

IN BRIEF



GENDER EQUALITY BRIEF FOR FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Women's Human Rights

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has five Constitutions ratified under the 1947 Code of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands: each of the four constituent states has their own Constitution in addition to the supreme Constitution for the Federated States of Micronesia. All five Constitutions of FSM [guarantee equal protection under the law](#) to all citizens regardless of sex, race, ancestry, national origin, language, religion, or social status. In November 2018, [Congressional Act 20-150](#) was passed to include sexual orientation as prohibited grounds for discrimination in the Code of the Federated States of Micronesia.

[Most women have traditional titles](#) by virtue of birth right, inherited through clan lineage and/or through their marriage based on the status of their husbands. Across FSM, there is great variation in cultural practices and norms regarding women's traditional status and roles.

Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae are traditionally matrilineal societies, in which land is inherited through the mother's clan. [Traditionally](#), male relatives would take care of the land and women would contribute to decision-making and oversee the responsibilities related to the land.

As noted in the [2012 Gender Stocktake](#), women's rights to land ownership and access to resources in FSM has been eroded under colonial rule, with male family members typically retaining the power to make decisions relating to land ownership and use. Yap State and some outlying atolls in Pohnpei State are [traditionally patrilineal societies](#), in which land is inherited through the father's lineage. Foreign ownership of land is not permitted in FSM. [Most land is held through family trusts](#) and land use rights are inherited through family and clan systems.

Citizenship in FSM is [acquired according to the principle of jus sanguinis](#) or blood line from one or both parents, or by proven ancestry. The Constitutional provision for citizenship applies equally to women and men, and [women have an equal right to obtain a passport](#).

Marriage to a foreign citizen or change of a spouse's nationality does not affect an individual's nationality; FSM Government is in full compliance with the CEDAW's requirements in this regard. Under the Compact Free Association, individuals with FSM citizenship can apply to enter and live in the United States indefinitely and without the requirement for a visa. It is common for FSM citizens to [emigrate to the United States](#) for education, employment, and health reasons.

The [legal age of sexual consent](#) varies in each state of FSM. For both sexes, the age of consent in Kosrae and Yap is 13, increasing the likelihood of children experiencing sexual abuse and sexual violence. In Chuuk and Pohnpei, the age of consent is 18. A high legal age of consent can make adolescents who engage in consensual sexual acts with other adolescents vulnerable to unwarranted legal sanctions. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has urged FSM to harmonize the minimum age of sexual consent across all states and ensure that adolescents who engage in consensual sexual acts with other adolescents are not criminalised.

The [legal age of marriage](#) for citizens are determined by individual states. The FSM Supreme Court has jurisdiction for marriages involving foreign citizens. In Kosrae and Chuuk, the minimum age of marriage is 18 for males and 16 for females. Girls under the age of 18 require the consent of either parent. In Pohnpei, [the legal marriage age is 18 for both men and women](#). In Chuuk and Pohnpei, [customary marriages are valid with no minimum age limit](#). Yap has no minimum legal marriage age stipulated in state law.

Legal Marriage Age in FSM

Internationally accepted age:



Chuuk*

Parental consent required for women under the age of 18. Customary marriages are valid with no minimum age limit.



Kosrae*

Parental consent required for women under the age of 18



Pohnpei**



Yap*



* Source: [Inter-Parliamentary Union and World Health Organization](#)

** Source: [Human Rights Council](#)

According to a [stakeholder submission](#) to the 2010 Universal Periodic Review for FSM, child marriage is still common and a significant age gap between an older husband and his young wife is considered culturally acceptable. This previous research suggests that bride prices have been used in FSM to demand cash for the marriage of a daughter. This practice is often justified as local custom and tradition. However, some observers consider it to be a distortion of the traditional culture, and one that benefits certain male family members. More recent data is required to understand current bride price customs and how these impact girls and women in each of FSM's four states.

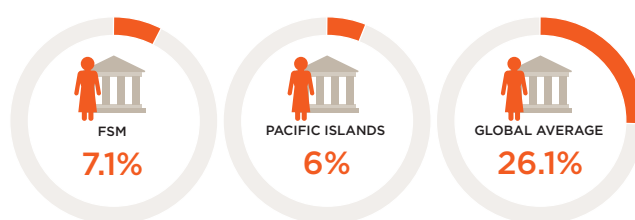
FSM has signed the UN Human Rights Council's 2011 statement on [Ending Acts of Violence and Related Human Rights Violations Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#). Same-sex consensual sexual acts are [legal](#) in FSM and have never been criminalised.

Governance and Participation in Public Life

The FSM's [National Congress](#) contains 14 Senators and is constituted from two groups. Four Senators-at-Large are elected from the country's four states to serve a 4-year term. A further 10 Senators are elected from single-member constituencies across the four states and serve a 2-year term. In total, Chuuk has six representatives, Pohnpei has four, and Yap and Kosrae each have two representatives in the National Congress. The President and Vice-President are selected by national Senators from the pool of Senators-at-Large. The subsequent vacant Senator-at-Large seats are filled in special elections.

In the [most recent national elections](#) in March 2021, no women were elected for the 10 single-member constituency seats. The most recent Senator-at-Large elections took place in 2019 and all four successful candidates were male. Following the death of a serving senator representing a constituency in Chuuk State, a woman, Dr Perpetua Sappa Konman, was elected by special election in November 2021. As of February 2022, the rate of female representation in National Congress is 7.1%. Senator Konman is the first female to serve in the National Congress.

