation to the issues of constrained capacity and institutional weakness noted in the Tonga CPS.

Given ADB's commitment to work on pro-poor economic policy, encompassing urban infrastructure, macroeconomics and private sector development, there is a clear need for all ADB staff to integrate gender analysis into policy dialogue across sectors and at all levels. There is scope to build in age/sex-disaggregated data into all studies and to involve ADB social development specialists in the creation of gender features and action plans for Technical Assistance in private sector development and economic policy and planning.

Tuvalu

I. Gender situation and key issues

Tuvalu is in the Polynesian sub-region and has a population of 9,700 with an annual growth rate of 0.4%. Tuvalu is made up of nine widely dispersed low-lying atolls with a total land area of 26km². Approximately half of the population is concentrated on the main island and in the capital of Funafuti.

Poverty is often considered to be worse on the outer islands where subsistence agriculture and fishing is the main source of livelihood and where there is lack of opportunity and access to markets and some services. However families in the capital who are either unemployed or do not have remittances from seafarers or overseas relatives are among the most cash-poor due to purchases of imported food. Women bear a higher burden of poverty as they spend more time producing and collecting food, managing households, caring for relatives, and giving services to the churches. This reduces their opportunity to fully engage in the political and economic sectors. Women generally have less discretionary personal income as they have been shown to reinvest more in children and their households than men do.

To create geographic equity, the government supports a price-equalization scheme so that goods sold in outer islands are equal in price to those in Funafuti. There is no national social safety net although public servants do have access to health and pension schemes. Support in emergencies and old age as well as help for the vulnerable must come from family and the churches. The youth population is significant with approximately half the population is under 24 years. It is not clear how many jobs are created each year or what the youth unemployment rate is.¹³⁷

As noted above, women are active participants in Tuvaluan society, but they are discriminated against in key areas. The constitution contains a non-discrimination clause but it does not include sex or gender. This means that discrimination against women is not illegal in Tuvalu.¹³⁸ Women cannot inherit land and girls are discouraged from entering into tertiary education, comprising only 30% of scholarship recipients.

Assessing the progress of Tuvalu against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.¹³⁹ These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; low human resource capacity; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. The Human Development Report indicates that while there is full enrollment for girls at primary level, secondary enrollment of girls drops to 81% at the single residential high school in the country.

¹³⁷ ADB.2007. *Country Performance Assessment: Tuvalu*. Manila

¹³⁸ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva.

¹³⁹ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

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Female to male ratios are not available.¹⁴⁰ The quality of education services and facilities is weak and literacy rates and English proficiency are reported to be declining. Student achievement is poor and children are promoted automatically to Class 8. A large percentage of students exiting the secondary system fail to qualify for entry into tertiary institutions. Students who do go to USP or other overseas institutions have a high failure and dropout rate. The one in-country tertiary institution, Tuvalu Maritime Training Institute, does not enroll women who are traditionally believed to be bad luck on ships. SPC has a programme focusing on increasing the numbers of women in seafaring and reports that Pacific Women are beginning to enter this field (through institutions in other countries) to work primarily in the cruise industry and maritime administration.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. There are decentralized health service systems for residents of outer islands. These include clinics supported by radio links to doctors at the central hospital, and transport of all first-time mothers to deliver in hospital. There are trained midwives on each island providing 100% access to assisted births. However constraints include problems with restocking and lack of some basic equipment for outer island clinics. The total fertility rate is 3.7 births/woman and the adolescent fertility rate is 40 births/1000 women aged 15 – 19 years. There is low prevalence of contraceptive use, just 31% using modern methods. Data on maternal mortality rates are not available but infant mortality rates are 35/1000 live births and under-5 mortality is 38/1000 live births. Women's life expectancy 65 years to men's 61.7.¹⁴¹

