



## Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (Pacific Partnership)

The Pacific Partnership brings together governments, civil society organisations, communities and other partners to promote gender equality, prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG), and increase access to quality response services for survivors.

This document highlights key accomplishments supported by the Pacific Partnership.

2018 - 2022

## Snapshot: Pacific Partnership Programme in Tonga

### GOALS:

- Women, girls, men and boys in target communities demonstrate improved attitudes on gender equality and violence against women and girls
- National actors - government and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) - develop and implement best practice standards and guidelines for multisector services
- Capacity of frontline service providers strengthened to provide quality services to survivors of gender-based violence

### WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:



- The **Tongan Government** through the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Women's Affairs and Gender Equality Division (WAGED) and the Ministry of Justice, Family Protection Legal Aid Centre (FPLAC)



- **Two key Civil Society Organisations:** the Women and Children Crisis Centre (WCCC) Tonga and The Talitha Project

### TOTAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT:

**\$1,186,074 USD** over 3 years

Tonga has high documented rates of violence against women and girls<sup>1,2</sup>



**36%**

**More than 1 in 3**

ever-partnered women have experienced physical violence in their lifetime



**20%**

**1 in 5 women**

report they have experienced any physical, sexual or emotional violence by any intimate partner in the past 12 months



**59%**

**3 out of 5 women**

who have ever experienced physical or sexual violence by any perpetrators, have never sought help and never told anyone

## Progress towards Ending Violence Against Women and Girls through the Pacific Partnership



### Strengthening and implementing national legislation and policies

In April 2021, Tonga became the fifth country in the Pacific region to launch its **Service Delivery Protocol (SDP) in Responding to Gender Based Violence (GBV)**. The Pacific Partnership supported this outcome by providing:

- Technical support to WAGED in the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the national gender policy - Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga (WEGET) 2019-2025.
- Technical assistance provided to WAGED in the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the Family Protection Act.
- Technical assistance provided to WAGED and key service providers in the development of the Tonga National Service Delivery Protocol for Responding to Cases of Gender-Based Violence.

<sup>1</sup> Tonga Statistics Department. 2020. Tonga Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019, Survey Findings Report. Nuku'alofa, Tonga: Tonga Statistics Department.

<sup>2</sup> Tonga Statistics Department. 2020. Tonga Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019, Snapshot of Key Findings. Nuku'alofa, Tonga: Tonga Statistics Department.



## Women and girls, especially rural women, have improved access to quality essential services to recover from violence

The Women and Children Crisis Center (WCCC) Tonga, “through the **Uloa** approach”, supports over 30 communities throughout Tonga and reaches over six thousand people. The mobile counselling clinics ensures that people, particularly women and girls, have access to timely and quality counselling. This is significant in the remote islands where there are no formal crisis centres or trained counsellors. A weekly radio counselling program provides information on responding to violence against women and related issues.

The Training of Trainers conducted by WAGED after the launch of Tonga National Service Delivery Protocol (SDP) for Responding to Cases of Gender-Based Violence strengthened the capacity of over 40 service providers throughout Tonga. When Tonga’s SDP rollout is completed:

- Service providers will align service delivery according to GBV minimum standards and survivor-centered best practice;
- Services for survivors will be improved, including those in the most remote islands where access to essential services is difficult. Local governance personnel will play a key role in referrals.

*The Pacific Partnership works with government and CSO’s to develop multisector GBV response systems, including referral pathways, that adapt during emergencies and public health pandemics, such as COVID-19.*



## Preventing violence against women and girls (VAWG) through sports, schools, and community transformation

Over 8000 youth across Tonga were engaged in WCCCs ‘lo Teu Lava (Of Course I Can) program, Stay Safe campaign and Male Advocacy Training (also conducted in a secondary school). Their online Fefine To’a (Women of Strength and Resilience) Stories reach over 82 000 people, helping to transform community attitudes on violence against women.

The Talitha Project’s Front Row Against Violence (FRAV) initiative has successfully established a partnership with the Tonga Rugby Union (TRU), as well as close collaborations between other rugby union bodies, the Tonga Referee Association, Tonga Women’s Rugby and many local schools/colleges.

These partnerships have resulted in:

- Over 1000 youth, mostly young women and girls in secondary school and colleges, engaged in rugby, both local competitions and/or tag and touch rugby, at the school and community level. This has helped increase awareness of gender equality issues amongst schools and carers/parents;
- Heightened awareness of gender equality and VAWG issues in association with women and girls’ increasing participation in rugby at all levels;
- Increased participation and visibility of women’s rugby groups in national competitions as well as female referees; and
- TRU proposing an organisation structural review to increase women’s representation in the TRU Board and for women to be given voting rights for Board decisions (decision pending).

*The Talitha Project also engages and supports youth activists to raise awareness and initiate a public dialogue via strategic communications and radio to unpack healthy relationships, harmful gender norms and gender equality.*

The Pacific Partnership is funded primarily by the European Union, and the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and UN Women, and is led by the Pacific Community (SPC), UN Women and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. In Tonga, two of the three coordinating agencies have Pacific Partnership activities: UN Women and PIFS. Imagery inspired by empowering female-specific tattoo motifs used in the Pacific region.

For more information, please contact: [comms.pac@unwomen.org](mailto:comms.pac@unwomen.org)