Female Representation in National Parliament in FSM



Source: [Pacific Women in Politics, Inter-Parliamentary Union March 2022](#)

Each state within FSM has its own [State Congress](#). Kosrae Congress (14 Senators), Pohnpei Congress (23 Senators), and Yap Congress (10 Senators) each have a single legislative chamber, while Chuuk Congress has a House of Representatives with 28 Delegates and an Upper House with 10 Senators. Overall, there are 85 members across the four State Congresses. Following the most recent State Congress elections in 2020, there are a total

of [five women serving as Senators at the state level](#): three for Pohnpei and two for Chuuk. Overall, the five female state Senators account for 5.9% of the total 85 members of the state legislatures.

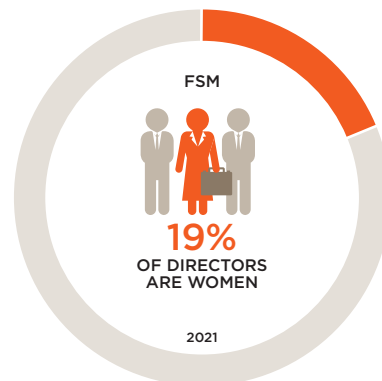
The representation of women in traditional leadership roles is not known, although the [FSM 2012 Gender Stocktake](#) states that women are not well represented in traditional local leadership roles.

There are no Temporary Special Measures in place in FSM to improve the representation of women in National or State legislature. In 2010, a [Bill](#) was proposed to introduce reserved at-large seats in the National Congress for women. The Bill, however, was not in the end considered by Congress and has since lapsed.

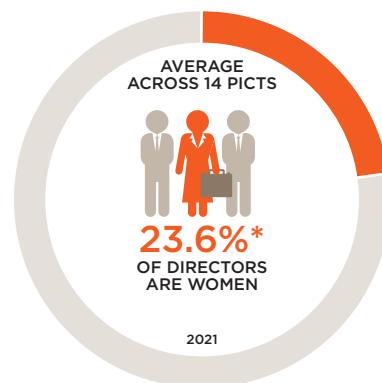
As of March 2022, [two of the ten members of the national executive branch](#) were women, holding positions in the Department of Education and the FSM Postal Service. In the Judicial Branch in 2022, [one of the three judges on the FSM Supreme Court](#) was a woman. Women also hold positions in the diplomatic space: in 2022, [two of the eight foreign honorary consuls](#) are women.¹ There is a lack of data regarding the number of women in the police force.

In a 2021 [analysis](#) of the boards of 14 private and public sector organisations in FSM, women were found to hold 19% of Director positions, 0% of Deputy Chair positions, and 13% of Board Chair positions. All female Directors and Board Chairs were on the boards of private sector organisation. No women were represented on the boards of the state-owned enterprises available to analyse.

Women on Boards in FSM



Source: [Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative](#)



Source: [Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative](#)

* Average calculated as the mean value across countries with available data.

The FSM National Women's Council (NWC) serves as the umbrella organisation for all women's groups and organisations in the four states to amplify women's voice in both national and global affairs. In 2015, a [Bill](#) was introduced to create the Office of Gender Affairs, connected to but distinct from the Department of Health and Social Affairs of FSM, which focuses on women's interests. Although there are initiatives to facilitate involvement of women in political and economic affairs, traditional roles and expectations have been [identified](#) as a limiting factor in women's participation in power and decision-making.

1 The FSM Consulate-General in Guam and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for the FSM Mission to the United Nations are women.

Education

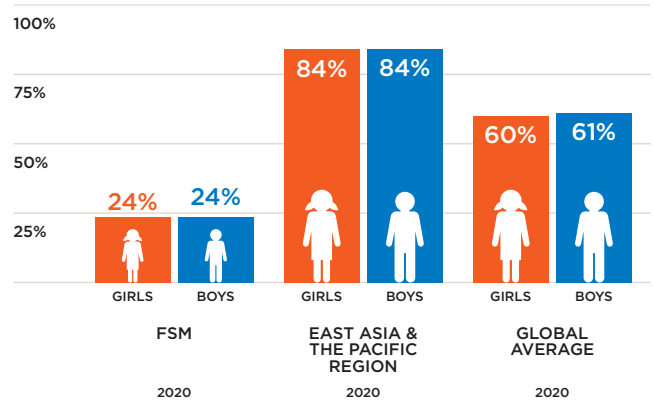
The education system in FSM separates into [four levels](#): early childhood education, primary, secondary, and post-secondary education. Education is free at the primary and secondary level, and compulsory until age 15. [Penalties](#) apply to those who obstruct children's mandatory education. Given that customary marriages with no minimum age limit are valid in Chuuk and Pohnpei, updated data is required to understand the impacts of child marriage on the education of girls and women in FSM.

The national [literacy rate](#) for 15-24 year olds was 95.7% in 2010. Sex-disaggregated data on literacy rates is not available.