Sexual rights and freedoms are restricted for Tuvaluan women. Marital rape is not illegal and abortion is criminalized with a severe penalty of life imprisonment for the mother. The only exception is to save the life of the mother but there are no facilities in the country to diagnose or provide abortion even in these cases. There were 9 reported cases of HIV/AIDS had been reported as of 2005, one of which was a woman.¹⁴² The estimated 417 Tuvaluan seafarers (a high risk population vector) increase the countries vulnerability despite the fact that maritime institutes around the region now include curricula on HIV/AIDS and STD prevention.¹⁴³ Given the low prevalence of contraceptive use wives and partners of seafarers are particularly at risk. Tuvalu is part of a number of regional HIV/AIDS initiatives including with SPC and UNAIDS.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in Tuvalu perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence and cash crop farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. Transportation is a

¹⁴⁰ UN 2007/2008. Human Development Report Statistics. http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_SLB.html

¹⁴¹ SPC.2007. *Pacific Island Populations*. Noumea. and UN 2007/2008 *Human Development Report statistics page*. New York. http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_MHL.html

¹⁴² SPC and WHO. 2007. *A Review of Pacific Regional HIV Strategy and Progress Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support*. Noumea.

¹⁴³ Boland, S and Brian Dollery. 2005. *The Economic Significance of Migration and Remittance in Tuvalu*. University of New England. http://www.une.edu.au/economics/publications/econ_2005_10.pdf

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constraint for women on outer islands interested in accessing markets for crafts and artisanal fisheries products, and initiation of small enterprise is not cost effective due to expensive and time consuming transportation. Tuvaluans have had almost universal access to improved water supplies from catchment and de-salination systems, and most families have improved sanitation facilities. However climate change and sea level rise pose threats related to salination of soil and the water lens with consequent destruction of agricultural production. As women are primarily responsible for subsistence food production this is a survival issue that is creating substantial time and economic burdens as well as creating stresses on mental and physical health.

Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In Tuvalu women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. Women cannot inherit land in Tuvalu and this constrains their ability to access credit and engage in any private sector activities above the micro-level. Loan approval rates at the Development Bank of Tuvalu indicate women have significantly less access to credit. Women received 37% of loans compared to 63% for men and loan values for men have been significantly higher. There are few figures on women's economic activity, but a combination of statistics indicate that women are engaged in public sector employment in large numbers. That is, civil servants make up 70% of the wage-earning workforce, and women's share of non-agricultural waged employment is 44%. There is no information on women's earning power relative to men's and while there is a minimum wage, equivalent to the lowest public service pay level, there is no 'equal pay' or 'pay equity' legislation in Tuvalu¹⁴⁴.

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

There are no women elected to the Tuvaluan parliament. This is likely related to the strong gender discrimination that exists in the traditional system. Women's lack of representation in politics undoubtedly contributes to the poor record of Tuvalu to legislate equal rights and protections for women in the home, labour force and public life. As in other Pacific states there is a need for increased gender analysis of political agendas, training for all politicians and targeted education for voters and female candidates. There are no available statistics on women's representation at senior levels in government or the private sector.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. While the constitution recognizes that domestic violence inhibits women's rights and freedoms it is not criminalized in Tuvalu. There are no country-specific statistics and information on the issue is limited. Regional NGOs specializing in ending violence against women have worked on the issue with the Dept of Women's Affairs and national women's organisations. As a result, there is now a 'no-drop' policy and a database that tracks frequent offenders. On the negative side, there are still components of legislation that penalize women for sexual crimes against them. Victims of incest

¹⁴⁴ ADB.2007. ibid

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over 15 years of age are criminally responsible and can be sentenced for up to 7 years.¹⁴⁵ Violence against women, sexual assault and sexual abuse of children are all symptoms of unequal power relationships between men and women and signals a need for gender analysis of government policies, targeted support to women and children, and legislative reform.

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

Tuvalu has signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. The government also made a gender equality progress report to the Beijing+10 forum in 2005. The Department of Women within the Ministry of Home Affairs is the government agency responsible for implementing Tuvalu's international and domestic commitments to gender equality. The government's development plan Te Kakeega II specifically notes gender as a social development consideration but it is not evident how the budget allocation process is intended to reflect this. Neither is there any indication that Tuvalu is planning or budgeting for the legislative reform and reporting processes required by CEDAW.

Other strategic development goals that require gender analysis include those for good governance, employment and private sector development, natural resources and infrastructure and support services.