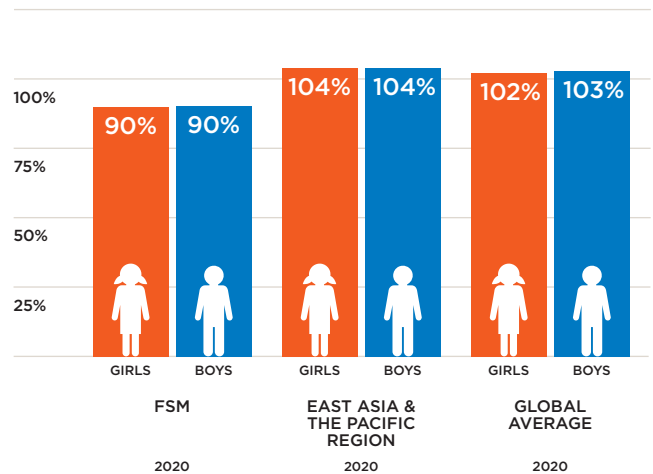
According to data from the [Department of Education](#) for the 2019-2020 school year, the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for early childhood education was 71% for both girls and boys in 2020. In the same year, the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) for early childhood education was 51% for girls and 50% for boys, suggesting a significant number of children in early childhood education are outside of the official age range for this education level. In 2020, the transition rate, from early childhood education Grade K to primary education Grade 1, was 96% for girls and 95% for boys. According to data from the [UNESCO Institute for Statistics](#) (UIS), the GER for early childhood education was 24.3% for girls and 24.1% for boys in 2020.

At primary level, data from the [Department of Education](#) states that the GER was 83% for girls and 81% for boys in 2020. According to data from the [UIS](#), the GER for primary education was 89.8% for girls and 90.2% for boys in 2020. In the Department of Education data, the corresponding survival rate from Grade 1 to Grade 8 – the percentage of a cohort enrolled in Grade 1 who are expected to reach Grade 8 – was 77% for girls and 69% for boys. Among students who reach Grade 8, the graduation rate – the proportion who will complete the grade and graduate from primary education – was 97% for girls and 96% for boys in 2020.

Early Childhood Education Gross Enrolment Rates in FSM

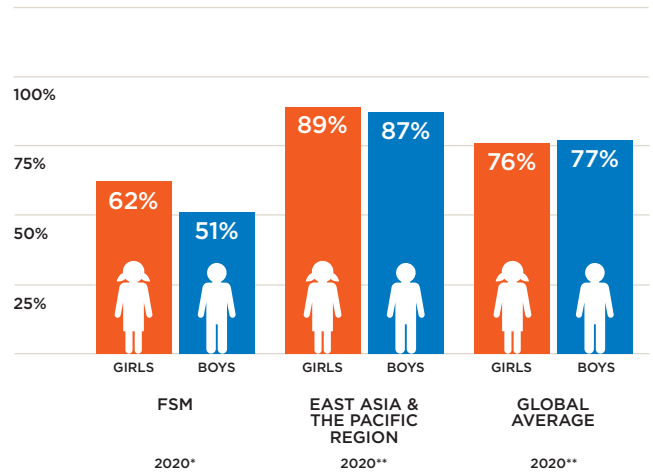


Primary Gross Enrolment Rates in FSM



Source: [UNESCO Institute for Statistics](#)

Secondary Gross Enrolment Rates in FSM



* Source: [Department of Education](#)

** Source: [UNESCO Institute for Statistics](#)

The FSM National Minimum Competency Test (NMCT) was cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Data from the [2018/19 academic year](#) is not sex-disaggregated, although it shows that 35% of Grade 6 students and 31% of Grade 8 students met the predetermined reading competency benchmarks. For mathematics, 28% of Grade 4 students, 27% of Grade 6 students, and 19% of Grade 8 students met the benchmark for their current grade. The [transition rate](#) from primary school Grade 8 to secondary school Grade 9 was 97% for girls and 96% for boys in 2020.

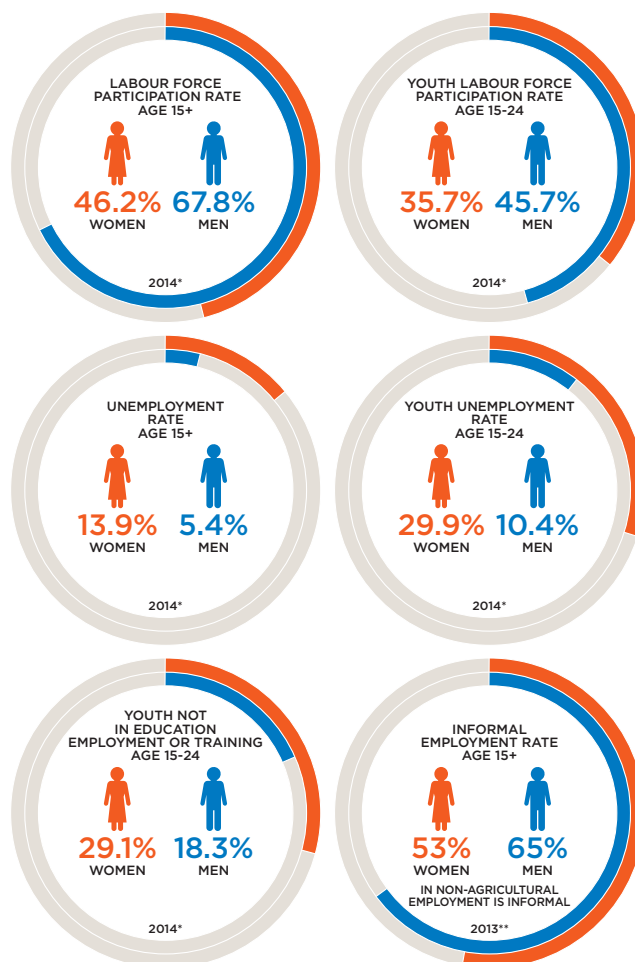
At secondary level, the GER was 62% for girls and 51% for boys in 2020 [Department of Education](#) data. The survival rate from Grade 1 to Grade 12 was 60% for girls and 51% for boys. For Grade 10 students in the [2018-19 NMCT](#), 43% met the Grade 10 reading competency benchmark and 27% met the mathematics benchmark. The [graduation rate](#) among students who reach Grade 12 was 96% for girls and 97% for boys in 2020. There is no UIS data on secondary enrolment rates in FSM.

There is a lack of data on transition and enrolment rates in tertiary education in FSM. In the Autumn term of 2020, 58.8% of the students attending the [College of Micronesia](#) (COM-FSM) were female. Data on the subjects studied by male and female students is not available. As of [September 2020](#), 544 top-performing students have received scholarships for graduate and postgraduate education, however sex-disaggregated data is not available. In the [2013/14 Household Income and Expenditure Survey \(HIES\)](#), 12.6% of men and 9.2% of women reported that they had graduated from a tertiary or vocational institution. More up-to-date data is required to assess current trends in tertiary educational attainment given the increased proportion of women enrolled in tertiary education in recent years.

The combination of school closures due to the COVID-19 and lack of internet access for many children has meant that [the pandemic has had a significant impact on children's education](#) in FSM. Further research is required to understand the long-term impacts on girl's education.

Women's Economic Empowerment

Economic Empowerment Indicators in FSM



* Source: [2013-14 Household Income and Expenditure Survey](#)

** Source: [Pacific Community \(SPC\)](#)

There is a lack of recent data covering basic economic indicators in FSM. The last published [Census](#) data is from 2010. More recent economic data can be found in the [2013-14 Household Income and Expenditure Survey \(HIES\)](#).

The labour force participation rate was 46.2% for women and 67.8% for men in the 2013-14 HIES. The unemployment rate was 13.9% for women and 5.4% for men age 15 and over. An estimated 29.1% of young women and 18.3% of young men aged 15-24 were not in education employment or training.

Women held [39% of jobs in the formal sector](#) in 2015. [53% of female employment](#) and 65% of male employment in non-agricultural sectors was informal in 2013.

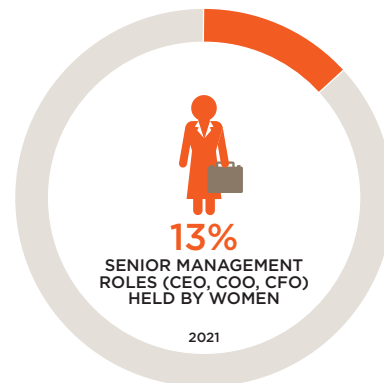
Traditionally, [women and men have distinct responsibilities](#). While men are traditionally in charge of fishing, planting trees and woodcarving, women are engaged in such activities as taking care of the family and children at home, climbing of breadfruit and coconut trees to gather food and drink, and manufacturing of valued traditional goods (e.g. baskets).

Typically, [FSM gender roles](#) assign women to agricultural food production, seafood collection, and artisan crafts (e.g. loom-woven waist clothes, oils, and medicine). Earnings from selling these crafts are often used to procure canoes, which are an important means of transport. Meanwhile, men are usually assigned to aquatic activities and coconut tree cultivation.

In the 2013 HIES, [poverty incidence](#) was found to be higher in female-headed households (50.5%) than male-headed households (38.9%). In all states, female-headed households were poorer than male-headed households. [Wages in the FSM remain low](#), particularly in the private sector, where both skilled and unskilled workers often make US\$1.25 to US\$4.00 per hour. In 2015, women in the formal sector earned on average 13% less than their male counterparts.

In a 2021 [analysis](#) of 12 organisations in FSM, women were found to hold 13% of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) positions as well as 13% of total senior management roles (including Chief Executive Officers, Chief Financial Officers, and Chief Operating Officers). All female CEOs in the study were found in private sector organisations.

Women in Senior Management in FSM



Source: [Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative](#)

Limited financial literacy and lack of access to credit impacts women's economic empowerment. As of June 2019, [172 female small business owners in FSM had participated in financial literacy and business management training](#) with the Pacific Women Growing Business Project. A further 110 women had engaged in the Project's rural outreach programmes between January and May 2019. Further data is required to understand women's access to financial institutions and credit in FSM.

The majority of private sector workers [operate outside of the social security system](#) and do not have access to benefits such as sick leave or parental leave. [Pohnpei has legislation prohibiting wage discrimination](#) on the basis of sex. However, Kosrae, Chuuk, and Yap have no equal pay legislation. Discrimination in employment on the basis of sex is prohibited under national and state code in all four states, although this applies only to public service employees.

FSM is not a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and therefore has not signed any ILO Conventions on equality of opportunity and treatment.

Maternity leave for government employees was increased from six to 12 weeks by a [Congressional Act](#) in November 2021. There are [no paternity or parental leave provisions](#) available to male government employees, and there is no national legislation on parental leave in the private sector. There is no national legislation against sexual harassment in employment. There is [no legislation to guarantee the provision of childcare](#) by either employers or the state.

Health/Sexual and Reproductive Health

In 2020, the [life expectancy at birth was 70 years for women](#) and 66 years for men. According to the [most recent World Health Organisation \(WHO\) data](#), the top three causes of death in FSM in 2016 were cardiovascular diseases (32%), communicable, maternal, perinatal and nutritional conditions (18%), and other non-communicable diseases (16%). The [mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory disease](#) was 39.9% for women and 52.1% for men in 2019.