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The Department of Women's Affairs allocates funds to its NGO counterpart, the National Council of Women, for women's empowerment programs. The Department is responsible to mainstreaming gender across government, but this is challenging due to the lack of political will for gender equality and an organisational culture bound by traditional discriminatory values. There is a shortage of sex/age-disaggregated data in Tuvalu and this makes it difficult to develop gender analyses and evidence-based rationales for policy and programming improvement. For example, across government there is poor cross-sectoral analysis of relationships between women's poverty and social development status in relation to i) the need for gender responsive private sector development policy or ii) the need for improved governance structures.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

Given Tuvalu's status as a weakly performing country, ADB's interventions are limited and closely coordinated with other donors. This creates opportunities to integrate gender across the aid effectiveness agenda. In general ADB staff and consultants working with the government of Tuvalu should integrate gender into all cross-sectoral policy dialogue, require the collection and analysis of sex/age-disaggregated statistics and ensure that the Social Development specialist is

¹⁴⁵ Tuvalu Penal code [Cap 8] 1978,s156(5) cited in UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. Op cited.

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involved in any project development. Projects should have an integrated gender analysis, and where indicated, specific gender features and gender action plans.

Vanuatu

I. Gender situation and key issues

Vanuatu is an archipelago comprised of 84 islands. The population of 216,000 is made up of 80 different language groups with different tribal affiliations and social structures that include matrilineal and patrilineal inheritance systems. The degree of women's empowerment varies with cultural groups; women from matrilineal areas often have more traditional decision-making power, generally exercised at the household level and many of the key women leaders in Vanuatu are from matrilineal groups. However, across all groups men have more access to and control of key political, economic, knowledge and time resources than women. There is a strong traditional obligation system that functions as a basic safety net, but that also restricts individual control of land and exacerbates women's lack of economic power. The population growth rate is projected to be 2.5% for the period 2005-2015, and currently half the population is under 20 years of age.¹⁴⁶ Women's life expectancy is 71 years/ men's 67.¹⁴⁷

Vanuatu's Human Development Index rating is 67 and it is classified as a 'least developed country' (LDC). About 50% of ni-Vanuatu live below the indicative poverty line of a dollar/day. Approximately 80% of the population live in rural areas with livelihoods based on subsistence agriculture and fishing where absolute poverty and severe hunger is rare. The formal economy is built on tourism, beef, copra, kava and timber and is largely subject to fluctuating commodity prices. There is a considerable problem of urban drift and the peri-urban settlements are particularly poor and underserved. Food security in settlements is a problem due to squatter's inability to access agricultural land. Prostitution is a growing problem, as poor women without alternative livelihoods must find ways to provide for themselves and their children.

Assessing the progress of the Vanuatu against the following MDG strategic priorities for gender equality demonstrates areas of inequality requiring strategic action.¹⁴⁸ These can also be correlated to constraints, common to the region, which include weak governance; lack of integrated gender analysis in planning and budgeting by both government and donors; low human resource capacity; women's poverty of time, opportunity and cash income; and a low level of indigenous private sector activity.

Gender Gaps and Opportunities for Girls at Secondary School Level

This indicator demonstrates issues of human resource capacity and social capital. Inequality in educational opportunity is a contravention of human rights and the resulting inequality of outcomes inhibits development effectiveness from generation to generation. The gross secondary enrollment for girls is 38% and drops drastically from a high level of primary enrollment. At tertiary level only 4% of young women are enrolled. Young men and women are often pushed out of the school system due to lack of spaces, and many school leavers do not have appropriate skills to find employment or self-employment. There is a high level of adult female illiteracy and a lack of boarding facilities for girls at secondary level which promotes discrimination against girls in education. In addition there are limited numbers of female teachers as role models at the secondary level. There are separate French and English education systems, which, combined with the geographic challenges of the country, make education an expensive sector for government.

¹⁴⁶ SPC.2007. Pacific Island Populations. Noumea.