Risk factors for non-communicable diseases include physical inactivity, poor diet, smoking, and excessive alcohol consumption. According to the [most recent data from WHO](#), 39% of women and 32% of men were physically inactive in 2016. Obesity rates were higher among women (47%) than men (36%) in adults aged 18 and above. Among adolescents aged 10-19, 20% of female and 18% male were classified as obese in 2016. In 2014, 20% of women and 16% of men aged 18 and over had raised glucose levels indicative of diabetes. Men have higher alcohol consumption rates than women in FSM: the total annual per capita alcohol consumption was 4 litres of pure alcohol for men and 1 litre of pure alcohol for women in 2016. Recent data on tobacco use is not available.

In 2021, the [total fertility rate](#) in FSM was 2.9 children per woman. Between 2003 and 2018 the [adolescent birth rate](#) for women aged 15 to 19 was 44 births per 1,000 population. There were two maternal deaths in 2017, resulting in a [maternal mortality ratio](#) of 88 per 100,000 live births. In 2019 the [infant mortality rate](#) was 21.8 per 1,000 live births for girls and 27.2 per 1,000 live births for boys, while the under-5 mortality rate was 26.3 per 1,000 live births for girls and 32.4 per 1,000 live births for boys. In 2017, UNICEF [reported](#) that almost all births are attended by a skilled health professional.

Contraceptive Prevalence Rate in FSM

51.3%	49.5%
in 2017	in 2019

Source: [Human Rights Council](#)

The [contraceptive prevalence rate](#) was 51.3% in 2017, a slight increase from 49.5% in 2009. Family Planning services and methods are

available for free at Public Health facilities in all four states. Through the [Family Planning and Maternal and Child Health Programmes](#), the FSM Government works with local clinics to make contraceptives more accessible to women. There is a [lack of both safe abortion facilities and the doctors to perform abortions](#). Under Section 51 of the [1980 Trust Territory Code Volume 1](#), abortion is permitted if it is intended [to save a woman's life](#) from miscarriage or premature delivery.

Adolescent Fertility Rate in FSM

Sustainable Development Goal target: reduce adolescent fertility rate to	FSM:
less than 13 live births per 1,000	44 live births per 1,000
women aged 15-19 by 2030	women aged 15-19 (2003-2018)

Source: [UNFPA](#)

Maternal Mortality Ratio in FSM

Sustainable Development Goal target: reduce maternal mortality ratio to	FSM:
less than 70 per 100,000 live births	88 per 100,000 live births
by 2030	2017

Source: [UNFPA](#)

Under-5 mortality rate in FSM

Sustainable Development Goal target: reduce under-5 mortality rate to	FSM:
less than 25 per 1,000 live births	29.4 per 1,000 live births
by 2030	2019

Source: [Pacific Community \(SPC\)](#)

The prevalence of HIV and AIDS are [generally considered low](#) in FSM: 46 cases were reported between 1989 to 2014, 41% of which were female. Generally, sexually transmitted infection cases are more likely to be detected in women than men: in 2014, gonorrhoea was detected

in 43 men and 178 women (equating to 80.5% of the total cases being female); chlamydia was detected in 329 men and 745 women (69.7% were female); syphilis was detected in 1,062 men and 1,456 women (57.8% female). Detections due to testing during antenatal care visits are likely to impact the gender composition of detected cases.

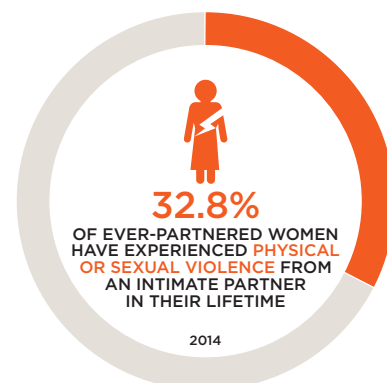
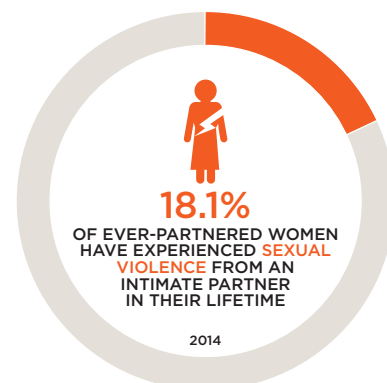
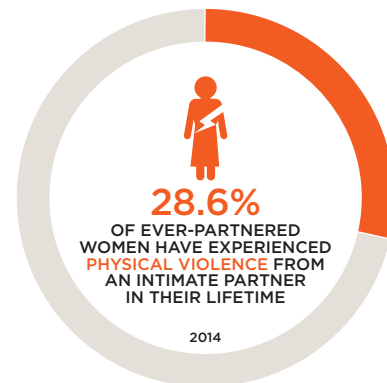
According to a 2018 survey, [72.3% of women and 70.3% of men reported that they do not have health coverage](#). Remoteness, a lack of trained personnel, poor transport and communication facilities, as well as limited financial resources all [impact the provision of health services on outer islands](#). In small societies, patients are likely to either be acquainted or related to health providers in their community. As a result, women may be hesitant to seek health care advice. According to a [2015 report to the CEDAW Committee](#), the potential lack of privacy and confidentiality in health clinics was noted as a barrier for teenagers seeking family planning information, counselling and services.