¹⁴⁷ UNDP. 2007/2008. *Human Development Report*. New York. http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/data_sheets/cty_ds_VUT.html

¹⁴⁸ UNDP Millennium Project. 2004. Task Force 3 Interim Report on Gender Equality. New York

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There are a number of technical and vocational institutes in Vanuatu but given the geographic constraints and shortage of boarding facilities these are not equally accessible to girls and young women.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health

Women's reproductive work is unaccounted for in national accounting systems and their role in ensuring sustainability of social and cultural values is largely unacknowledged in financing for development. If women are unsupported in their sexual and reproductive rights and health, the country is undermined and development will continue to be unsuccessful. Examining indicators for these values facilitates identification of intervention points to stabilize the development process. There is a lack of qualified health staff in Vanuatu, but women have the assistance of skilled birth attendants in 88% of deliveries. The fertility rate is 4.4 births/woman; maternal mortality 68/100,000 (reported rate) and infant mortality is 31/1000 live births. Under-5 malnutrition (underweight) is approximately 20%.¹⁴⁹ Better family life and sex education in schools and more decentralization of health services is needed to improve these figures. Contraceptive prevalence among married women is 26% although the figure is much lower for teens. The adolescent fertility rate is 92 births/1000 women aged 15 – 19 years and there is a need to ensure girls are not expelled from school when pregnant.¹⁵⁰ Abortion is illegal with an exception related to proof of a 'good medical reasons', which can in some cases be broadly interpreted. Rape in marriage is not illegal and child sexual abuse is a growing problem that family centres and UNICEF are seeking to address.¹⁵¹

HIV/AIDS is a growing problem in Vanuatu. While the prevalence rate remains close to zero, high rates of sexually transmitted disease in neighboring countries and the existence of a sizeable number of non-Vanuatu seafarers (a high risk vector) make Vanuatu vulnerable to epidemic. In 2007 there were 2 reported cases, both of which were women.

Infrastructure that Supports Reduction in Women and Girl's Time Poverty

Women in Vanuatu perform multiple roles as household managers, subsistence and cash crop farmers, income earners and as active members of churches and community groups. In all these roles infrastructure services are important determinates of opportunity. Like the other Melanesian countries Vanuatu has low population density and limited road and maritime shipping networks. Rural communities are often isolated from markets, inhibiting women's self-employment and microfinance initiatives. Only 50% of the population has access to improved water supply and 60% have access to improved sanitation systems. In rural areas and peri-urban settlements, conditions are basic and women spend a disproportionate amount of their time collecting fuel wood, water, and providing health care for preventable diseases caused by inadequate sanitation and lack of potable water. Women need to be involved in design and delivery of targeted infrastructure services to reduce overwork and increase available time for activities such as community management, local marketing of surplus produce, and developing alternative livelihoods.

¹⁴⁹ UNDP. 2007/2008. Op cited.

¹⁵⁰ UNFPA. 2005. *Vanuatu at a Glance*. Suva

¹⁵¹ UNDP and UNIFEM. 2007. *Translating CEDAW Into Law*. Suva. and Piau-Lynch. 2007. *Vanuatu Country Profile*. Produced for JICA.

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Access to Productive and Economic Resources including Women's Property and Inheritance Rights

Focusing on improving women's ability to be economically active and designing methods to increase their capacity has been proven internationally to have a positive impact on development success, family and community stability and economic growth. In Vanuatu women have less access to productive and economic resources than men. Opportunity to access credit is constrained by lack of land registration and by women's generally low level of influence in community settings. However women's lack of control over land is beginning to be recognized and the 2006 National Land Summit has recommended all stakeholders (including women) must be consulted if land is sold.¹⁵² The Department for Women's Affairs began coordinating a microfinance scheme (VANWODS) in 1996. It has now become a small financial institution providing support to 1,000 women. There are additional similar schemes targeted at the northern islands that rely on donor support.

Formal labour force participation for women is concentrated in the civil service, tourism and other services industries in urban areas. In rural areas women are active in cash crop production, subsistence agriculture, and small-scale marketing. The total economic activity rate of females over 15 years is 79%. There is a minimum wage of Vt 2,000/ month (approximately \$189). There is legislated labour force protection for work hours, annual leave, the right to maternity leave, and basic protection from dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy. However, despite these basic protections women continue to experience discrimination in the labour force. Women earn an estimated 32% less than men and hold very few senior positions in government or the private sector.¹⁵³

Women's Representation in Political Bodies

Women's representation in parliament is 3.8% (2 seats) and has been continuously low or non-existent despite efforts of the National Council of Women, UNIFEM, and other donors. There is lack of support for women candidates from the main parties and women running as independents find it difficult to muster requisite funds and logistical support from their families and communities. There is also a lack of capacity to analyze issues and build constituencies that address issues in multiple sectors. While men also face these constraints, there is higher general distrust of women candidates. The National Council of Chief's control considerable power and influence during elections and they are a heavily conservative group that have not endorsed female candidates. There have been repeated calls to introduce quotas and the Department of Women's Affairs has been receiving some support from the European Union on this issue¹⁵⁴.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls contravenes their human rights, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDs, negatively impacts mental health, and undermines women's social freedoms, productivity, and contributions to national development. A thousand cases of violence against women (VAW) and children are reported annually to the Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) and its branches, which do not reflect the actual extent of the problem¹⁵⁵. Due to family and community pressure many women do not report. The VWC has committees on VAW that work in

¹⁵² ADB. 2007. *Country Performance Assessment*. Manila

¹⁵³ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Piau-Lynch.2007. *Vanuatu Country Profile*. Produced for JICA.

¹⁵⁵ Fiji Women's Crisis Centre. 2005. <http://www.fijiwomen.com/index.php?id=1507>

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communities to do education and advocacy. The committees are trained in counseling and community education and, in some cases, chiefs, elders, community nurses and other leaders participate and advocate. The Family Protection Bill addressing domestic violence has been repeatedly put before parliament over nine years. Repeated rejections are attributed to the opposition of the National Council of Chiefs, who see it a threat to their jurisdiction in local dispute resolution.¹⁵⁶

II. Government's gender policy and planning framework

Vanuatu ratified CEDAW in 1995. The recent UNDP and UNIFEM stocktake on CEDAW status identifies that Vanuatu, like other Pacific states, needs to make considerable legislative and policy reform in support of equality. Despite the fact that the National Gender Equity Policy and MDGs have been incorporated into strategic planning there is very little demonstrated progress. Government policy documents including the Medium Term Strategic Framework (2006 – 2015) emphasize reallocation of budget toward social sectors and human resource development but there continues to be low levels of political will for cross-sectoral gender analysis and establishment of sex/age-disaggregated, gender responsive targets and indicators. In the organisational environment of government, and many donor organisations, resistance to gender mainstreaming undermines efforts in support of equality. When Vanuatu reported on progress implementing CEDAW, the Committees concluding comment noted concern in these areas and also specific concern about how, in the Constitution, traditional customary law has primacy over concepts on non-discrimination clauses and thereby undermines women's human rights and concepts of gender equality.¹⁵⁷

III. Government's institutional arrangements and capacity for gender

The Department of Women's Affairs is the national women's machinery responsible for implementing the Gender Equity Policy introduced in 1997 under the Comprehensive Reform Programme. An evaluation of the policy in 2006 identified 21 barriers that have prevented effective implementation of the policy. These include i) traditional discriminatory attitudes, ii) lack of government commitment and low allocation of resources, iii) the idea that women's rights are contrary to Christian beliefs, and iv) the endemic nature of violence against women. Based on the evaluation and guidance from stakeholders, the Department of Women's Affairs is developing a strategic plan and targets for action over a 5-year period. The Department's budget was significantly increased in 2006 from Vt 9,438,325 to Vt 16,795,956 but this has not offset constraints of low technical capacity for gender analysis and inadequate resources. The CEDAW Committees concluding comments note specifically that the Department of Women does not have adequate authority, capacity and resources to mainstream gender across government and effectively support implementation of CEDAW.

IV. Role of other development partners in the sector

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Human Development Program and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat have gender advisors who are available to work with both government and civil society to promote gender equality.

¹⁵⁶ ADB. 2007. *Country Performance Assessment: Vanuatu*. Manila

¹⁵⁷ UN. 2007. *Concluding Comments of the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women: Vanuatu*. New York.

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Appendices 1 and 2 provide summaries of current gender targeted activities by major donors.