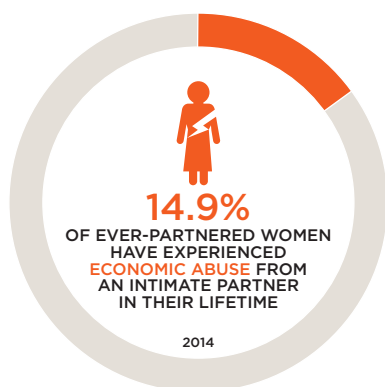
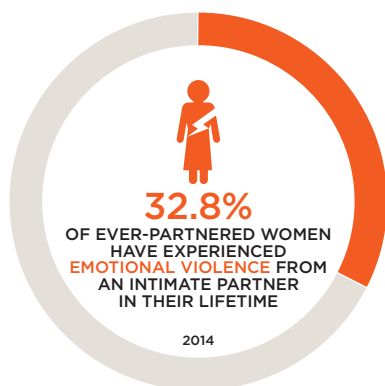
FSM's Strategic Development Plan 2014-2023 and Country Cooperation Strategy 2018-2022 with the [World Health Organization](#) aim to provide universal access to quality health services that will ultimately benefit women. UNDP HIV/AIDS programming in FSM [aims to provide improved access to health services for marginalised groups](#), including LGBT communities, and to strengthen control of HIV and tuberculosis.

Ending Violence against Women and Girls

The [most recent national survey](#) on violence against women and girls in FSM was conducted in 2014. FSM is due to conduct a UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in 2022, which will provide data on current trends in violence against women and girls.

Lifetime Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence in FSM





Source: [FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs](#)

In the [2014 Family Health and Safety Study \(FHSS\)](#), 28.6% of ever-partnered women reported that they had experienced physical violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime. In the same survey, 19.4% of women reported they had experienced physical violence from a partner in the previous 12 months. Among ever-partnered women, 18.1% reported experiencing sexual violence from a partner in their lifetime, with 12.9% experiencing this violence in the previous 12 months. Overall, 32.8% of ever-partnered women had experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime, and 24.1% had experienced this violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Among ever-pregnant women, 6.3% reported that they had experienced physical violence from a partner during a pregnancy. The figures were highest in Kosrae, where 14.7% of ever-pregnant women had experienced physical violence during pregnancy. The overall rate of intimate partner physical violence was also highest in Kosrae, where 55.5% of women reported experiencing physical violence. The rate of intimate partner sexual violence was highest in Chuuk, where 33.2% reported experiencing sexual violence.

Emotional partner violence was also common, according

to the 2014 FHSS, with 32.8% of ever-partnered women reporting that they had experienced emotional violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime, including being insulted, belittled, humiliated, threatened, scared and intimidated. 14.9% of ever-partnered women reported that they had experienced economic abuse from a partner, including taking away money that she had earned or saved (9.3%) and refusing to give her money for household expenses despite money being available for other things (11.7%).

The FHSS also collected data on women's experiences of physical and sexual violence from non-partners. Among all interviewed women, 9.6% reported that they had experienced non-partner physical violence since age 15. 31% reported more than one perpetrator, most commonly, female family members (56.8%) and male female members (55.7%). An estimated 8.0% of women reported experiencing sexual violence from a non-partner since age 15, with the highest rates recorded in Kosrae (15.0%) and Chuuk (11.0%). Experiences of childhood sexual abuse were disclosed by 14.2% of women. The rate of sexual violence before the age of 15 was highest in Kosrae (21.9%) and Chuuk (16.9%). Sexual violence before the age of 15 was most often reported by women aged 25-29 (23.8%) and aged 15-24 (18.1%).

Overall in 2014, 13.6% of women reported experiences of physical or sexual violence from a non-partner, and 28.7% reported experiencing physical or sexual violence from a partner.

FSM's Department of Health and Social Affairs noted the experience of colonial rule as a possible factor in altering traditional gender roles in FSM, and one that may also explain the prevalence of sexual violence in intimate relationships. Under colonial rule, women's right to land ownership and economic responsibilities to produce foods and crops were altered, generally undermining women's status.

A high level of societal tolerance, including by women, has also been [identified as a contributing factor](#) to the prevalence of physical and sexual violence. According to the 2014 FHSS,

62.8% of women agreed that ‘a good wife needs to obey her husband even if she disagrees’; 54.8% of women agreed that ‘a man should show his wife that he is the boss’; and 41.3% agreed that ‘women are obliged to have sex with their husbands’. Justifications for violence were expressed by a significant portion of women: 55.3% of women agreed that ‘a man has good reason to hit his wife if he finds out she is unfaithful’, while 40.7% agreed that ‘violence is justified if a woman disobeys her husband’. Overall, 65.2% of women agreed on one or more situations where they considered physical partner violence was acceptable.

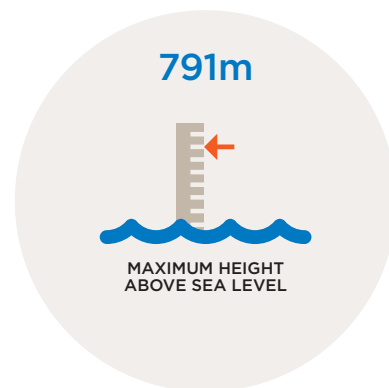
State-level efforts focused on reducing violence against women and girls include the Kosrae Family Protection Act 2004, and the [Pohnpei Domestic Issues Act 2017](#). [Other programmes in Pohnpei State include:](#) the Pohnpei Domestic Violence Act Taskforce in 2014; raining of the Pohnpei Police Domestic Violence Unit; and [training of health workers](#) on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on clinical management of rape and sexual assault in Pohnpei. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, [Chuuk developed an animated video](#), “Staying Safe at Home”, aimed at raising awareness of the heightened risk of gender-based violence, and also offering information on assistance available.