V. Indicative areas for intervention

There is scope for ADB to incorporate gender analysis into pipeline work on micro-finance and private sector development. This should be done through development of project-specific gender action plans and assurances that leverage existing government policy for gender equality.

Microfinance is a key area where women have set innovative and creative standards and these need to be further developed with lessons learned built into ADB initiatives. Team leaders should integrate gender into high-level policy dialogues for all sectors, and require that all statistics related to stakeholders, beneficiaries and user groups be disaggregated by sex and age.

Women are active participants in the informal private sector and there is scope to explore, within the micro-finance portfolio, what gender-differentiated constraints exist and what lessons can be learned from women and men's distinct experience. These lessons can then be applied to support private sector growth for informal and formal small businesses.

Regional Level Activities of Development Partners

Agency	Regional Commitments & Activities*
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination of regional action on gender and development and the empowerment of women through networks of government and NGO focal points - Strengthening government and NGO capacity for gender and development - Strengthening regional awareness on gender and agriculture, land management and fisheries - Capacity building in SPC for gender responsive regional health, HIV/AIDS programming - Capacity building in SPC and National Statistics Offices - Supporting ratification of CEDAW, reporting and action - Management of internet based communications networks for regional information sharing on gender related issues - Technical and advisory support to member governments on request - Community Education and Training Centre courses offered to all member countries with special attention to involving women with disabilities
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborative programming to advance women's representation in Parliaments: Sub-regional workshops related to reserve seats and quotas in government - Promoting gender mainstreaming in the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) - Integrating gender into regional security decision-making - Support to member governments on request
UNDP Pacific Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EVAW: Inventory of Organizations Working with Boys And Men to prevent Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and promote Gender Equality in the Pacific Region. This was initiated to explore also possible joint collaboration between UNDP Pacific Center, UNIFEM, UNFPA and UNICEF for work with men and boys in GBV; - Gender & HIV: Mitigating Impacts of HIV/AIDS; Regional support (meetings and media production) on human rights and HIV - Legislative analysis to support governments with CEDAW implementation (in collaboration with UNIFEM) - Governance: Sub-regional Parliamentary Workshops on Women as Representatives; Guides published on 1) quotas for women in elected governments and 2) Campaigning for Women - Disaster Risk Management: Gender inclusive research and pilot projects; publication of advocacy materials on community-based gender approaches to community security; civil society platform established on gender, peace & security; collaboration with regional partners to mainstream gender issues in regional security. - UNFPA/UNDP Pipeline: Gender Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation of gender indicators from country baseline studies on GBV
NZAid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health: Support to UNFPA; Youth and Mental Health Project with FSPI; Support to regional HIV/AIDS programming; Condom Social Marketing - Governance: UNIFEM CEDAW; Family violence Prevention Programme design study; Support to regional NGOs working on governance and human rights; Fellowship for emerging Pacific Women's Leaders; femLINKpacific Community Empowerment; Support to DAWN and Fiji Women's Right Movement - Support to Pacific women's participation in regional and international events: Midwives triennial conference; Women Parliamentarians & Ministers Conference; UN Commission on the Status of Women

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Agency	Regional Commitments & Activities
AUSAID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eliminating Violence Against Women: Regional evaluation on EAW in Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu, PNG and East Timor - Political Participation and Leadership: Funding to UNIFEM - Gender & HIV: Support to training and retention of health specialists; funding to South Pacific Reproductive Health & Family Planning Training Project; Pacific Regional HIV Program (including television programming Love Patrol). - Women's Economic Empowerment: Development of evidence-based rationales to support female entrepreneurs in collaboration with World Bank. World Bank is also planning a 2008 gender analysis of Doing Business reports for selected Pacific countries
PACIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS REGIONAL RESOURCE TEAM (RRRT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RRRT promotes human rights, provides training and support to develop legal literacy in Pacific countries, and helps build capacity in the region to address poverty and social inequities. RRRT works to obtain increased access to justice for people, particularly the poor, vulnerable and marginalized. - RRRT acts as a regional resource to assist countries to ratify and implement CEDAW - RRRT is a project of UNDP and is funded primarily by NZAid and AusAID
FIJI WOMEN'S CRISIS CENTRE (FWCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre is a Fiji-based organisation that has been a model and support to similar groups in the Pacific region. FWCC provides counseling, legal, medical and practical support to women and children who are sufferers and survivors of violence committed against them by men. - FWCC is also involved nationally and regionally in public advocacy and community education on gender violence.
FEMLINK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FemLINK is a media and communications NGO focused on giving women in the Pacific region a voice to participate in development and peacebuilding. FemLINK is a Fiji-based organisation but works around the Pacific region training women in the use of media technologies and supporting them to lobby and advocate for more gender responsive policies and government programmes.

* Note that the table attempts to show the main activities of the development partners most active in support of gender equality. Other agencies may also be integrating gender considerations into their activities and/or funding civil society organisations with expertise on gender. Updates or corrections on donor activities are welcome and can be submitted to Sakiko Tanaka, Social Development Specialist, ADB Pacific Regional Department.

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Country Level Activities of Development Partners Supporting Gender

	SPC	UNIFEM	UNFPA	UNDP	New Zealand	Australia	ADB
Cook Is	Also see regional listing Support to women with disabilities living on outer islands through health extension programmes Est of rehabilitation progs for female survivors of abuse and crime Technical assistance (TA) for revised national gender policy TA for development & maintenance of gender indicator database linked to CEDAW, CRC and Youth	Also see regional listing	Gender mainstreamed in all programming	VAW sub-regional project Support to dev. of gender responsive Nat'l Sustainable Dev. Strategies Also see regional listing	GAD support to government National Council of Women EVAW: Women's Counseling Centre Scholarship, small projects & NGO funding		
FSM	Also see regional listing	Also see regional listing	Gender mainstreamed in all programming	Also see regional listing			
Fiji	Also see regional listing	Gender Equality & Political Governance: strengthening leadership Economic empowerment of poor rural women engaged in marketing EVAW: Joint UN Program to advance legislation & policy Scholarships to trainings at the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC)	Men as Partners in Reproductive Health GBV – Baseline Country Assessment with UNIFEM / FWCC	Also see regional listing	EVAW: Fiji Women's Crisis Centre Support for human rights programming	EVAW: FWCC support; Part of regional evaluation on EVAW Stepping Stones project: Sexual & Reprod Health & HIV awareness Law & justice program - gender sensitizing protective care, police, prisons, and judicial systems Scholarships, Small projects and NGO support	Country Gender Assessment 2006

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	SPC	UNIFEM	UNFPA	UNDP	New Zealand	Australia	ADB
Kiribati	Socio-cultural research on Gender Based Violence	Political Governance: strengthening leadership Restructuring National Women's Machinery & dev of National Women's Policy and Plan Strategic planning with Nat'l Council of Women EVAW/HIV: Coordinated work with gov't & CSOs	Socio-cultural research on Gender Based Violence	Also see regional listing	Counsellor's Training Prog Scholarship, small projects & NGO funding	EVAW: funding SPC work Kiribati Nursing Initiative: support to training and migration	
Nauru	Also see regional listing Advise on development of National Gender/ Women's Policy Support attendance of Nauruan women at CETC	Also see regional listing	Gender mainstreamed in all programming	Also see regional listing			
Palau	Also see regional listing	Also see regional listing	Gender mainstreamed in all programming	Also see regional listing			
PNG	Also see regional listing	Gender Equality & Political Governance: strengthening leadership EVAW: Analysis of underlying issues; promoting implementation of laws; SGBV in tribal fighting (UNSCR 1325) Economic empowerment of poor rural women engaged in marketing HIV/AIDs support to positive women CEDAW support	Gender mainstreamed in all programming	Also see regional listing	Strategic partnership with Save the Children Gender Advisory Support to E Sepik Women/Child org Leitana Nehan Women's Dev Agency Bougainville Scholarship, small projects & NGO funding	EVAW: Legal & judicial reform & advisory support; Part of regional evaluation on EVAW NGO grants for women's leadership	HIV/AIDs awareness & social marketing of condoms projects linked to natural resource development locations; Lae Port Development: HIV/AIDs awareness sub-component Country Gender Assessment 2007 Road sector improvement project subcomponent: community empowerment & employment for women
RMI	Also see regional listing Ensure national census and household surveys address data & info requirements on gender Training in gender	CEDAW support Capacity development for National Women's Machinery Facilitating improved coordination &	Gender mainstreamed in all programming	Also see regional listing			