The CEDAW Committee has previously [expressed concern](#) at the lack of services for women in remote areas, including shelters, medical treatment, psychological counselling, and legal assistance.

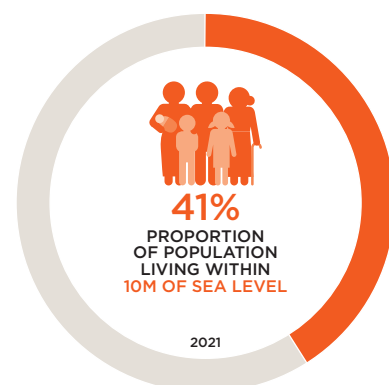
Gender and Protection in Humanitarian Action

FSM is [vulnerable to climate change](#) due to its geographical location and low-lying lands. In 2021, FSM was ranked 81st in the [World Risk Index](#) for disaster impact, with ‘high’ vulnerability, susceptibility, and lack of adaptive capacities; and ‘medium’ exposure and lack of coping capacities. The [maximum height above sea level](#) is 791m. There is a ‘[high](#)’ likelihood of typhoons in FSM, and a ‘medium’ likelihood of coastal flooding and tsunamis.

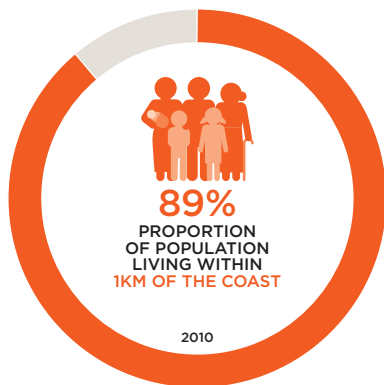
Climate and Disaster Profile of FSM



Source: [Pacific Community \(SPC\)](#)



Source: [Pacific Community \(SPC\)](#)



Source: [Pacific Community \(SPC\)](#)

Main Climate-Related Hazards



Source: [Australian Aid](#)

The [gendered impacts of climate change](#) include increased workload for women, reduced access to education, and an increased risk of violence against women. Given women's traditional responsibilities to produce and prepare food for sale, women are likely to carry the burden of additional or disrupted work due to climate change. In Chuuk, young girls are likely to be at increased risk of assault when walking longer distances to secure water during droughts.

Women's groups have been working to highlight the gendered impact of climate change and adaptation efforts through conferences and a variety of learning and development activities. For example, there was a [Gender Equality and Social Inclusion \(GESI\) in Disasters and Climate Change initiative](#) in 2020. The GESI training, which was attended by both government agencies and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), was regarded as an important step towards the integration of GESI principles in national and state policies on climate change. The

[specific needs and voice of vulnerable groups such as women](#), youth and persons with disabilities had not been considered in previous policies. In 2020, the FSM Protection Cluster was established at a national level. It aims to support stakeholders' coordination of prevention efforts, response, and access to services and justice in relation to gender-based violence.

In 2019, FSM conducted a [Climate Change and Disaster Risk Finance Assessment](#), in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), and the US Aid Climate Ready Project. The assessment reviewed FSM's climate change program against seven thematic pillars, including gender and social inclusion. According to the report, support to financing gender and social inclusion in climate change projects from 2011 to 2018 was inadequate. The report also found limited integration of climate change, gender and human rights in the Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (CCDRM) reporting. Recommendations included increasing resources for gender mainstreaming, and the balancing of decision-making on CCDRM by including women in decision-making processes.

National policies are in place to support climate change planning. The [National Strategic Development Plan 2004-2023](#) (FSM SDP) serves as FSM's main "national planning economic mechanism" containing the plans, policies and strategies for each economic sector. The [2013 Climate Change Act](#) sets out the mainstreaming obligations of eight executive departments and offices, including the Department of Health and Social Affairs, with which the National Machinery for Women (NMW) is affiliated. The departments are required to prepare plans and policies on climate change that are consistent with the provisions on the climate change policy. The [2013 Nationwide Integrated Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Policy](#) calls for special attention to be given to gender issues and the needs of marginalised groups such as small atoll communities, people with disabilities, and the elderly.