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	SPC	UNIFEM	UNFPA	UNDP	New Zealand	Australia	ADB
RMI cont'd	analysis for gov't officials & parliamentarians Support to gender mainstreaming in policies & programming	partnership between gov't & CSOs on gender					
Samoa	Also see regional listing	Gender Equality & Political Governance: strengthening leadership CEDAW support EVAW: evaluation of community education on VAW & HIV; strengthening CSO work	Tracking national follow-up to Samoa Family Health Study on GBV	VAW sub-regional project Support to dev. of gender responsive Nat'l Sustainable Dev. Strategies Also see regional listing	UNFPA gender based violence prog Scholarship, small projects & NGO funding		
Solomon Is	Also see regional listing Socio-cultural research on Gender Based Violence	Gender Equality & Political Governance: strengthening leadership Economic empowerment of poor rural women engaged in marketing EVAW: Gov't CSO coord on reporting & prosecution; SGBV in conflict recovery (UNSCR 1325) Gender responsive budgeting with UNDP CEDAW support Support to National Council of Women	Socio-cultural research on Gender Based Violence Men as Partners in Reproductive Health	Also see regional listing	National Council of Women Small Bus Enterprise Centre Scholarship, small projects & NGO funding	EVAW: funding SPC work and support to SI Family Support Centre; Also part of reg EVAW evaluation Support to women political candidates; Machinery of gov't women in leadership prog Community Sector Program support to NCW & prov women's centres NGO grants for women's leadership Stepping Stones project: Sexual & Reprod Health & HIV awareness Gender Analysis of RAMSI Increasing participation of women in law & justice systems	
Timor Leste		Strengthening of gov't women's machinery in collaboration with Irish Aid & other UN & bilateral agencies	Gender mainstreamed in all programming Specific work on EVAW/GBV	Collaborative UN work with MDG fund to support women's rights in nation bldg		Part of regional evaluation on EVAW	Road sector improvement project subcomponent: community empowerment &

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	SPC	UNIFEM	UNFPA	UNDP	New Zealand	Australia	ADB
		CEDAW implementation					employment for women
Tonga	Also see regional listing	Also see regional listing	Gender mainstreamed in all programming	Also see regional listing Support to dev. of gender responsive Nat'l Sustainable Dev. Strategies	Centre for Women & Children Scholarship, small projects & NGO funding	Support to women political candidates and IEC material for voter education	
Tuvalu	Also see regional listing	Political Governance: strengthening leadership CEDAW support Capacity of Women's Council	Gender mainstreamed in all programming	Also see regional listing			
Vanuatu	Also see regional listing	Also see regional listing Gender Equality & Political Governance: strengthening leadership Economic empowerment of poor rural women engaged in marketing CEDAW support Support to Dept of Women's Affairs and National Council of Women EVAW: support & coord with CSOs, theatre & media groups	Men as Partners in Reproductive Health	Also see regional listing	Econ Opportunity Study: Gender EVAW: Sanma Counseling Centre Scholarship, small projects & NGO funding	EVAW: Vanuatu Women's Centre support; Part of regional evaluation on EVAW Gov't of Vanuatu: Leadership & policy support to Dept for Women, elections, Analysis of relation between gender & econ growth Police Capacity Bldg Project: increasing women's involvement, training on HIV & EVAW Vocational education programs equity criteria School building projects involvement of women labour Wan Smol Bag programs on gender & power	

* Note that the table attempts to show the main activities of the development partners most active in support of gender equality and ADB's areas of work. Other agencies may also be integrating gender considerations into their activities and/or funding civil society organisations with expertise on gender. Updates or corrections on donor activities are welcome and can be submitted to Sakiko Tanaka, Social Development Specialist, ADB Pacific Regional Department sakikotanaka@adb.org or Gayle Nelson, Nagada Consultants nagada-consultants@shaw.ca