Appendix 1: Country Background

Capital	Palikir
Population	105,754 (2021).
GDP per capita (USD)	\$3,565.29 (2020)
Human Development Index	Ranked 136th out of 189 countries and territories (2020)
Type of Government	The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is an independent nation formed of four freely associated states. It is in free association with the United States of America. FSM has a presidential political system with a unicameral national congress.
Women in Legislature	One out of 14 Senators (7.1%) in the National Congress and five out of 85 (5.9%) Senators in the four State Congresses are women as of March 2022.
Legal System	<p>FSM is a federal state in which the power to legislate on specific issues is divided between the federal government and the four separate states: Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap. In addition to the national constitution, each state has its own constitution that defines the powers reserved to the states and those reserved to the federal government.</p> <p>The FSM Supreme Court is the highest judicial body in the country, constituting a presiding Chief Justice and up to five Associate Justices. Each of the four states in the FSM has a State Court system.</p>
Ratified Human Rights Conventions	<p>FSM has signed and ratified the following conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Accession 1993) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optional Protocol CRC on sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography (signed 2002, ratified 2012) Optional Protocol CRC on children in armed conflict (signed 2002, ratified 2015) Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (Accession 2004) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FSM has not signed or ratified the Optional Protocol to CEDAW or the Inquiry procedure under CEDAW. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (Signed 2011; ratified 2016) <p>FSM has neither signed nor ratified the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED) International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR) International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and of Their Families (CMW).
Urban vs. Rural Women (%)	22.5% of women and 22.1% of men lived in urban areas in 2010.
Female-Headed Households (%)	19.9% (2013)
Women in the Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The labour force participation rate was 26.4% for women and 38.0% for men in 2013. The unemployment rate was 7.7% for women and 8.0% for men in 2013. Women held 39% of jobs in the formal sector in 2015. In the 2013 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), 53% of total female employment and 65% of total male employment in non-agricultural sectors was informal.
Women CEOs	<p>An estimated 13% of CEOs and 13% of senior management personnel (CEOs, CFOs, and COOs) were women in 2021.</p> <p>In 2014, 18.2% of Managing Directors and Chief Executives were women.</p>
Women on Boards	<p>An estimated 19% of Directors, 0% of Deputy Chairs, and 13% of Board Chairs were women in 2021.</p> <p>Women were most highly represented as Directors on the boards of private sector organisation (21%).</p>

Appendix 1: Country Background (continued)

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is an independent Pacific Island country consisting of four freely associated states – Chuuk, Yap, Pohnpei, and Kosrae – situated in the North Pacific Ocean. FSM has a [Compact of Free Association](#) with the United States, which was signed into law in 1986 and amended in 2003. Under the Compact, FSM has the sovereign right to self-determination and the capacity to conduct foreign affairs, including to sign treaties and other international agreements. The United States Government provides economic and defence assistance to FSM.

FSM consists of 607 islands, 67 of which are inhabited. According to data from the [Secretariat of the Pacific Community](#), the total land area of FSM is 700km² and the Exclusive Economic Zone is 2,996,420km². The country's capital, Palikir, is located on Pohnpei island.

FSM had an estimated total population of 105,754 in 2020, [48.8% of whom were female](#). Of the overall population, 31.4% were below the age of 15 in 2020. Most of the population resides in rural areas. According to the [most recent data](#), 22.3% of the population was living in urban areas in 2010. In 2013, [19.9% of households were headed by women. The average size of female-headed household was 9.0 in 2013](#), with an average of 3.3 children; for male-headed households, the average size was 8.5 with an average of 3.1 children.

Appendix 2: Country Commitments on Gender

International Commitments

Gender Commitments	Status	Actions
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Accession 2004. The most recent State Party's Report was submitted in 2015.	As noted in the Concluding Observations on the combined initial to third periodic reports , a number of legislative and policy measures have been undertaken since FSM's accession in 2004: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trafficking in Persons Act (2012) and the corresponding state laws against trafficking; 2. Improvement of the institutional and policy framework, for example through the adoption of the National Strategic Development Plan (2004-2023), which covers gender equality issues and provides steps to address them; 3. Ratification and/or accession of various international instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women.
Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration	Signed 2012 Regional review published in 2019.	As noted in the 2016 regional trend assessment report , FSM has made progress in a number of areas since signing the Declaration in 2012: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government submitted its first CEDAW report in 2015, combining its first, second and third reporting periods. • A Family Health and Safety Survey was carried out in 2014, which showed high rates of gender based violence across FSM. • FSM is working collaboratively with the individual states to establish family protection laws. Kosrae state passed its Domestic Violence Act in 2015. • The Family Planning and Maternal and Child Health Programmes work with clinics in each state and provide family planning and reproductive health services.
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	Most recent review published in 2020.	The FSM Government has committed to five focus areas to accelerate gender equality from 2020 to 2025: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Eliminate violence against women and girls; 5. Economic empowerment and political participation and representation; 6. Institution strengthening, particularly of the National Women's Council; 7. Gender responsive social protection; and 8. Improve statistics and data by training more statisticians especially women and girls. <p>In the +25 year review report, FSM state that they have strengthened/enforced laws to promote the economic participation of women, improved financial inclusion and access to credit, and improved access to modern technologies, infrastructure and services.</p>
Universal Periodic Review	Most recent national report was published in 2021.	Over the most recent reporting period, FSM made progress in a number of legislative and policy areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation introduced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Protection Law – Kosrae 2014 • Domestic Violence Law – Pohnpei 2017 • Age of Consent Law – Pohnpei 2019 • Age of Consent Law – Chuuk 2019 • Pohnpei Disabilities Act of 2019. • The FSM National Gender Policy was endorsed by the President in 2018. • The FSM Government has submitted reports to CEDAW and the CRC.

Appendix 2: Country Commitments on Gender (continued)

National Commitments

Gender Commitments	Status	Actions
National Gender Policy	2018	<p>In 2018, the FSM government adopted the National Gender Policy with six policy goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to ensure better representation of women in decision-making;• to eliminate gender-based violence;• to achieve equitable education outcomes;• to address barriers facing women in the workforce;• to ensure better health care for women and provide improved choices over their fertility; and• to mainstream gender consideration in the policies and programs on women and men, girls and boys.
Elimination of Violence Against Women Policy	Draft report produced in 2019	The draft FSM Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) policy articulates the need for a survivor-centred approach based on the principles of safety, confidentiality, respect, and non-discrimination. The draft policy emphasizes the need for a rights-based, community-oriented, 'do no harm' approach to the elimination of violence against women and girls.